

# Marjorie's Canadian Winter

A Story of the  
Northern Lights

Agnes Maul Machar  
1893

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*Title:* Marjorie's Canadian Winter -- A Story of the Northern Lights

*Date of first publication:* 1893

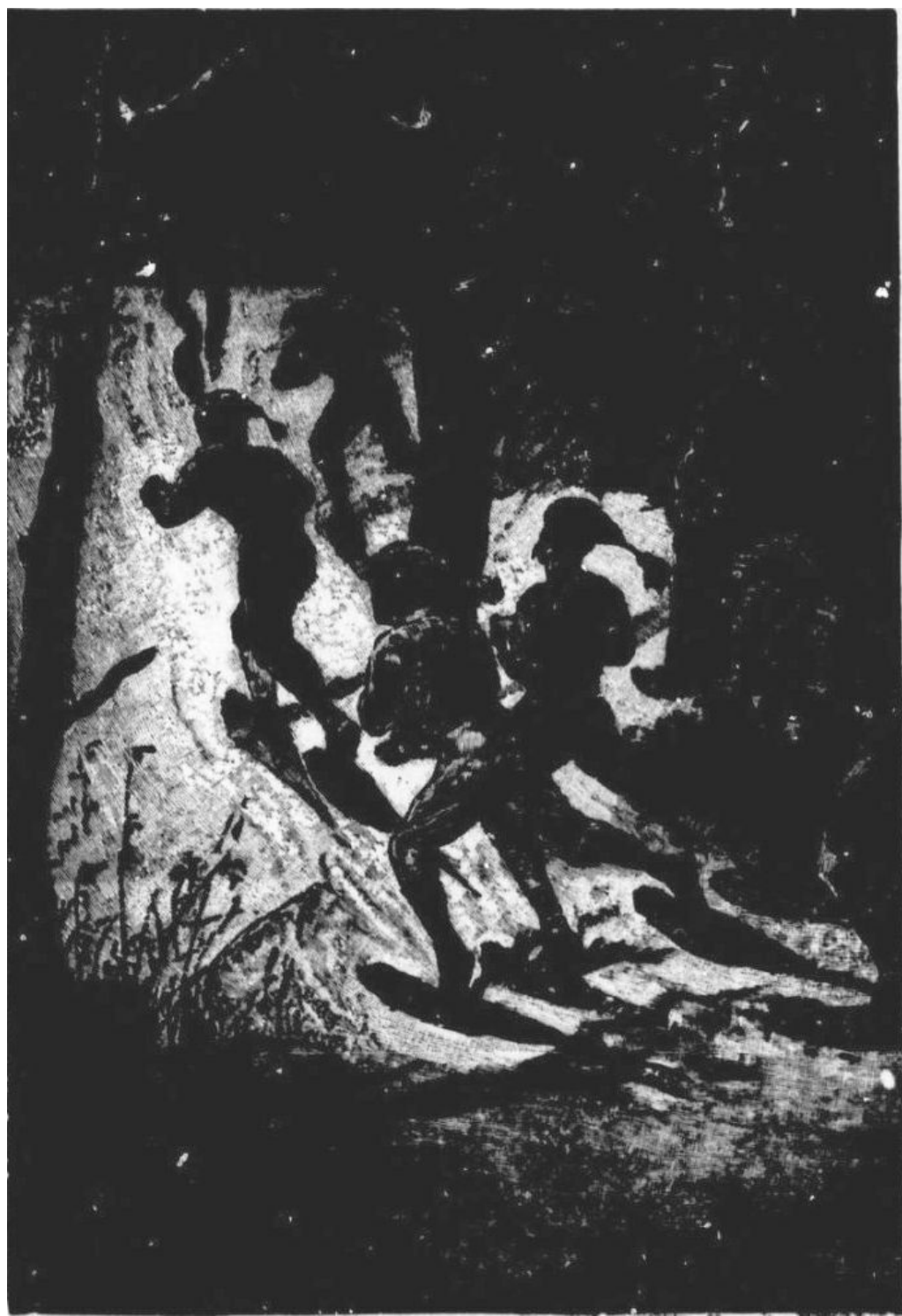
*Author:* Agnes Maules Machar (Jan 23, 1837-Jan 24, 1927)

*Date first posted:* June 24, 2014

*Date last updated:* June 24, 2014

Faded Page eBook #20140615

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SNOWSHOEING UP THE MOUNTAIN.

MARJORIE'S  
CANADIAN WINTER

A STORY OF THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

BY  
AGNES MAULE MACHAR

Author of  
"STORIES OF NEW FRANCE," ETC

BOSTON

D LOTHROP COMPANY

1893

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TO MY REVERED FRIEND

John Greenleaf Whittier

THIS LITTLE BOOK IS GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED IN  
HEART-FELT RECOGNITION OF THE INSPIRATION  
OF HIS WRITINGS AND  
HIS LIFE

“Our Friend, our Brother and our Lord,  
What may Thy service be?—  
Not name, not form, not ritual word,  
But simply following Thee.”

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

A NOVEMBER EVENING

CHAPTER II.

SOME DARK DAYS

CHAPTER III.

A NEW DEPARTURE

CHAPTER IV.

NORTHWARD

CHAPTER V.

IN MONTREAL

CHAPTER VI.

NEW FRIENDS

CHAPTER VII.

THE PROFESSOR'S STORY

CHAPTER VIII.

A SNOW-SHOE TRAMP

CHAPTER IX.

SEVEN SCENES FROM CHRISTMAS PAST

CHAPTER X.

CHRISTMAS PRESENT

CHAPTER XI.

PERE LE JEUNE'S CHRISTMAS

CHAPTER XII.

A NEW YEAR'S PARTY



CHAPTER XIII.  
TREASURES OF THE SNOW AND ICE

CHAPTER XIV.  
CARNIVAL GLORIES

CHAPTER XV.  
PERE DE NOUE

CHAPTER XVI.  
A NEW ACQUAINTANCE

CHAPTER XVII.  
ANXIOUS DAYS

CHAPTER XVIII.  
OPENING BLOSSOMS

CHAPTER XIX.  
EASTWARD, HO!

CHAPTER XX.  
AMONG THE HILLS

# MARJORIE'S CANADIAN WINTER.

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## CHAPTER I.

### A NOVEMBER EVENING.

Marjorie Fleming sat curled up in a large chair by the window of the dim fire-lighted room, looking out into the misty grayness of the rainy November evening, with wistful, watchful eyes that yet seemed scarcely to see what was before them.

The train that generally brought her father from the city was not quite due, but on this dull rainy day the dusk had fallen very early, and Marjorie, always a dreamer, loved to sit quiet in the "gloaming," as her father used to call the twilight, and give full sway to the fancies and air-castles that haunted her brain. The fitful light of the low fire in the grate scarcely interfered with the view of the outer world, such as it was: of the evergreens, heavy with crystal raindrops, the bare boughs of the other trees, and, beyond that, the street-lights, faintly outlining the houses and gardens on the other side. Marjorie, as she sat there, with one hand on the head of her little terrier Robin, scarcely looked her age, which was thirteen—a delightful age for a little girl; full of opening possibilities of life, and thoughts, of which, only a year or two ago, she had scarcely dreamed; an age not yet shorn of the privileges of childhood, and yet beginning to taste of the privileges of "grown-up people;" for now her father and his friends would not mind occasionally taking her into their thoughtful talks, which, to her, seemed so delightful and so profound.

As Marjorie waited, absorbed in a reverie, her mind had been roaming amid the fair scenes of last summer's holiday among the hills, with her father and her dear Aunt Millie; and latterly with the stranger who had appeared on the scene so unexpectedly to her, and had eventually carried off her beloved auntie to a Southern land of whose "orange and myrtle" Marjorie had been dreaming ever since. The bustle and novelty of a wedding in the house were very fresh in her mind, and she still felt the great blank left by the departure of the bride, whose loss to her father Marjorie had made such strong resolves to supply by her own devotion to his care and comfort. These resolves had been fulfilled as well, perhaps, as could be

expected from a girl of thirteen, whose natural affinities were more with books and study than with housewifely cares; but their faithful maid Rebecca, trained so carefully by "Miss Millie," regarded the somewhat superfluous efforts of her young mistress with something of the same good-humored disapprobation with which the experienced beaver is said to view the crude attempts of the young beginners at dam-building. So household cares had not weighed heavily on Marjorie yet, and the quiet life alone with her father had been much pleasanter and less lonely than she could have believed. For, though he was all day absent at the office in the city, Marjorie had her school and her books, and the walks in the bright October days with school friends. And then there were the long cosy evenings with her father, when Marjorie learned her lessons at his writing-table, while he sat over his books and papers; yet not too much absorbed for an occasional talk with Marjorie, over a difficult passage in her French or German, or an allusion in a book which she did not understand. Sometimes, too, he would read to her a manuscript poem or sketch, to see how she liked it; for Mr. Fleming was engaged in editorial work in connection with a New York periodical, and often brought manuscripts home from the office to examine at leisure. These were great treats to Marjorie. It seemed to her charming to hear a story or a poem fresh from the author's hand, before it had even gone to the printer; and she looked with a curious feeling of reverence at the sheets covered with written characters, that seemed about to fly on invisible wings to all parts of the land. As for her father, Marjorie thought that there was no one in all the world so clever and so good; and his verdict she took as a finality on every possible subject. Only one person stood yet higher in her thought: and that was the dear mother who now seemed to her like a lovely angel vision, as she imagined her in fragile delicacy and gentle sweetness, and knew, too, how her father had mourned her, and how he revered her memory as that of one far better than himself. All that that memory had been to him Marjorie could as yet only very faintly appreciate, but she knew or divined enough to give a loving but profound veneration to the feeling with which she looked at the picture over the mantel-piece, or the still sweeter smaller one that stood on her father's dressing-table. Marjorie had learned by heart Cowper's beautiful lines to his mother's picture, and she sometimes said them over softly to herself as she sat alone, looking at the picture by the firelight.

She was recalled now from the mazy labyrinth of rambling thoughts by Robin's sharp little bark and whine, as an umbrella with a waterproof coat under it swiftly approached the gate and turned in. It was a race between the dog and Marjorie, which of them should be at the door first. Robin was, but had to wait till Marjorie opened the door for his wild rush upon his master, while she threw her arms about

him, wet as he was, for the greeting kiss.

"Oh! how wet you are, father dear," she exclaimed. "Such an evening!"

"Yes; it makes me glad to be back to home and you, Pet Marjorie," he said, looking down at her with bright dark eyes very like her own, while she tugged away at the wet coat, in her eagerness to relieve him of it. He shivered slightly as he sat down in the easy-chair which Marjorie pulled in front of the fire, while she broke up the coal till the bright glow of the firelight filled the cosy apartment—half-study, half-sitting-room—where a small table was laid for a *tete-a-tete* dinner. Marjorie looked at him a little anxiously.

"Ah! now you've taken cold again," she said.

"I've taken a slight chill," he said, a little wearily. "It's scarcely possible to help it in this weather—but we shall be all right when we've had our dinner, eh, Robin?" as the little dog, not meaning to be overlooked, jumped up and licked his hands.

"But you look so tired, papa," said Marjorie again, using the pet name by which she did not usually call him.

"I've been out a good deal in the rain, and among saddening scenes, dear," he said.

"Oh! why did you go out so much to-day?"

"I had made an appointment with an English friend to show him how some of our poor people live, and, Marjorie dear, it made me heart-sick to see the misery and wretchedness, the dingy, squalid, crowded rooms—the half-starved women and children. It makes me feel as if it were wrong to be so comfortable," he added, looking round the room with its books and pictures. "And then, to pass those great luxurious mansions, where they don't know what to do with their overflowing wealth, and where they waste on utter superfluities enough to feed all those poor starving babies. Ah! it's pitiful. It makes me wonder whether this is a Christian country."

Marjorie looked perplexed. "But don't those rich people go to church?" she asked. "And, surely, if they knew people were starving, they would give them bread?"

"It's a queer world, Pet Marjorie," he said. "I suspect a good many of us are half-heathen yet."

Marjorie said nothing, but looked more puzzled still. She had heard a great deal about the heathen in foreign countries, but how there should be heathen, or even half-heathen people in a city like New York, and especially among the rich and educated portion of it, was not so clear. No doubt they were not all as charitable as they should be—but how did that make them "half-heathen"? But she was

accustomed to hear her father say a good many things that did not seem very clear at first, and she liked to try and think out their meaning for herself.

"I saw an angel to-day," Mr. Fleming went on half-musingly, then, smiling at Marjorie's surprised look, he added: "But I mustn't begin to talk about it now, or we'll keep dinner waiting, and I see Rebecca is bringing it in. I'll tell you about it in our 'holiday half-hour,' by and by. It'll be a conundrum till then."

It was rather a "way" Mr. Fleming had, to mystify a little his "Pet Marjorie," as he liked to call her, after the wonderful little girl who was such a pet of Sir Walter Scott, as Dr. John Brown has so prettily told us. And it had the effect of making her wonderfully interested in the explanation, when it was not possible for her to think this out for herself. And the "holiday half-hour" was the last half-hour before Marjorie's bedtime, when Mr. Fleming was wont to make a break in his busy evening, and give himself up to a rambling talk with Marjorie on matters great or small, as the case might be. For this half-hour Marjorie used to save up all the problems and difficulties that came into her busy mind during the day; and then, too, he would read to her little things that he thought she would like—generally from his office papers. It was no wonder that she looked forward to it as the pleasantest bit of the day, and that it left happy and peaceful thoughts to go to sleep with.

They had their quiet dinner together, while the rather dignified and matronly Rebecca waited on both, with a kind of maternal care. Then the table was cleared and drawn nearer the fire, while Mr. Fleming sorted out on it his books and papers. Among them were two or three new books for review. Marjorie looked at the titles, and dipped into the contents a little, but finally decided that they "were not as nice as they looked." Then, instead of producing grammars and exercise books as usual, she opened her little workbox, and unfolded, with an air of some importance, a large bundle of flannel.

"Nettie Lane and I were at the Dorcas Meeting to-day," she explained, in reply to her father's surprised and inquiring glance. "Nettie said I ought to take more interest in doing good to poor people, as Miss Chauncey always tells us we should. So she took me, because her mother is president, and she wants to 'enlist the interest of all the little girls,']" quoted Marjorie with satisfaction to herself. "And I took this home to make up before Christmas Day."

"All right, my child," said her father, smiling. "Only try to do whatever you undertake. If it should turn out as my Christmas slippers did last Christmas, I'm afraid the poor people will have to wait a while, unless Rebecca takes pity on you."

"O, papa! But then there was so much work on them, and you didn't need them then—just exactly. And I'm sure they look very nice now," she added, surveying

with pride the slippered feet, adorned with two brown dogs' heads, which rested on the fender, while her father looked through the evening papers.

"Yes, dear, they do, and I'm very proud of them," he said, leaning over to stroke her soft dark hair with a loving hand; "all the more that I know you are no Penelope."

"Oh! poor Penelope had nothing better to do," said Marjorie. "I don't suppose she had French or German to learn, or any new books to read."

"Happy woman!" sighed Mr. Fleming. "Of making many books there is no end." And he looked at the pile of books and MSS. he had just laid on the table.

"O, father! have you any stories to read to me to-night?" asked Marjorie.

"I'll see by and by. I noticed one that I thought looked as if you would like it. It's called 'The Story of the Northern Lights.' But now I'm going to work till our half-hour comes, and then I'll give myself a rest—and you a reading."

"Well, then, father dear, I think I'll put my sewing away, and do my lessons for to-morrow. When you are ready to read I can work while I listen."

Mr. Fleming smiled a little, but said nothing. The flannel was folded up with a rather suspicious alacrity, grammars and exercises were brought out, and perfect silence reigned, broken only by the turning of leaves or the scratching of pens; for Marjorie knew that when her father said he was going to work, he did not wish to be disturbed by any desultory remarks, and thus she had learned a lesson often difficult for women to learn—that there is "a time to keep silence."

"Is your exercise very difficult to-night, Marjorie?" asked Mr. Fleming, after a long interval, during which he had occasionally noticed long pauses of Marjorie's pen, with what seemed to be periods of deep abstraction in her task.

Marjorie colored deeply. "Oh! I haven't begun my exercise yet. This is my translation," she said.

"And do you find it so difficult to make out?"

"O, no! not difficult to translate; only I thought I would like to do it, you see it's poetry, and so"—

"You wanted to translate it into verse?" he continued.

"Yes; I've got the first verse done."

"Well, let me see how you're getting on."

He took the sheet of paper which Marjorie handed him with a mingling of pride and nervousness, and read aloud:

—“Know’st thou the land where the citron-trees grow,  
Through the dark leaves the bright oranges glow;  
A gentle breeze blows from the soft blue sky,  
The mild myrtle is there, and the laurel high;  
Say, dost thou know it?

There, oh there—

Let me go with thee, Oh, my beloved, there.”

“Well, it’s not a bad translation for a little girl to make, Pet Marjorie,” he said, kissing the flushed cheek. “But you know ‘there’s a time for everything.’ Your work just now is to learn German, not to play at translating it—half by guess. You should keep such things for your playtime—not waste your lesson time on them. I don’t in the least object to your trying what you can do in this way at proper times and seasons, but you know I don’t want you to get into a desultory way of working. It is a besetting sin of temperaments like yours—and mine,” he added with a sigh.

“Yours, father?” said Marjorie, in astonishment.

“Yes, dear; it has been very much in my way, and I want you to get the mastery of it earlier in life than I did. And it is what makes half our women so superficial.”

Marjorie did not clearly understand what this word “superficial” meant; but she knew it had a good deal of connection with grammatical accuracy and mistakes in her sums and exercises.

“Well, father dear,” she said resolutely, “I’ll try not to be ‘superficial’ and ‘desultory.’ And so I’ll just write it out in prose, and do my exercises.”

“Yes, only try to finish your poetical one another time, since you have begun it. Though you are rather young yet to try to translate Goethe. But I don’t wonder that Mignon’s song attracted you.”

The exercises were finished and put away, and the bundle of flannel ostentatiously taken out, before Mr. Fleming at last pushed away his papers, with a wearier look than was often to be seen on his expressive face.

“There! I won’t work any more to-night,” he said. “I don’t feel up to it. That cold damp air seems in my throat still—and those wretched places—I can’t call them homes”—

“But the angel?” asked Marjorie expectantly, settling herself on her favorite low chair, close to her father, with her work on her lap.

“Oh! the angel? well, perhaps most people wouldn’t have seen the angel, as I did. They might only have seen a pale young woman, in a rather worn gray gown, soothing a cross baby and two or three restless children, while the poor sick mother,

to whom she was acting as sick nurse, was trying to get some rest and sleep. There wasn't any golden hair, and I didn't see any wings, so my angel wouldn't have made much show in a picture. And she does coarse, plain sewing for a living—so she would hardly do for a poem either. Yes, Hood could put her into one. But if ever I saw the face of an angel on any mortal creature—and I have seen it before," he said reverently, with a momentary pause, which Marjorie understood—"it was there, so calm, so sweet, so pure, so happy—in such contrast to the wretched surroundings. It put me in mind of words I learned long ago"—

“‘The light shineth in darkness.’”

“Is the angel very poor, then?” asked Marjorie.

“Poor? Yes, I suppose most people would call her poor. To me she seemed rich in things no gold could buy—the ‘peace that passeth understanding,’ the love that ‘seeketh not her own,’ the ‘faith that worketh by love.’”

“Was she taking care of the poor woman who was ill, then?” asked Marjorie.

“Yes. She earns her living by making coarse garments for a mere pittance. But she was giving up her time, and her money too, I suspect, to acting as an angel of mercy to this poor suffering woman and her family. O, Marjorie! how much more real heroines there often are in the poorest, humblest life, than any of your love-lorn heroines of romance. Some one says so truly:

“‘Few save the poor feel for the poor;  
They little know how hard  
It is to be of needful food  
And needful rest debarred.’”

Marjorie's eyes were wet with tears as the picture rose before her mind. Presently she said softly, putting her hand in her father's: “I wish I could send the angel something, father dear. Couldn't I put my gold half-eagle into an envelope, and you could address it to her, and she would never know where it came from?”

“But you were saving it up for”—

“Oh! never mind, papa dear. I'd so much rather give it to her.”

“I'm afraid it's one of your romantic fancies, Pet Marjorie,” he replied, smiling down at her. “You must think it well over. It is best not to follow an impulse too hastily, lest you have to repent at leisure. Wait a little, and count the cost, and then, if you still wish it, you shall put it up and address it yourself.”

“And we'll write inside the envelope, ‘The light shineth in darkness.’ Won't that be nice?”



Mr. Fleming smiled as he bent down to kiss his little girl's eager face. He thought it was like what her mother would have done, and the thought brought a suspicious moisture to his eye.

"But my angel won't have the least idea of your meaning in making the quotation," he said. "She hasn't the least idea that she is doing anything angelic. She will think that it is the kindness of an unknown friend that is the 'light shining in darkness.'!" And then he commented inwardly: "Why don't such kindnesses oftener occur to people who could do them so easily?"

"I don't know that I should have thought of those words myself just then, if I had not been reading this little story before I went out. It is by a young author, I think, as I don't know the name at all, and it sounds like a young writer. And it bears the motto: '*Lux Lucet in Tenebris.*' You know enough Latin to translate that, don't you?"

"Why, it's on your little match-box, father dear. I learned it there long ago."

"Well, now for the story," he said, as he took up the manuscript.

### THE STORY OF THE NORTHERN LIGHTS.

The great King of Light sat in his palace, radiant with an intensity intolerable to any mortal eye. About him were gathered the various Light spirits who were to proceed on their life-giving mission, each one to her allotted task. There were the rich, warm sunbeams, who were to proceed in ordered files of myriads, each at her post, making the wintry air soft and balmy, sending the quickened sap through the budding boughs, waking the tiny blossoms from their winter sleep, drawing up the young blades of grain, swelling the ears day by day till they reached autumn ripeness, molding and coloring flowers and fruit, to gladden man's heart, and make earth seem for the time a paradise. To them was given the glad task of sparkling in the crystal drops of dew, gleaming on the shining green leaves, sending showers of golden arrows into the shady recesses of the solemn pines, and glowing in the rich hues of dawn and sunset.

Next in beauty and brightness came the spirits of the silvery moonbeams, and they too received their appointed task. To them it was given to replace the departed glory of the sunbeams, by a softer and more restful luster, spreading a solemn and ethereal beauty over woodland and lea—shedding a broad, quivering stream of silver across the restless waves, guiding the navigator to his desired haven, and the belated traveler to home and rest. They too went to discharge their mission in ordered

ranks, and made for the night a second glory, as beautiful, though not as bright, as the glory of the day.

At last there was left only one spirit who had not received her charge. She was the most subtle and ethereal of all the Light spirits, and unlike those of the sunbeams and moonbeams, her immediate parentage was veiled in mystery. Her light was not golden, like that of the sunbeams, nor silvery like that of the moonlight spirits, but of a pure, white, intense radiance, so pure that even its intensity was scarcely dazzling, but only luminous. But she was a shy and sensitive spirit, fond of sheltering herself in obscurity, and becoming invisible. She stood in the background, nearly hidden by a dark cloudy veil, till all the rest had received their commission, and departed to fulfill it. Then the king called her and said:

“For thee, too, my child, there is a mission, and the most precious mission of all. Thou art to be a light to shine in the darkness.”

Then he told her that she was to be sent to a remote region, dark and cold, where, for weeks and months the sun shines not, and where stern winter’s reign is almost unchecked. And there she was to carry her pure white radiance, to gleam brightly out from the blackness of the wintry sky, to lighten with her soft brilliancy the long, dark, moonless nights, to show to the traveler in his sledge the way over the trackless snow, and cheer the icy desolation with the hope of returning sunshine and warmth which should at last disperse the darkness, and cheer the dreary waste with light and life.

The timid spirit trembled at the task before her, and begged that she might have an easier, less solitary mission. But the king said:

“For thee, my purest and strongest child, I have reserved this noblest task—to go where light is most needed. Fear not, but depend on me for the power to fulfill thy mission. When thou feelest thyself weakest and most afraid, I will strengthen thee and make thee brightest. Not in thyself shall be thy light, but in constant communication with me.”

The spirit bowed her head and departed to the cold and dreary northern regions, where for months the sun never rises. And there she spread out her luminous banners and streamers of light, till the blackness of the winter night seemed to throb with pulsations of quivering brightness, seen amidst the darkness and the brighter for the contrast with it. And when the loneliness, and the power of the surrounding darkness which she could not entirely overcome threatened to overpower her, and her light

trembled and grew faint, the promised power from the great king came to her aid. In the hour of weakness came her strength, and at such times her brilliancy fairly flashed and coruscated across the sky; and golden and rosy tints, that seemed borrowed from the dawn itself, flushed through the pure, pearly radiance of her unwearied light. And grateful men, watching the glory and beauty of this "light shining in darkness" have called her the *Aurora Borealis*—the rosy-fingered dawn of the Northern sky.

As Mr. Fleming laid down the paper, he looked at Marjorie, who sat lost in thought, her work lying neglected in her lap. "Well, Marjorie," he said, "what do you think of the story?"

"It's very pretty," she replied. "But I don't think I quite understand it. I suppose it's a parable."

"Yes; it has a very deep meaning, to my mind; but I could scarcely expect you to see all its meaning yet; or until you have thought and felt a great deal more than you have had time to do yet."

"You said it made you think of the angel you saw to-day; or that she made you think of it, as she did of the 'light that shineth in darkness.'"

"Yes; it's a type of the Light that is always at present 'shining in darkness'; of the light as it shines in our own hearts amid so much of surrounding darkness. It made me think of brave Gordon, shut up there in Khartoum, like a man holding up a solitary torch in that great gloomy desert; and of many a missionary light-bearer, at home and abroad, each carrying a lonely ray of light into the darkness about him; and, most of all, of Him who is still the 'Light that shineth in darkness,' and the darkness, even yet, comprehendeth it not. You don't know yet half of what that means, Pet Marjorie, but you'll know more of it by and by—especially if you should be a light-bearer yourself."

Marjorie looked very grave. "I'm afraid, father dear, I would rather be one of the sunbeams. It must be so much nicer to shine where everything else is warm and bright and sunny too."

"Yes, ever so much 'nicer,'"

he replied with a smile; "and there are a great many good people of your way of thinking. But it is hardly so useful or so noble, or so Christlike as it is to shine in the darkness, even though you may be uncomprehended or misunderstood. But now it is getting late, and I don't intend to sit up much longer myself to-night, for I still feel that chill hanging about me. So we'll read about that Light shining in darkness, and then say good-night."

Mr. Fleming usually read aloud a few verses from the Bible before Marjorie and

he parted for the night. This evening he read the first half of the first chapter of St John's Gospel. Marjorie had often read it before, and knew it almost by heart. But she had never before attached any definite meaning to the words: "The Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not." But to-night the image of the bright Aurora, shining amidst the darkness which still remained darkness, opposed and uncomprehending, seemed to throw a new light on the old familiar words. When she fell asleep, the same vision seemed to be floating through her brain. She dreamed that she was walking alone over a wide trackless waste of ice and snow, through a dark moonless night, not knowing whither she was going, or how to choose her path, when suddenly a shaft of pure white light shot up amidst the darkness. It grew and grew, until it seemed to wear the semblance of a great shining angel beckoning her onward. And presently, more lights appeared in the sky, till all the night about her seemed to be filled with an angelic host, and she heard sweet strains of music, such as she had often heard in church, bearing to her ear the old familiar words of the Christmas song: "Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace and goodwill to men."

## CHAPTER II.

### SOME DARK DAYS.

That was the last talk that Marjorie and her father had for a good while. The chill that Mr. Fleming had taken that evening produced serious results. He felt so ill next morning that the doctor had to be summoned, and, in spite of all he could do, the attack developed into inflammation of the lungs, accompanied by a touch of bronchitis, to which he was constitutionally liable. For days he had to be kept perfectly quiet, while the doctor came every few hours and watched his patient's progress with great anxiety. Marjorie was distressed and anxious, though she scarcely realized the danger, being accustomed to her father's severe colds and attacks of bronchitis. By his express desire she went to school as usual and tried to study her lessons, though not by any means with her usual success. But when she hurried home from school, with an anxious heart, eager to know how her father felt now, and how Rebecca thought he was getting on, she was much more inclined to hover about the sick room, attempting the superfluous task of assisting the capable and experienced Rebecca in attending to the patient's comfort, than to set to work at the lessons which had never seemed so dry and difficult before. But she knew it worried her father when she neglected her studies, and the doctor had said that much depended on keeping him perfectly quiet, so Marjorie toiled away over French verbs and German adjectives and still more tiresome sums, with a very half-hearted attention, glad when they were done and she was free to sit by her father, or carry him the nourishment that Rebecca prepared. The short November days had never seemed so dreary, and the solitary meals seemed so uninviting that, but for Rebecca's energetic remonstrances, Marjorie would have half-starved herself.

"It's just too ridicklous," that sensible handmaid would declare, "for you to be frettin' yourself sick, when you ought to be savin' up yourself to cheer up the master; an' then, when he's gettin' well, you'll be taken down sick next, worryin' him to death almost!"

This consideration never failed to have its effect on Marjorie, when nothing else would make her feel like swallowing the food that seemed as if it would choke her.

But at last the doctor announced that he thought his patient out of danger, and that, with care, he might soon be restored to his usual state of health. Marjorie's relief and delight were so great, and the reaction to overflowing spirits so strong, that

Rebecca had to be constantly warning her not to excite or fatigue her father by too frequent expressions of her satisfaction at his slowly returning strength.

One cold, bleak November afternoon, two or three days after the turning-point, she was walking home from school with her friend Nettie Lane. Marjorie was in her brightest mood, as she talked of her father's recent improvement. During the time when she had been feeling oppressed by anxiety, she had shyly avoided speaking of his illness, as far as it was possible for her to do so; had answered inquiries as briefly as possible, and had even avoided Nettie herself, from an instinctive dread of Nettie's too ready and often thoughtless tongue. But now, with a natural desire for sympathy, she talked freely and hopefully of her father's daily increasing improvement.

But Nettie was not so sympathetic as might have been expected. At home she had heard it confidently predicted that Mr. Fleming "would not get over it," and people are often unwilling to admit their judgments to be wrong, even in such matters. So Nettie looked rather important, and remarked that her mother had said that appearances were often deceitful, and, any way, Mr. Fleming was in a very "critical condition."

"And I guess 'critical' means something pretty bad," added Nettie, "for that was what the doctor said before our baby died."

"But Dr. Stone says he thinks papa will soon be all right again," said Marjorie, keenly hurt by Nettie's blunt and unfeeling words.

"O, well! you never can tell what doctors mean by that," she added sententiously. "Mother thinks, any way, you ought to realize the danger more; for she says it would be dreadful if he were taken away while he is so unprepared."

"My father—unprepared!" exclaimed Marjorie, too much shocked to say more.

"Yes," replied Nettie decidedly; "every one's unprepared if they're not converted, you know; and mother says she's sure he's never been converted."

"I don't think your mother knows anything about it, then," said Marjorie, indignantly.

"Marjorie Fleming! aren't you ashamed? My mother knows all about such things. She says she can always tell when a person's converted," exclaimed Nettie, aggrieved in her turn.

"Well, she doesn't know much about my father; and I don't think you ought to say such things to me," said Marjorie, trying hard to repress the tears that she would not on any account have let Nettie see.

"Yes, I ought," persisted Nettie, "because you ought to pray for him every day—that he mightn't die till he was converted, for you know that would be dreadful!"

"Nettie Lane, I just wish you would mind your own business!" almost sobbed out Marjorie, who could bear no more; and without another word she turned the corner quickly, and almost ran till she was safe within her own door. And then, when she had got into her own little room, she gave way to the fit of grieved and indignant crying that she could no longer keep down.

It was intensely wounding both to her pride and to her affection, to hear Nettie talk in such a flippant, unfeeling fashion, of the father she so passionately loved and revered. And to be told that she ought to pray for her father's recovery—when she had been praying so earnestly morning, noon and night that he might be restored to health! And under all the rest lay an uneasy misgiving lest there might be some truth in what Mrs. Lane had said. She knew how Mrs. Lane was looked up to as an "eminent Christian"—a leader in all good works; and if she said such a thing, she must think it; and how could Marjorie tell what this mysterious "being converted" meant? And she knew that her father was not a very regular attendant at church, and that in some other respects he was not just like some of the people that Nettie, on her mother's authority, called "real Christians." But then she remembered what he had said about many people being "half-heathens," and how he had spoken to her about the "light that shineth in darkness." She felt perplexed and bewildered; and it was a great comfort to her when Dr. Stone's neat little equipage drove up to the door, and the brisk, cheery little doctor brightened her up by his hopeful, encouraging words about her dear father.

"I've told him he can leave his room and take tea with you to-night," he said. "A little change will be good for him now; only take care to have a good fire; and keep the temperature of the room very even," was his parting injunction.

How good it was to see her father once more in his own easy-chair by the fire, and to see that, though still weak and pale, he looked so much like himself, and smiled so cheerfully at all the little preparations for his comfort, while he also expressed his satisfaction in his own way.

"Why, Marjorie," he said, "you and Rebecca will spoil me altogether, if you coddle me up like this," and he bent over to kiss his excited child, thinking how much she looked like her mother just then. She had forgotten, for the time, all about the disquietude of the afternoon; but by and by it came back to her when tea was over and she sat down by her father, who seemed disinclined to try to read yet. It was Friday evening, so that she did not need to learn her lessons till next day.

"Well, Marjorie, what subject are you considering so deeply?" asked Mr. Fleming, watching her preoccupied and absent air as she gazed into the fire and stroked Robin's shaggy locks. Marjorie had often wondered at her father's power

of divining her "moods and tenses," as he used to call them, and she was not sorry to have an opportunity of unburdening her mind a little to the only person who, she felt, could give her any light on the subject. So she looked up, and asked shyly: "Papa—what does it mean, exactly—to 'be converted'?"

"To be turned round from the wrong to the right," he replied.

"Is that all?" she asked in surprise. "I thought it meant—to have a new heart. Were you ever converted, father?" she added, finding no way of getting at what she wanted, except the direct question.

"What has Nettie Lane been saying to you, dear?" Mr. Fleming asked, with one of his scrutinizing looks and a slight smile.

"Why, father, how could you know?" she asked in startled surprise.

"I can put things together," he said quietly. "I know Mrs. Lane's ideas pretty well, and I can guess her opinion of me. She is one of the Christians who forget that their Master has said, 'Judge not,' and who doesn't understand any one's being religious if it isn't in their own way. She is a good woman, and honestly tries to do good, but, like many other good people, she is apt to make mistakes when she tries to judge others."

"I knew you were religious, father; but I don't understand about being converted."

"Well, my dear child, I don't want you to mistake me, and I think the best way to answer your question will be to tell you something of my own experience and my own mistakes. It may save you from some, and I should like to tell you more about myself than I have ever done yet. I have been very ill, you know, dear, and in all these quiet hours and days that I have been laid aside—not knowing whether I should ever come back to my old life again—I have been thinking a good deal about my own past, and of things I have been led to see, that once I did not see."

Marjorie's eyes had filled with tears as her father referred, in his still weak voice, to that terrible possibility, and then, with quick anxiety, she asked if it would not tire him too much. And Rebecca came in to enforce the necessity of Mr. Fleming saving his strength, and not wearing himself out with too much talking yet, a truth which the fatigue he already felt obliged him to admit. So what he wanted to tell Marjorie was postponed, and eager as she was to hear it, she cheerfully settled down to read to him the newly arrived papers, and some things that specially interested him in the last unopened number of the periodical with which he was connected.

The next evening an old friend from the city office came in to see him, and he and Dr. Stone had a little private talk with Mr. Fleming while Marjorie finished her lessons, for once, in her own room. Sunday was a lovely day for November—



almost spring-like in its mildness—and Mr. Fleming was downstairs to give Marjorie a pleasant surprise when she came home from church. This unexpected pleasure made her forget what she had been going to tell him, until her return from Sunday-school, as the early dusk was closing in.

“O, father! we needn’t have the lights in yet?” she asked eagerly, for the warm glow of the firelight was so inviting, and Marjorie liked nothing better than a twilight talk with her father on Sunday evening.

“No, dear; I have read as much as I care to read, just now, and I would rather go on with the talk we began the other evening.”

Marjorie gladly settled herself down in her low chair by his side, and Robin stretched himself contentedly at their feet. Then, with a sudden recollection, she exclaimed:

“O, papa! what do you think was the text this morning? It was a stranger that preached, and I don’t know his name, but his text was: ‘The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not.’ Wasn’t it odd?”

“Not very,” replied her father. “You would never have noticed the text specially if it hadn’t been for our talk about it. Well, can you tell me any of the sermon?”

“He said, for one thing, that Christ lighted every man that came into the world, and that meant, that he gave them light enough to walk by, if they would take it. And then he said just what you said that evening, about our hearts being so full of darkness that the light often shone in the midst of it without being able to drive it away; and that even good people often had a great deal more darkness in their hearts than they knew.”

Marjorie had been accustomed to have to bring home reports of the sermons she heard when her father was not with her, and partly in this way she had acquired the habit of listening with attention, and carrying away leading thoughts in her mind.

“Yes,” said Mr. Fleming, “that is only too true. ‘Lighten our darkness’ is perhaps the prayer we all need most. But then if we are only sincere in trying to walk in the light we have, we shall have more light. It has always seemed inexpressibly touching to me that those words, ‘more light,’ should have been the last on the great Goethe’s dying lips. With all the light his splendid intellect and vast knowledge could give him, ‘more light’ was, he felt, what he needed most. It seems sad, too, that he could not, while he lived, have seen the true ‘Light of the World.’ But pride and selfishness are terribly blinding powers.”

“Well, father,” said Marjorie, much less interested in Goethe than in himself, “you said you were going to tell me about yourself.”

“Yes, darling, and so I will. Well, I was a long time in getting to see that true

Light, and that gives me more patience with others. You know that I was born and brought up in Scotland, though I left it as soon as I had finished my university course. My parents were good people, but very strict in their ideas—my father especially so—and very sure that what they had been taught to believe was the exact truth, and everything different must be wrong. From the people about me I got the idea that certain beliefs were a necessary part of Christianity, which I now believe people got out of the darkness of their own hearts, and not out of the Bible—beliefs which are certainly quite inconsistent with the blessed truth that ‘God is Love,’ and which, I think, taught them to be hard and unloving and unforgiving, as they fancied God was. I was too much of a boy—too lazy and careless about such things—to study the Bible for myself, and see what Christ and his apostles really taught. And so, first I grew to dread and dislike the very name of God, and everything that reminded me of One whom I never thought of loving but only of fearing. And then as I grew older, and met with other young men, and read more, I was very easily persuaded that religion was all a superstition—because some things I had been taught could not be true—and that it was impossible, even if there was a God, that we could ever understand him, or could even know whether he existed or not.”

“That’s what you call an Agnostic, isn’t it, papa? Mrs. Lane thinks they are dreadful people, but they can’t be, if you were ever one,” said Marjorie, impulsively.

“They are very much to be pitied, at any rate,” he said, “for wandering in darkness when there is light. And often it is not so much their fault as that of the Christians who pervert or misrepresent Christianity. I was unfortunate, too, in some friends of whom, at one time, I saw a good deal—people who were very earnest and devoted Christians, but seemed to care for nothing in life that was not distinctly religious. Art, science, even philanthropic reforms, they seemed to think unworthy of a Christian’s attention. There was for them only one interest—that which they call ‘salvation,’ and they seemed to care little even for other people, unless they thought as they did. Now I thought, and truly enough, that if there was a God, he was the God of nature as well as of religion, and that he must have created all man’s faculties and intended him to use them; and so the narrowness of these really good people only confirmed me in my idea that religion is only a superstition. And I took these stunted, dwarfed specimens—stunted and dwarfed by the perversity and narrowness of human nature—for the natural fruits of the tree of Christianity, and thought that I was thus judging the tree by its fruits.

“Well, as I said, I came to America just after my university course, when your Uncle Ramsay married my eldest sister, and came out to settle in Montreal. I had very exalted ideas on the subject of human freedom, and I thought that republican

institutions and the growth of humanity would right every evil under the sun. But I soon found that even these were by no means perfect; that abuses and selfish oppression and many other evils seemed to spring up, like weeds from the soil. As a young writer, trying to make my way, I had a hard time of it, and many experiences that gradually led me into very pessimistic, that is hopeless, views of humanity, and I was feeling very, very miserable and dejected, when—I met your dear mother.”

Marjorie’s eyes followed the direction of her father’s—to the sweet face in the picture. Both were silent for a few moments.

Then Mr. Fleming continued: “To me, in my depressed state of mind, she seemed a very angel of consolation. And when I found that she loved me, and was willing to share my not very brilliant prospects, life seemed to blossom anew for me. It seemed as if now I had found the true light of life, and for a time it was all I wanted.

“But it was not all she wanted. I had purposely avoided saying anything to her about the faith in which I knew she implicitly believed. I went to church—though not very regularly—and she knew I was serious and earnest in my ideas and in my life; that I worked with all my heart for what seemed to me for the good of man, and I think that even while she had a misgiving that her faith was not mine, she still hoped that it was, and when she could no longer even hope this, she still hoped that it yet would be.”

Marjorie sat listening with intense interest. She had never heard much of her dead mother except from her Aunt Millie, and this opening of her father’s heart and life to her, was a more precious gift than any other he could have bestowed on her. Mr. Fleming spoke slowly and thoughtfully—almost as if thinking aloud—now and then pausing, as if the time he was speaking about was present still.

“As our happy married life went on,” he continued, “and your mother’s nature matured and deepened, her true, spiritual faith grew deeper and stronger also. She did what I had never done—studied the Bible daily and thoughtfully, with a loving and childlike heart, and remember, Marjorie darling, it is only love that ‘comprehendeth love.’ Without this, it is no wonder so many critics should miss the very heart and core of revelation. But as her love and faith grew stronger, she grew more sensitive to my lack of sympathy with either, and I well know it was a great and growing sorrow to her. I always put the subject aside as gently as I could when it came up, for by that time my will was set against believing; but I felt the wistful pain in her face in spite of myself. Then our first baby died, and I knew that in that sorrow her one consolation was that which I could not and would not share; and this seemed to make a separation between us, just when sorrow should have drawn us

closest. She was never very strong, and I think this double sorrow undermined her health so much that, shortly after your birth I lost her, as I then thought, forever!”

Marjorie’s tears were flowing now. Her father took her hand in his, while he gently stroked her hair with the other; and, after a short pause, he went on.

“What I went through at that time, Marjorie, I could never tell in words. It was the blackness of darkness. I knew then what it was to be ‘without God and without hope in the world.’ I would have longed for death, but even that gave me no hope of reunion with her who was my life—and what did I know of a ‘beyond’? And healthy human nature shrinks from a vacuum! So I lived on, trying to forget my sorrow in my work. Your Aunt Millie came to live with me, and did all she could to cheer me. She was passionately fond of Tennyson’s ‘In Memoriam,’ and sometimes in the evenings, when I sat too tired and sad to talk or read, she would read to me bits of that beautiful poem, which I had never cared to do more than glance at before. The beauty and music of the poetry attracted me at first, and by degrees some of its teaching found its way into my heart. I began to feel that human knowledge is not all knowledge, and that there were other ways of getting at truth than by our senses and our short-sighted human reasoning. And so to make a long story short, I began to stretch out my hands through the darkness, to the Light that can shine even in darkness, and that, as I found, shone even for me. Your Uncle Ramsay too helped me by telling me that if I wanted to get more light, I must honestly seek to follow the light I had, and that Christ had said, ‘If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine.’ I began to study Christ’s life and words, and was amazed to find there many things that I had never seen before—often as I had heard and read the words—things that transcended my own highest ideal of moral purity, and that, alas, far transcended my power of acting up to them. But I felt that in the very desire to follow Christ came the power of following. There were many things that I did not see for a long time—some that I cannot say I see clearly even yet; but this I have long been sure of: that no light has ever come to this world’s darkness to compare with the divine glory seen in Jesus Christ, and that in the loving following of him, is the life and light of men! I could say for myself, from the heart, what was said by one who was also a long and anxious seeker for truth, whose life I read some years ago. ‘Fully assured that when I am most a Christian, I am the best man, I am content to adhere to that as my guide in the absence of better light, and wait till God shall afford me more.’ And as time has gone on, God has given me more light, so that some of the very things that once were difficulties to me, are now additional proofs of the divine origin of a religion which proud human nature could never, never have originated.”

The room was very still. The fire had burned low as the absorbing talk had gone on; only the ticking of the clock and the distant sound of Rebecca's preparations for tea broke the silence. Mr. Fleming's voice had grown tired and weak, but presently he roused himself to say a few words more.

"I have told you all this, my child, because in this age of conflicting opinions few thoughtful minds can entirely escape the infection of prevailing doubt. And as changes are always liable to come, and some may soon come to our life together, I think it may be helpful to you hereafter to know what has been your father's experience, and what is his deliberate verdict after so many years of thought and of trial of the illusions of life without the true Light. I might not be able to satisfy Mrs. Lane yet on a cross-examination, and as it does not come natural to me to express myself in her particular phraseology, I never try to do so. But

‘God fulfils himself in many ways;’

and I am more and more satisfied that Christ's law of love is the law of light; and that in those two words, loving and following, lies the essence of that which is variously called ‘conversion,’ or a ‘new heart’ or practical Christianity. ‘Rise up and follow me,’ was Christ's summons to those who would be his disciples, and then ‘If ye love me, keep my commandments,’ and ‘This is my commandment, that ye love one another!’ And now, darling, ring for lights and tea; for I have talked rather too much and I feel a little faint.”

Mr. Fleming talked no more that evening, but Marjorie never forgot that conversation, or rather her father's earnest words, which lingered in her mind for months and years to come. It made that mysterious something called “conversion” so much clearer and simpler than it had ever seemed before. Just to “follow” Christ; to try to do his will in loving obedience; she could try to do that, and she would. And when she read in her Testament that evening about the man sick of palsy whom Christ told to “take up his bed and walk,” it flashed upon her that perhaps it was just in trying to obey Christ that he received the power to do it. And the light that had shone for her dear father and mother would, she was sure, shine for her also.

But what could be the “change” her father had hinted at, as if something unknown to her were impending? Her father, she was sure, was growing decidedly better. The doctor no longer came to see him daily, and when he did, he spoke so cheerfully, that Marjorie felt quite reassured. Nettie Lane and the other girls had often told her that she might have a step-mother some day—an idea which seemed to her as impossible as it was painful. But she felt sure that her father could not have spoken of her mother as he had done, if he had had the slightest thought of such a

thing, and she dismissed it from her mind as out of the question. Whatever the impending change might be, it was not that. And, as often happens, what it really was, was something which would in all probability have never occurred, even to her dreaming imagination.

## CHAPTER III.

### A NEW DEPARTURE.

A few days after that Marjorie brought in her father's letters to the sitting-room, where he had begun to write again, though he was not as yet allowed to leave the house. One of the letters bore a Canadian postage stamp, and the postmark of Montreal, and was addressed in the well-known flowing handwriting of her aunt, Mrs. Ramsay. Another was addressed in her Aunt Millie's familiar hand, and Marjorie carried them in with eager expectation, for such letters were generally common property. But instead of reading them to her at once, as he usually did, Mr. Fleming merely opened them eagerly, and after a hasty glance over their contents, resumed his writing.

"Well, father dear," said Marjorie, in a disappointed tone, "aren't you going to tell me what Aunt Millie says? May I read her letter?"

"Not just now, dear," he replied, and Marjorie noticed that his hand was trembling a little; "you shall read both letters in the evening, when I have time to talk to you about them. But I can't do that just now."

Marjorie went off to school, feeling a little hurt, and wondering why her father couldn't at least have let her read her dear Aunt Millie's letter, when he knew how eager she always was to hear from her. However, she knew her father always had a good reason for anything that seemed strange to her, so she trusted him now. But the day seemed a long one, and after school she made haste to learn her lessons before tea, so that after tea she might be ready as soon as her father was at leisure.

He did not write or study in the evenings yet, and when Marjorie sat down beside him, and told him that her lessons were over, he seemed quite ready for their talk.

"I have a great deal to talk to you about, my child," he said, throwing his arm lovingly about her, "and the sooner I begin the better—now, I didn't want you to read those letters this morning, because I wanted to tell you first what they were about, and I didn't feel ready to do it then. Marjorie darling, your Aunt Mary most kindly invites you to come and spend the winter with her in Montreal."

"But, father dear, I couldn't go away and leave you," exclaimed Marjorie in bewilderment.

"My dear child, I am afraid that I must go and leave you—for a while," he said

sadly. "No, don't be frightened, dear; the doctor thinks I am getting on nicely; but I have had a severe shake, and he thinks it would not be prudent for me to risk staying here through the winter. He strongly recommends me to go South, and your Aunt Millie is most anxious that I should go to her, for part of the winter, at any rate. Mr. Fulton and I have been talking the matter over, and he too endorses the doctor's advice. I can still carry on some of my work in connection with the office, even there. And as I shall probably take a voyage among the West India Islands, I can write some articles that will be of use both to the office and to myself. I should have liked very much to take you with me, dear; but there are several reasons against that, besides the additional expense. It would be a serious interruption to your studies just now, and you would find it very hard to settle down after it. Then your Aunt Mary has always been anxious to see more of you, and that you should get to know your cousins, and I know it will be much the best thing for you to be under her care for a while. It will be the next thing to having your own mother, dear."

Marjorie had listened without a word, so far too much stunned by all these unexpected announcements to say a word. She could scarcely realize at first, all that such a plan involved. But as it gradually dawned upon her that a long separation from her father was really inevitable, her head sank down on his shoulder and a burst of tears came to her relief.

"Don't suppose it isn't hard for me, too, darling," said Mr. Fleming, tenderly stroking her hair. "But I am older than you, and have had more experience in submitting to what must be; and then a few months don't seem so long to me to look forward, as when I was your age. But I am quite sure you'll have a very happy winter and that you'll soon learn to love your aunt and cousins, and my dear old friend Ramsay."

And then he went on to tell her stories of things that had happened when they were at college together, showing his friend's goodness and kindness of heart, and also his love of fun, and before long Marjorie had almost forgotten her first broken-hearted feeling, and was smiling over her father's narrative of his own bewilderment when he first woke up to the fact that Ramsay actually preferred his sister Mary's society to his own!

"I can tell you, Marjorie," he said, "it was one of the severest snubs I ever got in my life, and how old Ramsay did enjoy it; and Mary, too, after she got rid of her first shyness."

Mr. Fleming and Marjorie talked a long time over all the arrangements that had to be considered. He had a good opportunity for letting his house furnished for a year, and as he and Marjorie always spent part of the summer in some quiet country



quarters, he thought it best to avail himself of the chance. Rebecca would remain in the house to look after things, and could get on very well with the old gentleman and his wife who were to take the house. And Mr. Fulton had a friend who was going to Montreal, and who could be Marjorie's escort, so that her aunt need not take the long journey, as she had offered to do, in order to take Marjorie North.

"But Robin, father!" said Marjorie, suddenly looking down at the shaggy little terrier. "We can't leave poor Robin in the house. He would break his heart."

"Oh! that reminds me that you haven't read your Aunt Mary's letter yet. I told her about Robin, and how unwilling I knew you would be to leave him behind—as she would have been herself indeed. And she says: 'By all means let Marjorie bring "Robin Adair." He will find a warm welcome from all the family, including our big, good-natured Nero, who will patronize him with the greatest satisfaction.' Now read the letter for yourself, and see if you don't think you will love your Aunt Mary just as much as your Aunt Millie, when you come to know her as well."

So Marjorie sat down to read her aunt's letter in which, after expressing the pleasure with which she would receive her niece, she went on to predict how much Marjorie would enjoy the novel experience of a Canadian winter, the sleighing, tobogganing, snow-shoeing, and last, not least, the wonderful sights of the winter carnival. "The children are wild about outdoor sports," she said, "and I am sure the exercise and fun will be very good for Marjorie, for when I saw her I thought that, like yourself, she read and studied too much, and lived too dreamy and solitary a life."

Mrs. Ramsay had paid her brother a short visit, on the occasion of their youngest sister's marriage, and Marjorie could not but be attracted by her motherly manner and genuine kindness. She was her father's "common-sense sister," as he used to call her, and he had frequently told her how her happy tranquillity of disposition had often been a true solace in his youthful troubles. He knew that the influence of her calm, bright Christianity and active, practical life would be very good for his impulsive and rather dreamy Marjorie, and this more than half reconciled him to the parting which he dreaded almost as much as she did. And it was pleasant, also, to think that his friend Ramsay should know and love his little girl, of whom he was secretly very proud, and whom he knew his old classmate would appreciate.

The next few days were very busy ones. Dr. Stone was anxious to get his patient off just as soon as possible, and there were many preparations to be made. Rebecca, who at first almost cried her eyes out at losing "the master and Miss Marjorie, not to mention poor little Robin," yet was glad to stay by the old house, was almost buried in the boxes she was packing, and the garments she was sorting

and putting to rights. Marjorie and she made a careful inventory of the contents of the house, a task which made Marjorie feel herself of much use, as she carefully wrote down her list in a neat memorandum book. Mr. Fleming went into the city when the weather was fine enough, and made his arrangements at the office and elsewhere. One of his pleasantest errands was to leave Marjorie's half-eagle—neatly put up as it had been planned—in the hands of the "angel" he had met on that November day, when his illness had begun. She looked ill, herself, and Mr. Fleming felt sure that the little gift of money would be a real boon to her, if she would only use it in procuring comforts for herself. But he could not charge her to do this, for he merely performed the part of a messenger, only saying to her that he had been asked to hand her the package, and then at once coming away without waiting for questions.

Mr. Fleming's own papers had all to be arranged and put away, and very soon the house began to wear the strange and comfortless look characteristic of a transition period, and the disappearance of the things that most mark the individuality of the inhabitants.

At length, the last evening had come, and Rebecca with very red eyes, had carried away the tea-tray for the last time. The fire burning brightly, alone seemed unchanged, but the room otherwise looked very bare and formal. Even Robin seemed to feel the difference, and watched Marjorie and her father with a wistful expression, as if he wanted very much to know what could be the matter. All the preparations were made and the boxes packed, for both travelers were to start on the morrow, within an hour or two of each other. Marjorie sat down on her low chair by the fire with some sewing, glad to have something to do as an outlet for her restlessness. She was trying to finish—before leaving—one of the flannel garments she had undertaken to make for the Dorcas Society.

"You've been sadly interrupted in your good intentions, dear," said her father, smiling at her determination to finish her work at the last moment.

"Yes, papa. Oh! doesn't it seem a long time since that evening you read me the 'Northern Lights'!" she exclaimed. "But Rebecca says she'll do the rest, and it'll be all the same to the Dorcas. If I'd only known we were going away, I might have worked more when you were ill, but somehow I couldn't settle down then."

"No, dear; you have hardly learned that amount of self-control yet. But you are going to be a brave girl to-morrow, are you not? You won't make it harder to part with you?"

Marjorie shook her head, but her lips quivered, and her father hastened to less dangerous ground.

"I hope, my child, you will try to feel as if your cousins were brothers and sisters. I am sure they will want to be good to you."

"Yes, father, but I hope they don't hate Americans."

"Why, Marjorie, what put that into your head?"

"Well, you know, father," said Marjorie, "that little girl we met at the Glen House last summer? She came from Montreal, and her name was Ada West."

"A pretty, fair-haired little damsel, very vain and silly? Yes, I remember her; rather a spoilt child, I imagine," replied Mr. Fleming.

"Well, she always used to say she hated Americans, and their ways; and that she never wanted to have anything to do with them."

"Why! she seemed to have quite a fancy for you, notwithstanding."

"Oh! she insisted that I wasn't really an American—she called it 'Yankee.' But I told her I was a real American, and that my mother's great, great, great-grandfather came over in the *Mayflower*, and that my grandfather died fighting in the war, and that I was proud of being an American, and never wanted to be anything else."

"Well, dear, I want you to love your native country and believe in it. And you know I am a naturalized American and love your mother's country as much as my own Scotland. But where did we all come from in the first place?—your great, great, great-grandfather as well as your father? But there is no reason why the children of the same mother should hate each other, because they live on different sides of a river, or because some have been longer in America than others. I don't suppose Miss Ada knew what the *Mayflower* was."

"No, she said she didn't know, and didn't care."

"Yes, I thought so. These violent dislikes and prejudices are generally signs of thoughtless ignorance. And the rich, self-indulgent people one is apt to meet at such places are not the best people to take as specimens of any country. People often make this mistake about Americans. But your cousins are not like that, I know very well. Your Uncle Ramsay has too big and noble a heart to allow such prejudices in his family. How well I remember how he and I used to hurry down Princes Street in the mornings, to get the latest news of the American War, when we were Edinburgh students, and the battles he helped me to fight with the fellows who were so down on the North then; and the beautiful letter he wrote me when he heard that I was going to marry the daughter of a true, brave patriot who had fallen in that terrible yet heroic war—heroic on both sides, as every one can afford to admit now."

Marjorie's eyes glistened, for she had always been proud of this unknown soldier-grandfather; indeed she was, perhaps, privately guilty of a little ancestor worship.

“But remember, Marjorie, no one can truly love his country, who hates any other.”

Marjorie looked surprised, and inclined to question this strange proposition.

“I know some people call it loving their country, when they abuse and attack others,” continued Mr. Fleming, “but it is really only loving themselves. They love their country just because it is something that belongs to them, and when they lose their selfish interest in it, they soon show how deep is their love. You have read *Coriolanus*. Do you remember how when his pride and self-love were wounded, he turned against the country he had been so proud to serve—

“‘No more infected with my country’s love’—

and was only prevented by the entreaties of his wife and mother from destroying it? So Americans used to boast of their country; but when opposition of interest and opinion arose, they split into two parts, each for a time hating the other more than they could a foreign enemy. No, Marjorie! true love never hates, any more than heat can suddenly turn to cold. It must go on loving, though human love must grow less intense as it goes farther from home. And true patriotism, in seeking the real good of its country, must seek the good of all others, too. Even an old heathen poet could write the noble line:

“‘I am a man, and I hold nothing human as foreign to me.’

“And my country’s poet has sung, more sweetly still:

“‘Then let us pray that come it may,  
As come it will, for a’ that,  
That man to man, the world o’er,  
Shall brothers be an’ a’ that.’

That is true patriotism and true cosmopolitanism or, rather—for that is a very long word—true brotherhood.”

“Why, I never thought of that before,” said Marjorie, thoughtfully.

“No, dear, you could hardly be expected to have thought yet, of all the things we older folks have had time to think about. But don’t forget it, dear. It may save you from getting into silly and vulgar and unchristian disputes. And, Marjorie, one thing more let me say. The root of true brotherhood is, to know and love our Heavenly Father. If we do that, we can’t hate any of his children. One of the things that has taught me to know him, was my growing, deepening love for you! I came to feel that that love could only come from the source of all love, as of all life. Marjorie,

whatever you do, let no one make you believe anything but that God is Love; and, just because he is Love, seeking to save us from sin, our worst enemy, but always loving us with a tender, faithful, untiring love, infinitely more tender than any human love, which can only faintly reflect his.”

“Yes, father dear,” said Marjorie. “I’ll always remember that when I think of you.”

“And remember too, darling, that no part of your life should be lived apart from God. People divide life far too much into ‘religious’ and ‘secular’ things. But our life touches God at all points, and must do so save in wrong. In your lessons and daily interests, yes, even in your amusements, you come in contact with things that are God’s, and can live always in the sense of his presence, if you seek to do so. When you have not me to come to, take all your troubles and difficulties to your Heavenly Father. If you can’t do that, be sure there is something wrong, and go to him to set it right. This will save you from many mistakes and much unhappiness, and will show you that the true nobility and beauty of life lies in living it as seeing him who is invisible. I don’t want your path to him to be so long and thorny as mine has been. And remember too, that we know him best in the tenderness and truth—the ever present love of him who was ‘bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh’; our Elder Brother.

“You know those lines from my dear old Whittier, that I have read to you sometimes:

“‘That all our weakness, pain and doubt  
A great compassion clasps about.’

And these others, from his ‘Miriam,’ that I have learned to say from my own heart:

‘I‘We search the world for truth; we cull  
The good, the true, the beautiful,  
From graven stone and written scroll,  
From all old flowerfields of the soul;  
And, weary seekers of the best,  
We come back laden from our quest,  
To find that all the sages said  
Is in the Book our mothers read,  
And all our treasures of old thought  
In his harmonious fullness wrought  
Who gathers in one sheaf complete  
The scattered blades of God’s sown wheat,  
The common growth that maketh good  
His all-embracing Fatherhood.’

“As you grow older you’ll understand that better, and love the lines, as I do, for their own sake. And now, my dear child, it’s getting late, and we have to be up early. So now we won’t say another word but good-night.”

There was a long, fervent embrace, and then they parted, trying not to think how long it would be before they could say “good-night” again.

## CHAPTER IV.

### NORTHWARD.

Mr. Fleming had arranged to depart on the same day with Marjorie, by a train leaving only an hour or two after that by which she and her escort were to start. They went into the city by the earliest morning train, after a hurried breakfast before daylight of the gray December morning. The parting words were said to the tearful Rebecca, and they were whirling towards New York before Marjorie could realize that the journey was begun. Robin seemed overpowered by surprise at the strange proceeding, and cowered down in a corner beside Marjorie's satchel, to see what would happen next. The conductor talked to Mr. Fleming about his journey and his intended absence, while Marjorie wiped away some tears that she could not quite keep back, notwithstanding her determination to be "brave."

In New York there was a hurried transfer from one station to another; the arrangements about luggage, the bustle and noise of the drive through the long New York streets, the crowded station, the brief talks with Mr. Field, her escort, the few bright parting words said by her father, when she and Robin—the latter by special permission—were comfortably settled in the Montreal train, and then, before she could realize what was happening, the locomotive whistled, her father gave her the last kiss and jumped off the train, and, as he took off his hat and waved it toward her, they glided off and the parting was over.

Mr. Field kindly left Marjorie to herself for a little while, till the tears that had been kept back with such an effort, had had their way, not a few of them falling on the shaggy coat of the still astonished Robin, whom Marjorie hugged close to her as if she was in danger of losing this last link with her home life. For the first hour or two she felt thoroughly and utterly homesick. It seemed to her that she could never be happy till she should see her father again. Then her mind went back to his earnest words of the evening before, and she found the soothing solace that comes to each one of us in remembering that those who are separated from us are not separated from our Heavenly Father, and from commending them, simply but earnestly in our hearts to that ever loving care. Nor did she forget Rebecca, left lonely in the house to prepare for the arrival of strangers, and just then "fretting" a good deal, as she would herself have called it.

By degrees Marjorie's impressible nature began to assert itself, and she began to

look out with some interest at the country through which she was passing: the villas and villages, the glimpses of river and mountain, beautiful even in the cold grayness of December. Mr. Field, in his desire to entertain her, brought her two or three morning papers, at which Marjorie tried to glance, out of courtesy; he also bought for her—to her secret annoyance—a packet of candy from the ubiquitous “newsboy” and offered her her choice from the parcel of gaily bound volumes laid down by her side, when the boy again made his inevitable round. But Marjorie could truthfully say that she did not want to read just then, and in watching the ever changing panorama without, and mentally trying to follow her father’s movements as he set out on his southward journey, the hours crept on, not so slowly after all. Dinner made a break not unwelcome to either herself or Robin. Then there were changes of cars, and cities and towns to rush through, and by and by the short December day began to draw to a close as they were nearing the Canadian frontier.

It was some little time after Mr. Field’s announcement that they were in Canada now, that a lady entered the train accompanied by a very young girl, and took vacant seats quite near Marjorie’s, on the other side of the car. Marjorie was looking with admiration at their rich sealskin jackets and fur mufflings, when, as they laid aside some of their wraps she gave a little start of recognition. She could not be mistaken, the fair hair and lively chatter were certainly those of Ada West, and the handsome and handsomely dressed matron with her must be her mother, so much did Ada resemble her. She was too shy, however, to make any advances, and sat perfectly still, watching the two with some eagerness, till Ada, whose quick eyes were not likely to leave anything or any one about her unnoticed, glanced at Marjorie with a scrutinizing glance, which speedily changed into one of surprise.

“Why, I do believe it’s Marjorie Fleming,” she exclaimed, darting from her seat to Marjorie, and overwhelming her with questions, while her mother looked on with an inquiring and critical air. Mr. Field had just then gone into the smoking-car for a chat with a friend, so that Marjorie was left alone.

“Mamma,” said Ada, as soon as she had extracted from Marjorie some information as to what she was doing there, “this is Marjorie Fleming, that I told you about—you know I met her when I was traveling last summer with auntie—and how clever she was, and how her father wrote poetry, and all sorts of things.”

“Ada! Ada, how you do talk!” exclaimed her mother. “How do you do, Miss Fleming?” she continued, somewhat stiffly; “are you going to Montreal?”

Marjorie explained as briefly as she could, and then Mrs. West having done all she thought necessary, reclined comfortably in her corner, leaving Ada to chatter away to her heart’s content.



"Mamma and I have been paying a little visit to my aunt. I was awfully sorry to come away, for I always have lots of fun there. But mamma said if I didn't come home now, it wouldn't be worth while to go back to school before Christmas. Well, I'm awfully glad you're going to stay in Montreal all winter; we can have such a nice time; and there'll be the carnival, you know—that's such fun. Did you ever see an ice palace? We've had two before this, and they say this one will be the best yet. And so you're going to the Ramsays'? I know Marion and Alan Ramsay quite well. Marion's ever so much older than me, so of course she's not in my set at all; but Gerald knows Alan very well, so I see him pretty often, and he's ever so nice and jolly. Mamma," she ran on, scarcely leaving Marjorie room for the briefest replies, "Marjorie's going to stay at Dr. Ramsay's—Mrs. Ramsay's her aunt. She told me that last summer, and I told her you knew Mrs. Ramsay quite well."

"Yes, of course I know Mrs. Ramsay, and every one knows Dr. Ramsay's a very clever doctor," replied Mrs. West, whose indifferent and somewhat patronizing manner impressed Marjorie somewhat unpleasantly, she scarcely knew why.

"Yes," continued Ada, in a lower tone, "Gerald says Dr. Ramsay's awfully clever. He once came to our house for a consultation when my eldest brother was dreadfully ill. Gerald and Alan go to school together. I daresay you and I will go to school together. What school are you going to?"

Marjorie replied that her father had left that altogether with her aunt to decide.

"Well, then, I'm almost sure she'll let you go to my school, for every one says it's the best in Montreal. And that'll be ever so nice, for then I can get you to help me with my lessons. It's an awful bore to learn lessons, but I know you don't mind it, you're so clever. It must be nice to be so clever as you are."

Notwithstanding the liveliness and cordiality of this unexpected traveling companion, Marjorie, whose heart was still rather heavy and preoccupied, had had time to grow somewhat tired of the ceaseless flow of questions and remarks, by the time Mr. Field returned to tell her that, in a short time, now, they would be in Montreal. He seemed much pleased to find that Marjorie had found a friend of her own age who could talk to her so much better than he could, so he took his seat at a little distance to look over a Montreal paper he had just bought in the train. As he did so he remarked: "It's a pretty sharp night outside. The Northern Lights are very bright, too. I expect you'll know you've got a good way North when you get out of the train."

Poor Marjorie! the mere mention of the Northern Lights almost upset her, so vividly did it bring back the thought of her father, now so far away. But it brought memories, too, that helped to console her. Meantime, Ada and her mother had

begun to gather up their wrappings, and Marjorie was counseled to muffle up well.

“You don’t know how cold it is in Montreal in winter! You’ll have to get some furs; you never can get on in our winters with a hat like that. Why! is that your dog?” added Ada, as Marjorie, in rising, woke up Robin, who had been sound asleep in a corner.

Marjorie explained that Robin, as well as herself, had been invited to Montreal.

“Well, isn’t that funny! Look, mamma! Marjorie has brought her dog with her, too. Her aunt said she might. Isn’t he sweet? He’s almost like Cousin Ethel’s little Skye. Where did you get him?”

Marjorie replied that he had been given to her father by a great friend of his who had brought him from Scotland.

“Well, you’ll have to take awfully good care of him, or he’ll be stolen. Gerald had such a lovely dog stolen once. Who do you suppose will come to meet you? Most likely they’ll send Alan. And Gerald’s sure to come to meet us. So I can tell him you’re here, and Alan won’t miss you—for how could he know you when he has never seen you? There now, look out if you can; we’re just across the Victoria Bridge.”

Marjorie tried to catch a glimpse of what was without. She could see very little, however—only a dim, white expanse around, with a long stretch of twinkling lights to the right, which Ada told her was Montreal. Then they glided into the great terminus of Point St. Charles, and a few minutes after the train drew up beside the long platform of the Bonaventure station.

Mr. Field assisted Mrs. West and Ada, as well as Marjorie, to alight, and then they stood watching the bustling scene and the people who were looking for their friends along the line of cars.

“Oh! there’s Gerald,” exclaimed Ada, as a tall, slight lad in a fur-trimmed overcoat came swiftly toward them, scrutinizing the various groups as he passed. “And there’s Dr. Ramsay looking for you—look! that tall man in the beaver coat and cap. Now, isn’t it well I’m here to point him out to you? O, Gerald!” she went on, as the lad greeted his mother and sister, “Dr. Ramsay’s looking for his niece. You’d better tell him she’s here with us; Miss Fleming, Gerald.”

Gerald bowed, and went off at once, and returned directly with Dr. Ramsay, who gave Marjorie a warm welcome, in a kind, cheery Scotch voice, and heartily thanked her escort for the care he had taken of her.

“I was looking for a little girl all alone,” he said, smiling, “so I was led astray by seeing you with Miss West. I had no idea you had acquaintances here already.”

Mrs. West explained that her daughter had met Marjorie while traveling the

previous summer, and then, after many promises from Ada to come and see Marjorie soon, they parted, to look after their luggage and see it taken off to the waiting sleighs.

“Your aunt would have come to meet you herself, Marjorie,” said Dr. Ramsay, after they had said a cordial adieu to Mr. Field, who promised to look them up before leaving town, “but she has a slight cold, and I thought she had better stay at home; so I undertook to find you. Luckily, I was disengaged, and able to drive down for you myself. Alan is holding my horse, so we’ll go out at once and I’ll give him your check and get him to look after your trunk; it makes so much delay. You’ve got your dog safe, I see.”

They soon reached the doctor’s snug little cutter, where Marjorie was duly introduced to her cousin Alan, who looked a very big boy in the blanket coat and blue tuque that so many Montreal boys delight to wear in winter.

“All right, father,” he said briskly, as he took the check, and went off whistling merrily, to look after the trunk, while Dr. Ramsay stowed Marjorie and Robin, whom she had been holding tight in her arms, down among the soft fur robes of the low cutter.

“Poor little fellow!” he said, as he patted Robin’s soft head, “so you’ve lost your master for a while. Your father was always a lover of dogs, Marjorie,” he said, as they drove off. “I remember him of old, with two or three trotting at his heels. He was so proud of knowing the original ‘Rab.’ Of course you’ve read ‘Rab,’ Marjorie? Your father and I used to devour everything that my dear old professor, John Brown, wrote, and I wasn’t a bit surprised when I heard he called you ‘Pet Marjorie.’”

The tears started to Marjorie’s eyes as she heard her father’s pet name for her quoted, but it made her feel as if Dr. Ramsay was an old friend; and he kept her busy looking at the various objects of interest clearly visible in the bright glare of the electric light, which almost totally eclipsed the soft glow of a brilliant Aurora that threw into bold relief the dark hill before them, rising boldly against the northern sky.

“There’s the Windsor,” he said, as they passed the great hotel block with its shining windows. “And there’s the site of the ice palace; they’re just beginning the foundations. And that’s what we Montrealers call our ‘mountain.’” he added, laughing, “though when your father and I were boys, we would only have called it a bae.”

It was impossible to resist the influence of Dr. Ramsay’s cheery spirit, as indeed many of his patients had found out, for his brightness and kindness cheered many a sick room, like a veritable “light shining in darkness.” His repeated references to her

father had the effect he desired; of making her feel at home with him at once. Then it was inspiring in itself to glide so swiftly over the white snow-clad streets to the merry jingle of sleigh-bells in all directions, through the keen frosty air in which the stars seemed to glitter like diamonds of rarest luster.

"Here we are, then," said the doctor, reining up his spirited little horse at a door in a long row or "terrace" of stone-fronted houses, on one of the streets running up toward the mountain. "Here, give me Robin, now; that's right." And by the time Marjorie reached the door it was thrown open, revealing the warm, lighted hall within, and a lady who stood waiting to give Marjorie a motherly welcome.

"Now, Marion will take you upstairs," said Mrs. Ramsay, whose tranquil manner and peculiarly sweet voice strongly attracted Marjorie. "And you will come down as soon as you get your wraps off, and have some supper."

Marion was a blooming girl of eighteen, tall like her father, but with her mother's brown hair and soft dark eyes, with something, too, of the matronly and protecting air which is often noticeable in a helpful elder sister. She put her arm kindly around Marjorie as she showed her the way to the neat little room which had been prepared for her, and helped to remove her outdoor wrappings, with a quiet cousinly frankness that made Marjorie feel at once as if she were no stranger.

"My room's just next to yours," she said, "and we can talk through the wall when we choose. But mother thought you would like best to have a room to yourself, as you had always been accustomed to it."

It looked a little strange to Marjorie, who had had one room for her own ever since she could remember, and this one seemed rather small at first. But she thanked her cousin, saying that she was sure she should be very comfortable, and the two girls went downstairs arm in arm.

Dr. Ramsay met her at the dining-room door, and courteously led her into the cheerful room with a bright fire burning, and a light supper laid for the traveler. "You and I are going to have supper together," he said, smiling, "for I have been out all the evening, and am as hungry as a hawk. The rest don't indulge in suppers, for I think people are better without them, as a general rule. But you know doctors are privileged people, who are quite superior to their own rules."

There was something very infectious in Dr. Ramsay's clear, almost boyish laugh, and Marjorie laughed too, and began to feel some appetite, which a few minutes before, she would have disclaimed. He was a tall, athletic man, with wavy auburn hair falling across a broad, white forehead, and sea-blue eyes which seemed to have a gleam in them of the old Danish sea-kings, some of whose blood was in his veins. Kindly eyes they were, which, however, could be very keen or even stern when

occasion required. Just now they were bent with affectionate scrutiny on Marjorie, to see how much he could trace in her of the lineaments or expression of his old friend, John Fleming. Marjorie was thinking what a contrast he was to her own father, with his slight nervous figure and earnest face, so expressive of study and thought, and rather sad when in repose, though often so bright in conversation. Mrs. Ramsay had been thoughtfully attending to Robin's comfort, and giving him his supper. It was a pleasure to her to care for her brother's little favorite, and the creature seemed to recognize her as a friend, and took to her with a readiness which astonished Marjorie. She and Marion helped Marjorie and her uncle to the delicious ham and bread and butter and coffee—made very weak by the doctor's order, so that it might not keep the child awake; and presently Alan came in, looking not quite so big when his blanket overcoat was off, but much more like his father than his mother, with his blue eyes and fair complexion brightened with a rich color from the keen, frosty air.

"And how did you happen to get acquainted with Ada West?" asked Mrs. Ramsay, when they had talked over Marjorie's journey and arrival.

Marjorie explained how she had met her at a favorite summer resort near which her father and she had spent some time the previous summer.

"And were you great friends?" Mrs. Ramsay asked.

"Well, we saw each other very often," replied Marjorie, a little doubtfully; "but she used to say she hated Americans."

Dr. Ramsay laughed heartily, as did Alan also, who exclaimed: "Isn't that just like Ada! She always says whatever comes into her head, no matter what. And then she's so pretty, people don't seem to mind."

"Well, she doesn't seem to hate you," said Dr. Ramsay; "and she really is a good-hearted little girl, only rather spoilt by getting everything she wants, poor child! She's developing fast into a society belle, like her mother."

"They're awfully rich people," said Alan, for Marjorie's benefit; "and they have a fine house on Sherbrooke Street, just below the 'mountain.' Gerald's in my class at school, and he has a pony of his own, and as much pocket-money as he wants to spend."

"Yes, and it's a great wonder that he's as nice and steady a boy as he is, considering how he has been brought up," said his father. "When you've got to my age, Alan, my boy, you'll understand better that it's anything but a good thing for a boy to get all he wants so easily. It's a good thing for a man, as well as a horse, to 'bear the yoke in his youth,' and be well broken in, too, as he has got to be sooner or later. So don't be envious of poor Gerald. If he doesn't follow in his elder

brother's footsteps it'll be a wonder."

"Oh! I don't want to change with Gerald," said Alan, as he drank off the cup of hot coffee his mother had handed him; "though he is a good fellow, and I wouldn't mind having his pony."

"Be thankful you have old Chester to drive sometimes, and your toboggan to ride," said his mother, smiling.

"You never went down a toboggan-slide, did you, Marjorie?" inquired Alan. "Well, wait till we get a little more snow, and then you'll see what speed is."

"Well, Marjorie has finished her supper now, and it's time she went to rest after her long journey. I sent the younger ones to bed before you arrived, dear," she added to Marjorie. "They wanted very much to wait till you came, but I thought you would have enough new faces for one evening, so they will be all impatience to see Cousin Marjorie in the morning."

"Just bring the Bible to me, Alan," said Dr. Ramsay. "You know I was out at prayer-time, and so were Alan and Marjorie."

So the Bible was brought; the doctor read his favorite evening psalm, "The Lord is my Shepherd," and then, in a few simple, earnest words of prayer, commended all present, and all dear ones distant, to the care of that good Shepherd whose vigilance never sleeps.

As Marjorie laid her tired head down on soft pillows, she could not feel herself so far away from home. She could scarcely realize, indeed, that that very morning she had awoke in her old familiar room, and had breakfasted with her father, between whom and herself there were now so many miles of distance and darkness. But she felt as if the consciousness of a Father's loving care were around her still, and with this restful feeling in her heart she quickly fell into a sound, almost dreamless slumber.

## CHAPTER V.

### IN MONTREAL.

Marjorie was awakened next morning by the scratching of Robin's little paws, he having come to look for his young mistress in this strange house. Then she became conscious of the sharp patter of fine snowflakes against the window glass, and looking out between her curtains, saw a pale misty grayness with white puffs of drifting snow whirling through it. At first she could not remember where she was. Then she heard children's merry voices in the distance, and began to realize the new circumstances of her life. Just at first the tears rushed to her eyes as the thought came of her father, and how long it would be before she should see him again. But the interest of novelty counteracted the touch of pain; and before Marion's gentle tap sounded on her door, she was half-dressed. Marion was watching to go down with her, and not far off was Millie—her Aunt Millie's namesake—waiting for an introduction. She was a year or two younger than Marjorie, with a strong likeness to her father, and a good deal of cleverness and ambition in her eager face.

From the hall downstairs came ringing shouts of laughter, which, Marjorie soon found, came from Jack and the two youngest children, who were watching with great amusement the introduction of Robin to Nero. The staid, dignified, but good-natured Newfoundland looked at the little intruder with evident surprise, but with a tolerant, patronizing air, while Robin, who was more than half-disposed to snarl and quarrel, after the manner of small terriers, seemed gradually to take in the situation, and reconciled himself to be patronized, though evidently much relieved when Marjorie appeared and gave him an opportunity to retire gracefully.

Jack was nearly as old as Marjorie, but somehow seemed much younger, despite his greater height. He was much plainer than Alan, and rather awkward, if not shy. He and his sister Millie always "hunted in couples," as their father expressed it. They were always together when it was possible for them to be so. Millie went to the grammar school with her brother and kept up with him in his classes, notwithstanding his seniority. Jack had long made up his mind to be a doctor, and it was Millie's secret ambition to be one too; and then she and Jack could go into partnership together "to kill people," as Alan unfeelingly put it when this secret had incautiously leaked out.

The two youngest were Norman, a sturdy eight-year-old in knickerbockers, and

little Effie, the household pet, who was only six, and, as everybody declared, a little image of her mother. Mrs. Ramsay was already in the dining-room, and called them all in to prayers.

“Your uncle is not up yet,” she said to Marjorie, when she had given her a warm kiss of greeting. “He was called out late last night, and was out most of the night. Such things often happen in doctors’ families, and we have to breakfast without him when they do.”

Marjorie felt disappointed. She could not have believed that the absence of the doctor’s genial presence could have made such a difference. Mrs. Ramsay indicated an appropriate hymn, which all sang together very sweetly; even Effie’s childish voice accompanied her mother’s; and then followed the reading and the simple prayer, the whole lasting only a very few minutes, for, in the opinion of both Doctor and Mrs. Ramsay, brevity is one of the essentials of devotion where children are concerned. The simple little service closed with the reverent repetition of the Lord’s Prayer by the servants as well as children. To Marjorie, accustomed to so small a family, in which such had not been the practice, this hearty little household service was a very pleasant and impressive novelty.

Then followed breakfast, while the clatter of so many lively tongues was rather bewildering. Marjorie was kept busy answering questions: whether she liked snow; whether they had sleighs in New York, or toboggan slides; whether she could skate or snow-shoe; or had ever been in a toboggan? Norman generously offered to take her down in the small toboggan which was the joint property of himself and Effie, and which they expected to use in a day or two, on a children’s slide in a neighboring field; while Alan and Jack discussed the merits of the various slides then ready, and the new ones about to be prepared for the approaching carnival.

“There will be plenty of snow for them soon,” said Mrs. Ramsay, “if this snowstorm lasts all day. But you won’t get out much to-day if it does, Marjorie. You will have to amuse yourself in doors, I fear. And now, children, it’s time to be off to school.”

None of the little Ramsays minded a snowstorm unless it was very bad indeed. Even little Effie got on her striped blanket suit and blue tuque, in which she looked a charming little picture, and trotted merrily off with Norman to the school, not very far away, which they attended. When they were all fairly off, Mrs. Ramsay went to attend to her housekeeping, and Marion who did not go to school now, but only to one or two special classes, conducted Marjorie on a tour of inspection of the house and the things in it which she thought would specially interest her cousin. One of these was a fine large photograph of her father when a young man, which Marjorie



had never seen before, and at which she could scarcely stop gazing.

They finally found their way into "the study," a cosy room half-full of books, where the children learned their lessons, and practiced on the old piano, and followed the various pursuits that interested them out of school hours; and where they could make "a litter" without detriment to the order of the rest of the house; being always expected, however, to put away their books and toys when not using them. Here Marion and Marjorie established themselves with some mending, in which the latter offered to help, and here Mrs. Ramsay by and by joined them, Dr. Ramsay looking in also for a few minutes when he had had his breakfast. This room had a window looking toward the "mountain," which, however, in the snowstorm appeared only as a somewhat dim sketch in black and white, the dark pines above weirdly contrasting with the white clouds of snow-drift. The wintry world without made the indoor comfort all the pleasanter, and Marion and Marjorie had a long talk over their work till the latter felt as if she knew her Cousin Marion almost as well as her Aunt Millie.

Mrs. Ramsay held a sort of family council with the two girls as to the best plan for Marjorie's studies. It was too near the Christmas holidays now, to be worth while to begin attendance anywhere till they were over. Dr. Ramsay believed in a thorough grammar school education for girls, from the beginning, but his wife could not quite reconcile herself to what she called his "advanced" ideas, and had a great preference for placing a girl growing into womanhood under the care of cultivated women, with companions of their own sex. She had had her own way with Marion, who was not particularly intellectual, and had no ambition in the way of higher education; but Millie was totally different, and Mrs. Ramsay had the good sense to see that it was best to let her follow her bent. "After all," Dr. Ramsay would say, "since Nature has made our girls so different, why should we want to trim them all off on one pattern—like a box hedge? Variety is the very spice of life, and I like both my Marion and my Millie, each in her own way." So Marion had been educated mainly on the old-fashioned plan, while Millie already, at eleven, planned for herself a professional education and a professional career, though, fearing to be "chaffed," she was not given to talk freely on the subject. Mrs. Ramsay knew that her brother shared, to a great extent, her "old-fashioned prejudices," though he had always taken a personal supervision of Marjorie's education; and as she herself had no desire for the novel experience of a high school, it was decided, to her satisfaction, that after Christmas she should enter the same school that Ada West attended, and where Marion still continued to take lessons in music and painting.

The snowstorm continued unabated during the day. Norman and Effie came

home with cheeks glowing with exercise and fun, and wanted to begin a snow "fort" and "robbers' cave" in the yard at once. "Jack and Jill," as Jack and Millie were often called, brought home jubilant reports of the depth of the snow, and declared that there would be enough for snow-shoeing and tobogganing to-morrow. Marjorie found the afternoon pass quickly enough, between reading the "Adventures of Amyas Leigh"—in which she had become profoundly interested—watching her Cousin Marion paint a china cup, intended for a Christmas present, and making acquaintance with the little ones. They soon found out she could tell stories; and she had to ransack her brain for all the old griffin and fairy tales that her father used to tell to her on winter evenings.

"And don't you know any bear or Indian stories?" Norman wanted to know, when at last the supply seemed to run short. Marjorie confessed that she did not; whereupon Effie volunteered to tell her the story of the Three Bears, from her nursery book, and told it very amusingly, too, in her own quaint little way.

"I'll tell you what, Cousin Marjorie," said Jack, who had been standing by, "you just ought to get Professor Duncan to tell you some of his stories. He knows lots and lots; all about the Indians, and Champlain, and priests—Jesuits they were, you know—that came to try to convert the Indians, and how they went and lived in their wigwams till they were almost dead with cold and hunger, and how they killed and burned them."

"Burned the Indians?" asked Marjorie, shocked, but yet with an association of ideas connecting the Jesuits with the Inquisition and the persecution of the Waldenses.

"Jack," exclaimed Millie, with a touch of scorn, "how you do tell things upside down! No, Cousin Marjorie; these Jesuits weren't like that. They were awfully good, brave men, and they were always risking their lives among the savages, and some of them were killed and burned with the greatest barbarity. You must get Professor Duncan to tell you about Isaac Jogues."

And Millie, having thus elucidated the matter to her own satisfaction, subsided again into the book she was devouring.

"Who is Professor Duncan?" Marjorie asked Jack.

"Oh! he's a great friend of ours."

"Of father's, you mean," interpolated the critical Millie, without raising her head.

"No; of all of us," insisted Jack. "He often comes to see us, mostly always on Sunday evenings; and he's splendid, and never gets tired of telling us things; and he knows an awful lot. They say he's an author," continued Jack, mysteriously.

"So is Uncle John, isn't he, Cousin Marjorie?" inquired Millie.

Marjorie was a little taken back. It had never occurred to her to consider her father in the light of an “author,” though of course she knew that he wrote a great deal.

“Yes, I suppose so,” she said, secretly much pleased to find his reputation so well sustained.

Next morning was clear, bright and bracing. The sky was blue, the sun shone on the new-fallen snow, making it sparkle till it was fairly dazzling. The “mountain” rose, a glittering rounded mass of white, relieved by the inky blackness of its leafless trees and crest of dark pines above. The merry music of the sleigh-bells seemed unceasing, and contributed to the general exhilaration. The children were all in the merriest mood, and were discussing toboggans and snow-shoes, snow forts and Christmas-trees, all in a breath. Alan belonged to a Snow-shoe Club already, and went on long tramps, and it was one of Jack’s ambitions to do the same.

Dr. Ramsay offered to take Marjorie in his cutter, for a drive about the city, when he went on his morning rounds, and Mrs. Ramsay arranged to meet her, with Marion, at one of the book stores, in order to go on a shopping expedition to get Marjorie a fur cap and some other needed outdoor wraps, among which Alan had specially requested that a blanket ulster, tuque and sash should be included, for he should want her to go tobogganing with him often, and she must have a tobogganing costume.



Victoria Square.

So she was well muffled up, temporarily, in Millie's warm fur cape and blue "cloud," and stowed herself away in the doctor's cutter, with great satisfaction. Chester needed no urging to dash off to the tune of his own bells, and they were soon gliding down Beaver Hall, across Victoria Square, and along Great St. James Street with its massive stone buildings, and then between the queer tall French houses of the narrow Notre Dame Street, growing more and more French in aspect and speech as they went eastward. Dr. Ramsay pointed out the banks, and the beautiful post-office, which made Marjorie wonder when there would be a letter from her father, and the stately church of Notre Dame with its two tall towers; and the market-women going in and out; and to Marjorie it all seemed like pictures out of books that she had read long ago.

"Look, Marjorie," said her uncle, as they were obliged to thread their way more slowly along the narrow, crowded street, "that is the entrance to the Old Gray Nunnery. Some of the oldest buildings in Montreal are there, going back almost to the time when it was first founded as Ville Marie; that was its old name. You must go in some day and see the little old church, and hear the story of my favorite heroine, the benevolent Marguerite de Bourgeoys, and see her picture, with the kind sensible

face—the face of a true woman.”

“Who was she?” asked Marjorie.

“A maiden of Troyes in France, who became a nun, and came out to Canada in the old French days to be a missionary to the Indians, and especially to teach their children. She was one of the founders of Montreal and of its oldest church, and you will see her picture in there when you go to see the convent. It’s what we Scotch call a ‘soncy’ face, full of heart and goodness.”

“Another light in the darkness,” thought Marjorie, and her thoughts flew southward to her father. But they were quickly recalled by the novel scene about her, as Dr. Ramsay guided his horse carefully through the throng of vehicles of all kinds on runners, from the great drays and the large handsome family sleighs, with their rich fur robes, down to a miniature cutter drawn by a goat, which delighted her greatly. They passed the Champ de Mars with the stately façade of the court house behind it, and Nelson’s Column, and then as they approached the crowded Bonsecours market, a mass of market sleighs and people—sellers and buyers—they had to go more slowly still. Marjorie watched with great interest the crowds of *habitans*, horses and vehicles of quaint and curious fashion, and the wonderful variety of articles they were offering for sale, from carcasses of sheep and poultry to great pans of frozen milk which was sold by the pound. The shrill chatter of intermingled French and English tongues, in which the French predominated, made it almost impossible for her to hear Dr. Ramsay’s occasional explanations as they passed some object of special interest. Some fine carcasses of beautiful deer, frozen stiff, excited her admiration and pity. Dr. Ramsay told her they were brought from a long way back among the hills, and promised her venison for dinner some day, as a treat. And Marjorie thought she would rather have the deer bounding over the hills than lying stark and stiff in the marketplace. But then, on the other hand, the deer might starve in winter, which was one consoling consideration. As they passed the great dark stone pile of the market itself, Dr. Ramsay pointed up a narrow alley at the end of which was a quaint, weather-beaten little stone church. “There,” he said, “is the quaintest, oldest little church in Montreal, ‘*Notre Dame de Bonsecours*’—‘Our Lady of Gracious Help.’ Many a prayer has been put up there for soldiers and sailors, and many a sailor has hung up his little votive offering in token of gratitude for merciful deliverance. I can’t wait for you to go in now, but you shall go in another time, and take a good look at it all; for it will give you a very good idea of many an old church abroad. It might quite well be in Normandy.”

They were now gliding along St. Mary Street, through the old French suburb of Hochelaga, with the white expanse of the river to their right, and the wood-crested

mound of St. Helen's Island rising out of the wide river plain. Dr. Ramsay explained that this was the oldest part of Montreal; that the name Hochelaga had been the name of the original Indian village which had occupied the spot when Jacques Cartier first visited it, shortly after he had first discovered the St. Lawrence itself. He described how the gallant Breton navigator had left his largest ships at Quebec, and sailed up in a small sloop to visit this large palisaded village which he had heard of as the capital of a great country on the river, then also called the river of Hochelaga. He told how Cartier had landed somewhere near that very place, and had walked up through the maize fields in state, to the village of bark wigwams, with its triple wall of palisades; and how all, from the withered and decrepit chief, down to the squaws and children, received the white strangers with the greatest joy and respect, even believing that Cartier could heal their maladies. And then Cartier had been conducted through the primeval forest to the top of the beautiful mountain, and had given it the name it has kept ever since—"Mount Royal"; in honor of the magnificent view, beautiful then as now.

They turned by and by, after Dr. Ramsay had pointed out the great convent at Hochelaga, where so many French Canadian girls received their education, and which he said she should go to see some day. "The nuns," he said, "are sweet and gentle women, and their scholars love them dearly, and learn from them gentle and womanly manners, which make French Canadian girls so charming, and are like a low voice, 'an excellent thing in woman.'!"

Dr. Ramsay turned into St. Paul Street on their way back, to show Marjorie the very oldest bit of the city, the site of its first foundation, and talked about the old heroic days when this one little street of small houses stood alone to stem the great tide of savage barbarism that swept like a flood over all the surrounding country except only the rock of Quebec and the fringe of eastern settlements of her Puritan forefathers.

"In those days, Marjorie," he said, "the bitter enemies of Canada—the fierce Iroquois—were the friends of your forefathers; and I am sorry to say that these two colonies of Christian nations not only went to war with each other before the eyes of these poor heathen savages, but even urged on their Indian allies to fall on the defenseless colonists on each side, and murder and plunder and destroy. It was horrible that such things should be! Let us be thankful that the world has grown a little better since then, and that nations are beginning to see the wickedness of war in its true light.

"But there were heroes in those days, Marjorie," he added, and he went on to tell her how that very Place d'Armes, in front of the big church of Notre Dame, had

been the scene of an exploit as brave as the "holding of the bridge" in the "brave days of Rome," which she had read about in Macaulay's Lays, when Maisonneuve, the Christian knight and soldier who founded Montreal, had kept a horde of Indian assailants at bay, single-handed, until every one of his pursued retreating followers was safe within the walls of the little fort.

"And was he killed?" asked Marjorie.

"No," he replied, "the Indians were so impressed by his brave defense that they were determined to take him alive, and then he managed to strike down their chief, and, in the excitement that ensued, he too got within the walls. And so that adventure at least ended happily."

"For the French, yes," said Marjorie, and the doctor laughed.

"Ah, I'm afraid we've all a little heathenism left," he said, good-humoredly. "But then, you see, if Maisonneuve and his men had been killed, it might have involved destruction to the whole French colony at that time, which would have been a far greater misfortune than the death of a few savages could be."

And now they were back in St. James Street, and Dr. Ramsay set down Marjorie at the bookstore where her aunt and cousin were to meet her.

## CHAPTER VI.

### NEW FRIENDS.

As Marjorie expected, her aunt and cousin had not arrived when she entered the bookstore, so she followed her uncle's directions, bought some Canadian postage stamps, and sat down by the counter to look at the new books there displayed, until her aunt's arrival. Not far from her sat a gentleman who seemed deeply engaged in looking over some large volumes, yet occasionally darted keen, scrutinizing glances at the people who came in or went out, one or two of which rested a moment on herself. She could not help stealing a glance at him again and again; for he seemed to her both a very peculiar and a very interesting-looking man. He had a strong face, which no one could have called handsome, but which was full of deep lines of thought and expression; a powerful, though by no means tall figure, somewhat high-shouldered and stooping. He had the air of one who lived much alone and communed much with books, and yet had strong sympathy too with men, for the lines of his face were kindly as well as thoughtful, even when it was at rest. The bookseller treated him with marked respect, and brought out one volume after another to show him—books which seemed very large and learned-looking, Marjorie thought.

At last, after selecting two or three volumes to be sent to him, he rose, buttoned his overcoat, shoved his heavy fur cap—which had been lying on the counter—down almost to his shaggy eyebrows, and took his leave after a kindly good-morning to the bookseller and a last glance at Marjorie, which seemed to say that he knew quite well that she was a stranger, and was mentally classifying her as he might a botanical specimen. Just as he reached the door, he stopped to greet with the most overflowing cordiality, Mrs. Ramsay who was just coming in. Both she and Marion responded to his greeting with evident pleasure, parting with the words, "We shall see you to-morrow, then."

"O, Aunt Mary! who is that gentleman?" asked Marjorie, with eager interest.

"That is Professor Duncan, one of our dearest friends here," replied Mrs. Ramsay, with a smile. "But what made you ask?"

"Oh! I couldn't help looking at him while I was waiting. And I thought he must be very wise and clever; I am so glad you know him! Jack and Millie were talking about Professor Duncan yesterday."



“Yes; he’s a great favorite of theirs, as he ought to be; for he is most kind in talking to them and telling them stories. He lives all alone, and often drops in to take tea with us on Sunday evenings, so to-morrow you will see him and hear him for yourself.”

The shopping expedition began, and Marjorie accompanied her aunt and cousin from one large shop to another, where furs, blanket-suits and an infinitude of other articles of winter wear were displayed in bewildering profusion. After a good deal of comparison and consideration, Marjorie finally decided on a warm squirrel cape, cap and muff, for ordinary wear, and a tobogganing costume, consisting of a white blanket ulster with a striped border of sky-blue, and blue sash and *tuque bleue* to match; colors which Alan had especially commended, because he belonged to a club bearing the name of *Tuque Bleue*.

They were just coming out of the last shop when a large family sleigh with handsome fur trappings, drew up in front of it. Marjorie was just admiring the beauty of the horses and the appointments of the equipage, when a light figure sprang out and she heard a lively voice exclaim:

“O, Marjorie! I’m so glad we’ve met you. I was just going to drive up as soon as mamma was done shopping, to see if you would come and take lunch at our house to-day. May she, Mrs. Ramsay? It was too stormy yesterday to go to see you, you know, but mamma always lets me have any one I like to luncheon on Saturdays.”

Mrs. West who followed her daughter more leisurely, endorsed Ada’s invitation, and as Mrs. Ramsay seemed quite willing that Marjorie should accept it, the matter was quickly settled, Ada saying that they could leave Marjorie at her uncle’s house when they drove out in the afternoon.

Marjorie preferred to sit with Ada in the sleigh while Mrs. West went in to make her purchases. She thought she should never tire of watching the stream of people and sleighs of such variety of aspects, that poured along Notre Dame Street—the great shopping street of Montreal—and Ada’s brisk accompaniment of remarks and explanations made the scene still more entertaining, for she could tell Marjorie something about a good many of the people who passed.

When Mrs. West came out the horses’ heads were turned homewards, and they were soon again across Victoria Square and ascending the slope of Beaver Hall. Then they drove a little way along Dorchester Street, and Ada pointed out the beautiful churches and mansions there, and the fine English cathedral with its rectory close by; and then they crossed the wide St. Catherine Street and soon were gliding along Sherbrooke Street where the stately mansions that line it on either hand, stood

out to view all the more plainly, because of the leaflessness of the environing trees. Behind the line of handsome houses and snow-clad grounds, rose the white slopes of the stately "mountain"—in dazzling purity against the vivid blue of the clear wintry sky.

They soon stopped in front of a fine mansion of gray cut stone, with an ornamental portico and somewhat extensive grounds. Ada, as usual, was out first, and waited impatiently for Marjorie to follow Mrs. West, for whom she politely waited to descend first. The door was quickly thrown open, and Ada eagerly led her friend into the softly carpeted hall. Marjorie had never been in so fine a house in her life. The spacious hall and rooms, all so richly carpeted and luxuriously furnished, the gleam of gilding and white statuary here and there, of gorgeously framed pictures and rich tinted curtains, and a glimpse of a French window opening into a conservatory glowing with lovely flowers—all seemed to give her the sensation of entering a fairy palace. It seemed a sort of charming dream which would dissolve again directly. Poor Ada's accustomed eyes had never seen her own home as the beautiful vision that it seemed to Marjorie's just then. To her it was very matter-of-fact reality, though she could have told just how much some of the pictures cost, and was proud in her heart of her luxurious home which she knew was so much admired. But to Marjorie, as she followed her friend up the wide staircase to Ada's own room with its costly furnishings, it all seemed too beautiful and grand for homely every-day use.

"There's my canary," said Ada, pointing to the gilt cage that hung between the pretty pink-lined curtains. "He sings beautifully, and hasn't he a pretty cage? That was my last birthday present, but I'm awfully afraid of forgetting him. Now if you're ready come down, and I'll show you the drawing-room and conservatory before lunch."

Marjorie was divided in her admiration between the large handsome room with its artistic decorations and charming pictures, and the pretty little conservatory gay with geraniums and chrysanthemums, white and golden, and its ferns and hanging baskets with their clustering tendrils of drooping plants and flowers. She was still lingering in delighted admiration of these when a gong sounded, and Ada said they must go to luncheon.

They passed on through the spacious hall, its light mellowed by the rich tones of the stained glass window, into the large dining-room with its heavy carved furniture, where an oval table was beautifully set out for luncheon, with flowers and silver and gleaming crystal. Mrs. West came in with her somewhat slow and languid air, and Gerald followed a few minutes later, and after a courteous salutation to Marjorie took his seat opposite her. He was not like Ada, being pale rather than fair, with

brown hair and rather large gray eyes like those of his mother. He was much slighter than Alan in figure, and Marjorie thought he looked like a clever lad and would be rather handsome if his expression had not something dissatisfied in it. She thought he did not look so bright and happy as Alan, notwithstanding the pony and the abundance of pocket-money.

The luncheon was quite good enough for any one's dinner, Marjorie thought. There were three courses, with fruit besides, and biscuits and macaroons to finish with. Ada just tasted a little at each course in turn, but evidently did not relish her lunch as Marjorie did. Mrs. West had a better appetite, and talked very little; satisfying herself with asking a few questions as to how Marjorie liked Montreal, whether it did not seem very small after New York, whether New York was very gay this winter, and so on. She seemed surprised to find that Marjorie did not live in New York at all, but only in one of the suburban towns, and that she had lived very quietly, not going much into the city.

"And how is your little dog? What is his name?" said Ada, asking, as usual, two questions in one breath.

Marjorie explained that her father had wanted to call him Rab, after a dog in a book, but that she liked Robin best, and so he had got the name of Robin Adair, which, Ada declared, was a very funny name for a dog.

Gerald looked up with more animation than he had yet shown.

"Oh!" he exclaimed, as if an idea had just struck him, "I suppose Rab was the dog in a pretty little story that Alan lent me about 'Rab and his Friends.'!"

"Yes," said Marjorie; "and my father knew that Rab when he was at college in Edinburgh."

"And," pursued Gerald, "there was another story in the book about Marjorie Fleming, I remember. Are you the wonderful little girl that used to talk to Sir Walter Scott and make all those verses about the hen?"

'And she was more than usual calm,'!"

he quoted. "I suppose I mustn't give the rest."

Marjorie caught the little gleam of humor that underlay his grave manner; but she only replied with equal gravity:

"That little girl died, I believe," at which Gerald's face relaxed a very little into a faint smile.

"Gerald, what nonsense you do talk!" exclaimed Ada. "How could Marjorie have talked to Sir Walter Scott when he died ages ago?"

"Did he really?" replied Gerald satirically, and Marjorie, who detested satirical

remarks, hastened to say that her mother's name had been Margaret, and that her father could not bear that she should have the very same name, and so had bethought himself of calling her Marjorie, an old Scotch name in his own family, and which was connected with that of the historical Marjorie Fleming.

"Gerald's going to Oxford in a year or so," said Ada. "And we're all going abroad as soon as I have done with school here. Perhaps I'm to go to school somewhere abroad for a while, too. Wouldn't it be nice for you to come with me, Marjorie? I'm sure you could learn to speak French and German a good deal quicker than I could."

Marjorie's eyes sparkled. The vision of going abroad some day with her father, was one of her castles in the air, but she could not talk about her father here.

Just then the door opened, and a young man, rather handsome and very fashionably dressed, strolled in with a listless air, very like his mother's. He threw down a small packet beside Ada's plate.

"Why, Dick," said his mother, looking up at him with a look brighter than any Marjorie had yet seen her wear, "I had given you up. I thought you must be taking lunch down town with your father."

"Oh! the governor's over head and ears in work, so he couldn't spare time to go out to lunch—just sent out for some biscuits; and I thought I had had enough of the office for one week and might as well give myself a half-holiday as not, so I came home. Father ought to take a half-holiday himself on Saturdays, and give every one else one, all round. How do, Miss Fleming!" he responded to Ada's introduction, and then went on.

"I had to call in at Notman's on my way up, Ada, so I brought home the photos you wanted."

"See, Marjorie," said Ada, undoing the package, "this is the last photo I have had taken. It was taken in my fancy dress costume for a masquerade at the rink last winter."

It was a good likeness and a very pretty picture, representing Ada as Titania, with a coronet and a pair of Psyche wings, and all the other accessories.

"Have you had your photograph taken?" asked Ada; "because if you have, we'll exchange and I'll give you one of these."

Marjorie had not had one taken for a long time, she said; her father regretted very much at the last moment that he had not been able to get a good one taken in New York.

"Then I'll tell you what," exclaimed Ada, in great glee, "you must go and have a good photograph taken at Notman's and send it to your father for Christmas. And

then you can give me one, too. Now go the very first thing next week.”

“You’ll have to go, Miss Fleming, I assure you,” said the eldest brother, who made it a point to make himself agreeable to young ladies. “My sister has a way of making her friends do what she wants them to do.”

“And I’ll go with you to help to pose you,” said Ada. “I’m a very good hand at posing people, am I not, Gerald?”

Ada was much more given to appealing for approbation to her younger than to her elder brother, notwithstanding his propensity to “make fun” of her; perhaps because this very practice had inspired her with greater respect for his opinion.

Luncheon seemed to Marjorie to last a very long time. Nobody was in any hurry to rise, for nobody had anything very particular to do; and Dick and his mother discussed at leisure the various bits of gossip he had picked up in the course of the morning; the latest news about the arrangements for the coming carnival, and the Christmas parties and receptions that were being talked of. It was very evident that Dick was Mrs. West’s favorite child. Poor fellow, he was a “spoiled child.” As he had always got every thing he wanted for the asking, and had never had to do anything he did not like, he seldom now did any thing but what he “liked” to do; and the things he did like to do were very often things that it would have shocked his mother a good deal to know.

At last Mrs. West rose and she and the two girls adjourned to the library, another luxurious apartment containing a bookcase well filled with books in handsome bindings—seldom opened—an elegant writing-table fitted up with all sorts of ornamental paraphernalia and any number of comfortable easy-chairs, one of which Mrs. West drew up before the bright coal fire and took up a magazine that lay on the table, to while away an hour in glancing over its pages. Ada opened a large photograph album to show Marjorie the portraits of her friends. Presently the door-bell rang, and shortly after a visitor was shown into the library; a bright-eyed, sunny-faced little lady with silver-gray curls, and a brisk, animated voice and manner, who put Marjorie at once in mind of some of the people she knew at home. Mrs. West greeted her as Miss Mostyn, and having expressed great pleasure at finding Mrs. West at home, the visitor turned to Ada with a pleasant salutation, and then looked inquiringly at Marjorie.

“This is Miss Fleming—Dr. Ramsay’s niece from New York; she only arrived the day before yesterday,” said Ada.

“I’m delighted to meet any one belonging to Dr. Ramsay,” said Miss Mostyn, grasping Marjorie’s hand most cordially. “I’m sure I don’t know how we should get on without Dr. Ramsay. He’s so good to the poor and suffering! And so you’re from

New York, my dear? I've got some very dear friends there—noble Christian women. I hope you're going to be like them."

Marjorie's heart was quite won by the pleasant face and cordial words. Miss Mostyn had business on hand and she turned to a seat beside Mrs. West, but Marjorie was so much attracted towards this stranger that she could not help following her with eye and ear, and giving a very half-hearted attention to Ada's chatter.

Miss Mostyn explained that she had just come from a poor family in great destitution and suffering, in whose case she wanted to interest Mrs. West. The father had recently met with a dreadful accident in the "Works" in which Mr. West was a partner. He had had one of his legs amputated and had been in a very critical condition ever since. And now his wife had a young baby and was much prostrated by her watching and anxiety, and the family had nothing coming in, and were in absolute want of food, clothes, fuel—everything, with no money to buy anything. Dr. Ramsay had been attending them and had been most kind, as indeed Mrs. Ramsay had been also. But they needed so many things, and Miss Mostyn was trying to raise a subscription to procure necessities for them during their present helpless condition. She had come to Mrs. West, she said, hoping that she would head the subscription with a generous donation, as the poor man had met with the accident in the "Works" with which Mr. West was connected.

Marjorie felt intensely interested in Miss Mostyn's narrative and graphic picture of the suffering helpless family. Now she felt how delightful it must be to be rich and able to reach a helping hand to people in such distress. But Mrs. West did not seem at all eager to respond to the appeal. She "thought," she said, "the firm had done all that was necessary for the man at the time the accident occurred, though it really was no fault of theirs in any way."

"They did make him a donation at the time," said Miss Mostyn, "but he has been two or three weeks ill now, and that money is gone. You know, with rent and fuel and food to pay for, how fast money runs away."

"Well, I know Mr. West thought they did all that was necessary," replied Mrs. West, chillingly. "And I really have so many claims constantly. You could have no idea what it is, unless you lived in a house like this," with a complacent glance at the luxurious appointments about her. Miss Mostyn smiled slightly, but made no reply.

"However, of course it's a very sad case, and I really must give you a little toward it." And she took out of an elegant pocket-book a dollar in silver, which she handed to Miss Mostyn. "It's really all I can spare just now; it's just one thing to give to after another, and then there is Christmas coming, too, and I always have so

many presents to give. But if you get a dollar from every one you ask you'll do very well. But I think," she added, "that you should head your subscription with the amount that the firm gave at first, because they ought to have credit for that, you know."

Miss Mostyn thanked the donor rather formally, and suggested at parting that Mrs. West might drive round that way and see the family for herself.

"My dear Miss Mostyn!" exclaimed that lady pathetically, "you've no idea how many things I have on my mind. It's all very well for you, with plenty of time on your hands, to go and visit such people; and I'm sure it's very good of you, and you'll have your reward. But with my establishment to look after, and my visiting list, I assure you it's quite out of the question. And then it always makes me so miserable to see how such people live; it would quite upset me, I assure you. Some people are more sensitive to such things than others."

Miss Mostyn's sunny countenance was just a little clouded, and there were bright red spots on her cheeks as she took her leave with the same gentle kindness as that with which she had entered. Marjorie felt shocked, indignant. It was the first time she had ever seen the hard, cool, callous selfishness, naturally engendered by a life of luxurious self-indulgence, come out and display itself with unblushing insensibility to the suffering of others; and the moral ugliness of it seemed all the greater in contrast with the beauty of the material surroundings, and the grace and fairness of the woman who had spoken such heartless words. She felt as strongly repelled from Mrs. West as she had been attracted to Miss Mostyn, who had kindly invited her to come to see her, as she took her departure. To her great relief, Mrs. West remarked that the sleigh would soon be at the door for their afternoon drive, and Ada carried her off to get ready.

"Miss Mostyn's awfully good, you know," Ada replied, to a question of Marjorie's; "but she's just 'got poor people on the brain,' Dick says. She's always got some awful case of destitution on hand, and mamma says it just makes her nervous to see her now."

"But, Ada, don't you think that people who are rich ought to be always helping the poor? I think that must be the greatest pleasure of being rich—to be able to help other people."

"Well, Marjorie, you do have such funny ideas! I never heard any one say before that it was a pleasure to give money to poor people. I know it's good to be charitable, but that's because it isn't nearly so nice as buying what you want for yourself."

"Well, my father always says that 'it's more blessed to give than to receive,' and

you know Who said that.”

“Yes, I know it’s in the Bible somewhere,” said Ada, “for we had a sermon about it lately. But I didn’t think that meant it was a pleasure, you know; for the Bible says: ‘Blessed are they that mourn,’ and I’m sure that can’t be a pleasure.”

Marjorie felt a little perplexed at this view of the subject, but there was no time to continue the discussion then, for Mrs. West called to them to make haste.

They were soon in the sleigh once more, and Mrs. West directed the coachman to drive to the western extremity of Sherbrooke Street, where she had to pay two or three visits, and while she was so engaged Ada could give Marjorie a little drive, and then leave her at Dr. Ramsay’s house. As they glided swiftly along Sherbrooke Street, Ada pointed out the various objects of interest; the College grounds and buildings, the palace-like residences on the street and on the slope of the snow-clad hill. Every moment some beautifully appointed equipage glided past them, and ladies, wrapped in rich furs, and with color brightened by the sharp, frosty air, exchanged bows and smiles with her companions.

“Ada,” remarked Mrs. West discontentedly, after a critical scrutiny of her appearance, as she sat opposite to her, “that cap of yours is really beginning to look a little shabby already; I shall have to get you another soon. You really ought to take more care of your things.”

To Marjorie’s eyes Ada’s sealskin cap seemed all that could be desired; but Mrs. West had a very fastidious eye for dress, and liked all belonging to her to be irreproachable. Marjorie’s thoughts went back to Miss Mostyn’s tale of misery and Mrs. West’s dollar subscription; and it was a relief to her mind when that lady reached her destination and bade her a civil good-by, expressing the hope that she would soon come to see Ada again. She was, indeed, genuinely fond of her daughter, and glad to gratify the great fancy she had taken to this new friend, who seemed a nice little girl, too, “for an American,” as Mrs. West would have put it.

After another swift, enjoyable drive along the whole length of Sherbrooke Street—Ada pointing out the long toboggan slides, with their wooden platforms and inclined planes, on the mountain slope at either extremity of the long, broad street—they turned down the street on which Dr. Ramsay’s house stood and drew up in front of it, to the great delight of Norman and Effie, who were drawing a little toboggan up and down in front of their own door.

“O, Cousin Marjorie! we’ve been trying our toboggan slide in the field, and it’s lovely. We’ll give you a slide if you’ll come,” they exclaimed, in chorus.

Marjorie bade Ada good-by, and as the door was opened Robin rushed out in wild delight at her return. Millie stood by enjoying his transports, and declared that



he had been such a good little dog, and had gone for a walk with her and Jack, and that he knew them all quite well now, and was “great friends with Nero already.”

“And here’s something you’ll be glad to get, my dear,” said Mrs. Ramsay, with a smile, holding up a letter, on which Marjorie recognized, with delight, the dear, familiar handwriting of her father.

“You must come back and tell me all your news when you have read it, dear,” said her aunt, as Marjorie rushed off to devour her letter all by herself in her own room. She sat down with Robin in her lap, and felt as if she were transported back to the dear old home in which her father and she had had so many talks together, and as if she could hear the very tones of his voice and feel his hand on her hair.

The letter was a pretty long one, and as she opened it, there dropped out of it a folded printed paper, at which she did not look until she had read the letter. It was written by snatches; telling her, in his own characteristic way, what he had been seeing, and a little, too, of what he had been thinking on his journey. It contained many kind messages to the Ramsays, and ended with a few grave words, which, as Marjorie well knew, came from his heart:

“And now, my Marjorie, I have told you sometimes that I believe life is a long education for us, by which our Heavenly Father is seeking to fit us for higher things by and by. Your school has been changed just now, in more senses than one; but if you are only ‘trusting and following,’ you will be learning day by day from the Great Teacher. I inclose to you—what I think you will like to have—the story of the Northern Lights in print. It is being published now, and I asked them to let me have a proof on purpose for you—which reached me yesterday. So here it is. You might keep it in your Bible, and then it will remind you often of our talks about it. And remember, dear, who it was said: ‘I am the light of the world; He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.’ That is the secret of getting true light, and of a true and happy life.”

Marjorie wanted to sit down and answer her letter “right off,” but she felt she must first go down and read most of the letter to her aunt, and give all the kind messages. And before she had finished, Mr. Field called, according to promise, and they had a little talk about New York and her father’s journey, and the attractions of Montreal; so that she only got part of her letter written before tea. She had begun it the day before, giving a very detailed history of her own journey and arrival, and now she had a great deal more to tell. In fact, Alan, who came into the “study”

where she was writing, inquired if she were writing a book, and said he was thankful boys were never expected to write letters like that. But Marjorie knew it would not be too long for her father.

At teatime, when her uncle came in, late and tired, as he often did, Marjorie's thoughts suddenly reverted to his poor patients, in whom she had felt so much interested, and she surprised him by asking how they were getting on and if they were really so very poor.

Dr. Ramsay seldom spoke, in his own family, of the sad sights he was constantly seeing. For one thing, he himself wanted change of thought and feeling when he got home, and for another, he did not think it right to depress the natural joyousness of youth by burdening it too soon with the weight of the sorrow and suffering of life. But when, at any time, he felt that his children's sympathy could be awakened with useful result, he did not hesitate to appeal to it.

"As sad a case as I ever met with," he replied. "But how did you hear of it, my dear?"

Marjorie briefly told of Miss Mostyn's visit of appeal to Mrs. West.

"Ah! well, I'm glad she went to her. And I hope she will give something handsome, as she could well afford to do."

"She said the firm had done something for him already, but she gave Miss Mostyn something—a dollar—I think," replied Marjorie, hesitating in her reply between the desire to give her uncle information, and an instinctive fear of violating the obligations of hospitality.

Dr. Ramsay said nothing, but made a slight though expressive grimace, as he looked at his wife.

Mrs. Ramsay remarked gently, "Well, probably she may feel interest enough to go to see them, and if she does that, she will feel that she must do more."

"No, I'm sure she won't," exclaimed Marjorie, her indignation now thoroughly revived; "for she said she hadn't time, and that such things always upset her so."

Dr. Ramsay laughed outright this time. "Poor woman!" he exclaimed; "it's well that we doctors don't have such superfine feelings! No, Alan, no remarks, if you please. We have no right to judge others for not seeing their privileges. But you can tell Gerald about the case. It would be a useful way for him to spend some of his superfluous pocket-money. And I have taken care that they sha'n't starve for the present. And your aunt is going to see them to-morrow, so you can go with her if you like, Marjorie, to see for yourself. Between her and the charitable dispensary the poor sick ones have been kept supplied with nourishing food. And as usual, the poor neighbors have been very kind."

Marjorie's thoughts went swiftly back to the "angel" her father had seen, and what he had said about her. That evening, as she finished her journal-letter, she concluded her narrative with the following reflection:

"You said once that there were a great many 'half-heathens' in New York. I didn't know what you meant then, but I think there must be a good many in Montreal, too. Ada's mother, who is so rich and has such a beautiful house and everything she wants, seemed to grudge to give a dollar to a starving family, though the father had got hurt in Mr. West's business! So I think the light must be 'shining in darkness' here, too. I'm so glad you sent me the Northern Lights in print, for I'm sure they'll all like it here. I'm sure Uncle and Aunt Ramsay have the 'light of life,' and I'm going to try to 'trust and follow,' so as to have it too!"

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE PROFESSOR'S STORY.

Sunday was another bright clear day, decidedly milder, so that there was nothing to interfere with the pleasure of being out of doors in the pure, bracing air. Marjorie, in her warm squirrel furs, with her dark gray eyes sparkling and her rather pale cheeks brightly tinted by the frosty air, looked, her aunt thought, much improved already, as they took their way to church on Sunday morning. The long anxiety and watching during her father's illness, and the depression and dread of the impending separation, had told a good deal on her always sensitive organization; but a reaction had just set in, and her natural shy reserve was beginning to wear off already under the influence of her brighter spirits and the liveliness of her cousins. Marion and she seemed like old friends as they walked together to the Presbyterian Church which Dr. Ramsay attended. Her father and she had been wont to go to the Congregational Church at home, but she knew her father had little respect for the "isms" which separate Christians, and Dr. Ramsay, though attached to the church in which his forefathers had lived and died, had just as little respect for churchism as had Mr. Fleming. "If you don't love other churches, you can't really love your own; for you haven't got your Master's spirit in you," he would say to his "churchy" friends, both in his own communion and others.

And Dr. Ramsay had friends in every denomination of faith. He met them at sick beds and in hospitals, where they learned to know each other, and to know, too, that there are times when all human hearts must respond to the same touch—the gentlest yet strongest touch of all.

It was pleasant to walk to church through the throngs of church-going people that crossed one another's path in every direction—people of all classes and positions. Sometimes they met a little group of long-robed ecclesiastics, and Marjorie would explain which particular confraternity they belonged to; or some gray Sisters of Charity would be seen at the head of a little band of children.

The service was very like the one she was accustomed to, but the prayer for "Her Majesty the Queen" reminded her that she was no longer under her own country's flag. And yet she did not feel like "a stranger and a foreigner," worshipping there with those who spoke the same tongue, prayed to the same God, loved the same Saviour and sang almost the same dear old hymns that they used to sing at

home. Nor did the people look very different, except in their warmer dress; at least not the female portion of the congregation. She thought the men did not look quite so keen and anxious, and she noticed more stout and comfortable-looking elderly gentlemen than she was accustomed to see in church. And she thought there were a great many pretty children.

Her observations rather distracted her attention from the sermon, for Marjorie's thoughts were very apt to go off roaming in the direction of some passing fancy, which was one reason why her father liked her to bring him reports of the sermons she heard. But she thought that her father would have liked this one, which was her usual way of estimating things which she did not feel herself competent to criticise, and her father had never encouraged her in the slightest attempt at criticising a sermon since he said, "if you listen in such a spirit, you will lose all the good of it." One thought she carried away for her next letter to her father—because it was so like his own words: that the patient learner in Christ's school would find, like the learner in every other school, that every lesson well learned from the Master's teaching, is only a stepping-stone to the next step of progress in the upward line.

After dinner Marjorie went with Marion to her room, and they had a nice quiet talk over their favorite Sunday books. Marjorie was much older in mind for her years than was her cousin, so that they could talk without any sense of inequality. Marion was not specially poetical, but she loved Frances Havergal's poems for their devotional sweetness, and she enjoyed reading her favorites to Marjorie, to whom they were new. And Marjorie in turn read to Marion some of the poems from the *Christian Year* and her precious copy of Whittier, which her father had taught her to know and love by reading them to her on Sunday evenings, in his expressive and musical voice.

Marion, however, went off at the usual hour to teach her Sunday-school class, and Marjorie went with her aunt to see the poor family. They lived in one of the old, narrow, dingy streets that abound in the St. Antoine suburb; and it was sad enough to see them, the sick parents and the four little children, pent up in one room not bigger than her uncle's dining-room. Marjorie thought of the spacious magnificence of the Wests' luxurious home, and wondered, as many a young soul has wondered, how such differences can be. But she noticed with surprise how brightly the man spoke; how gratefully he referred to Dr. Ramsay as the means, under God, of saving his life, and his poor wife's life too; and how they could never thank Mrs. Ramsay and Miss Mostyn enough for all their kindness; and how they hoped, please God, to see better days, for when he got the wooden leg the doctor had sent for, he should be able to work as well as ever. And it made the tears come to Marjorie's eyes to

see the loving tenderness with which he looked at the poor little baby when Mrs. Ramsay took it into her arms, and with which he remarked that “the little thing was welcome, though it did come in hard times.”

“Well, Marjorie,” said her aunt, as they left the house, “you see there’s always some light in the darkness, after all, if people only open their eyes to see it.”

The expression sent Marjorie’s thoughts off to her father and their talk. So when she had come in, and had carried down her books to read by the drawing-room fire, she re-read the story of the Northern Lights which she had put into her Bible. And when the four younger children came in from Sunday school, and Norman and Effie rushed to her demanding a story, and Jack and Millie endorsed the request, she thought she could not do better than tell them, in the simplest rendering she could improvise, the story of the Northern Lights.

They all listened attentively, though Jack and Millie appreciated the allegory more than the two little ones. The wintry dusk was closing in and the firelight only lighted up the room, so Marjorie did not notice that Alan and Gerald had stolen quietly in just before she had concluded.

“Where did you get that story, Marjorie?” asked Alan; “you’ll have to tell it over again to us.” Then Gerald explained that he had come to ask if Marjorie would go to the English Cathedral that evening with Ada, and Mrs. Ramsay had said he might stay for tea and take Marjorie to meet Ada at church, if she wished to go. Marjorie was very willing to agree to this arrangement, for she liked the Episcopal service very much, and Alan told her she would hear both good music and a good sermon.

“There’s Professor Duncan!” exclaimed Millie, as her ear caught his voice talking to her father in the hall, and she and Jack ran to meet their favorite. He came in with Dr. Ramsay, one of his arms resting on the shoulder of each of the two children. His strong face was lighted up with a most benignant smile in which he included Marjorie, when she was formally introduced by the eager Millie.

“Ah! so this is the young lady I met in the bookstore yesterday. And so you are Mrs. Ramsay’s niece, my dear? Do you know, I was looking at you and trying to think what the likeness was that was puzzling me? I see it now, though. I once traveled to New York with your father, and that is a face, and a man, too, that one doesn’t easily forget.”

Marjorie colored deeply with pleasure at this mention of her father. And then Millie exclaimed:

“O, Professor Duncan! you must make her tell you the story she has just been telling us. It’s such a pretty one, and then it’s a parable, and you like parables. It’s about the Northern Lights.”

"I'll be delighted to hear it," said the professor, settling himself comfortably in one easy-chair, while Dr. Ramsay threw himself into another. "I'm just as fond of stories as these folks here—and much fonder of parables, I know, than I was at their age."

Marjorie had often been exhorted by her father to do a thing—when she was asked to do it—as well as she could, and without making any fuss about it, as some girls were apt to do. So she overcame her shyness of strangers, and only said that she would rather read the story as her father had sent it to her in print.

So a lamp was lighted, and Marjorie read it in a very clear and expressive voice, trying to reproduce it just as her father had first read it to her. Mrs. Ramsay and Marion had come in too, and all listened attentively, but Professor Duncan never took his deep-set eyes off the young reader till the last word had been read.

"Do you know, I like that very much?" he said, "capital idea! It's just what I'm always telling these children about in some form or other. We've had just such solitary Northern Lights here in Canada, shining in the darkness. And by the way, Ramsay, what do you think about brave Gordon all alone there? Do you think Stewart will be able to manage to reach him?"

"I wish they could do it a little quicker," said Dr. Ramsay. "And I wish poor Gordon could know how many hearts are throbbing with eager desire to hear of his relief. It would cheer him up a bit in that terrible isolation."

"Not alone; his Father is with him," said Professor Duncan solemnly. "We may be sure of that! If ever a man lived as 'seeing the invisible,' you may be sure he does."

"Right, Duncan, right!" exclaimed Dr. Ramsay; "would we were all like him in that."

But Millie was eager to make her request of Professor Duncan. It was that he would tell them, for Marjorie's benefit, her favorite story of Isaac Jogues.

"Well, I've told it so often that I should think you would know it by heart. But I don't mind telling it again if it won't bore your mother and father."

"Your stories never bore me, Duncan, you know very well," said Dr. Ramsay.

"Do you know, Ramsay," said the professor, fixing his deep, thoughtful eyes on the flame that was leaping up from a lump of black coal, "it's pleasant to set such a story as that of Isaac Jogues beside the present interest in our living, struggling Gordon—living still, I trust at least! It makes one realize the unity of the Christian life and spirit; one under all differences of time and character and creed; the one inextinguishable persistent power of divine love and sacrifice, leaping up even from our dark humanity, as that flame leaps up from that black coal, the latent power of

the light and heat that have, somehow or other, pervaded its very essence.” And then he repeated in a low, half-soliloquizing tone the lines Marjorie had heard so often from her father:

“Wherever through the ages rise  
The altars of self-sacrifice;  
Where Love its arms hath opened wide,  
And man for man hath calmly died,  
I see the same white wings outspread  
That hovered o’er the Master’s head!”

“Oh!” exclaimed Marjorie half-audibly, with an involuntary expression of recognition.

“What is it?” asked Professor Duncan, glancing at her with quick interest.

“Oh! nothing; only my father is so fond of that poem. It seemed so strange to hear you repeating it,” explained Marjorie.

“Yes; I should quite imagine that would be one of his favorites,” said Professor Duncan. “But you know you haven’t got a monopoly of Whittier over there any more than we have of Tennyson. We love your Quaker poet, some of us, quite as much as any of his countrymen can do.

“But now I see Millie is thinking I have forgotten Jogues. Well, Miss Marjorie, as it is for your benefit I am to tell it, let me ask you first if you have read Parkman’s History of the Jesuits in North America.”

“No,” Marjorie said; “papa always said I must read all Parkman’s books by and by. But he said it needed courage to read that one.”

“So it does, my dear; Christian courage, that is! There are things in it too dreadful for tender-hearted girls to read, unless indeed they can appreciate the compensations, which all can’t do! If we could only feel what is in a martyr’s heart when he suffers, I fancy we could bear to hear of his sufferings as calmly as he takes them. We don’t realize the truth of the promise, ‘As thy day is, so shall thy strength be!’

“Well, if you haven’t read Parkman, you don’t know, perhaps, how, when the Christian church at large hadn’t yet waked up to its missionary duty, some earnest men, zealous even to fanaticism, banded themselves together to extend Christianity according to their lights, and called themselves the ‘Society of Jesus;’ we call them the Jesuits. And, after Jacques Cartier’s discovery of Canada, and the visits of other adventurers had opened up a new continent to the ambition of France, as well as other countries, an intense enthusiasm arose there, led by the Jesuits, to convert the



wild, roving, miserable Indians to the true faith. Queens and noble ladies and knights and noblemen vied with each other in their zeal and liberality to help in this great enterprise. And the Order of the Jesuits supplied one brave hero after another, ready to devote himself for life to this noble endeavor, and ready, too, to meet with joy not only exile from all he held dear on earth and from all the comforts of the most civilized social life in the world, but also cold, starvation, sufferings of all kinds, and even death by the most horrible tortures, always contemplated as a not remote possibility, and with terrible examples constantly before their eyes.”

Professor Duncan raised himself a little in his chair, and drew a long breath, as if himself oppressed by the mental image he had conjured up. Then he went on again:

“It seems almost wrong to exalt any one individual above another, among so many brave, enthusiastic men, all self-devoted to their object—from the brave soldier Champlain himself, who declared that the conversion of a single soul was better than the discovery of a continent, down to the humblest *adonné*, or lay brother, who because he had not learning nor riches to give, was said more especially to have given himself! But yet, to my mind, the story of Isaac Jogues is one that for tender pathos and grand simplicity and unconscious humility and noble, self-forgetful devotion is the most touching and beautiful of all the heroic stories of these true-hearted Christian men.

“Well, you must know, Miss Marjorie,” he continued, “that the conversion of the great Huron nation or tribe was the special object of all these heroic missions. The Algonquins, and their relations, the Hurons, were, from the time of Champlain, the fast friends of the French, who had always treated them kindly, and who unfortunately took up arms to aid them in their great and destructive feud with the Iroquois. This was a great and fatal mistake of Champlain’s. The white men should have used their influence to make peace among these warring tribes, instead of taking sides in their cruel warfare. But he thought that if he could help the Hurons to conquer the ferocious Iroquois, he would have no difficulty in establishing the French ascendancy in North America. But unfortunately the Iroquois had white allies too. The Dutch traders who had settled in New York, and the English settlers of New England, were jealous of the French, and willing enough to help the Iroquois by supplying them with fire-arms for the ‘thunderbolts’ they had first seen Champlain use, with such terrible effect. In fact, it was their policy always to use them as a breastwork against the advances of the French.

“It was about 1640 that a terrible series of Iroquois incursions began to harass the French colonists and the Jesuit Missions. Here in Ville Marie, as Montreal was then called, the few settlers were in constant peril of their lives, and skirmishing

bands of the Iroquois were perpetually hovering about the St. Lawrence and the Ottawa to waylay and capture any passing canoes; for these were the great highways down which the Hurons used to come, from their western towns and villages, to trade with the French. The Jesuit missionaries had, with great peril and difficulty, established a mission on the wild shores of Lake Huron. They had a central mission-house, where lived some ten or twelve of the devoted brethren, and from which they went out, generally two and two, on preaching and visiting tours among the Huron villages, healing the sick, when they could, by their simple remedies, baptizing the Indians and their children, when permitted, and certainly by degrees winning these savage hearts to feel that this new religion they taught was a religion of love and mercy.

“Among the pious brethren assembled at Sainte Marie, then their central mission station, was Isaac Jogues, who came to join the Canadian mission in 1636, as a young man still under thirty. He was delicately moulded in face and figure, sensitively organized, and, don’t forget this by and by, constitutionally timid. He was a scholar and a student, and doubtless had had his own literary ambitions, but his deep religious nature and sensitive conscience had led him to become a Jesuit, and to join this brave band in the wild West. Though far from robust, either physically or even perhaps mentally, he was light and active, a fleet runner, and, as you shall see in the end, his spirit was simply unconquerable! He was one of two men—the other as delicately constituted as he—brave Garnier, who were sent on one of the most perilous missions among these Great Lakes, that to a fierce tribe called the Tobacco Nation. Starved, hooted, dreaded as conjurors, their lives constantly menaced, they wandered through the snow-blocked forest, from one miserable cluster of bark cabins to another, seeking to gain a hearing for their message of love. But as yet, all hearts and homes were sullenly closed against them, and they only escaped with their lives under cover of darkness, from a band of young men who pursued them with their tomahawks, intent on their destruction. Another perilous pilgrimage he had, soon after that, with another brother, Raymbault, along the shore of Lake Superior, preaching on one occasion to an assembly of some two thousand Ojibways, a branch of the Algonquins.

“But there was a still more perilous mission to be undertaken, and Jogues was the man chosen for it. This was to go down to Quebec, by the Iroquois-infested St. Lawrence, with the canoes of some Huron traders, to get the various supplies needed for the mission, which were quite exhausted. The long voyage down the Ottawa and the St. Lawrence was accomplished safely; and Jogues set out on his return, with the prayers and blessings of his brethren at Quebec, taking back with

him two young lay brothers, who were eager to take part in the Huron mission. They had a convoy of twelve canoes, most of these being filled with Huron traders, still heathen, while there were also a few Christian Indians, one of them a noted chief.

"The little fleet was quietly gliding through a long stretch of bulrushes on Lake St. Peter, on their way up here, when the Iroquois war-whoop, and the whistling of bullets, announced the dreaded enemy, whose war canoes bore down on them from their ambuscade. The Hurons were panic-stricken. The heathen Indians leaped ashore and made for the woods. The Christian Hurons rallied to the support of the French at first, but the sight of another approaching fleet of canoes put them all to flight. Goupil, one of the young lay brothers, was captured, and Jogues, who might have escaped, would not desert his friend, and surrendered himself to the astonished savages who were guarding the prisoners.

"Forgetting himself, Jogues began to baptize the poor captives. The other lay brother, a fine fellow named Couture, also escaped at first, and also returned to share the fate of his friends. Unhappily, in a moment of excitement, Couture fired his gun and shot an Indian who had presented his own weapon at him. The Iroquois sprang upon him like savage beasts, and Jogues ran to try to shield Couture. But the enraged Iroquois beat and mutilated the three unfortunate missionaries, even gnawing their hands like savage dogs, as was their brutal custom with their prisoners. Then they and the other captives were carried off in the canoes of the marauders, up the winding Richelieu and across the beautiful Lake Champlain, to the charming solitudes of Lake George, of which Jogues was thus the first discoverer, and which should have borne his name. But he was thinking little of discovery then; indeed, it was a wonder he was alive! For on the way they reached a large camp of the Iroquois, and there they were again brutally beaten, lacerated and tortured, till Jogues, who, as chief man, fared the worst, was half-dead.

"It would be too painful for me to tell, or for you to hear, about all the sufferings of the blood-tracked pilgrimage, across the primeval wilderness, through which one now travels so swiftly, to the palisaded Iroquois town on the Mohawk, where the same horrible scenes of torture were repeated with redoubled fury. The Iroquois must have seemed like demons of hell to the maimed and suffering missionaries. Yet even when enduring the full force of their savage fury, Jogues was thinking of the perishing souls about him, and as, you know, these Jesuits esteemed baptism of supreme importance, poor Jogues managed to baptize two of the dying Huron captives with the raindrops he found on an ear of Indian corn given to him for food!

"Couture, whose boldness had gained the admiration of the Indians, though he had made them so angry by killing one of their braves, was saved from further

tortures by being adopted into an Iroquois family. Goupil, to whom Jogues had sacrificed his liberty, was murdered by his side, and so he also had his release; and Jogues was left alone. He was anxious to give to Goupil's remains a Christian burial, but the Iroquois hid the body from him, and he had to read the service of the dead over the spot where it had lain. When the snows were melting he found some pitiful relics of the corpse, and gave them the only interment he could, in a hollow tree.

"It seemed like a living death that poor Jogues had to endure that winter among his pitiless foes. They would not kill him outright, but made him their slave, and dragged him with them through the wintry forest on their hunting expeditions, when he almost starved because he would not touch the food they caught, devoted by them to their divinity of the chase, or, as Jogues put it, to a demon. As he had no quiet in their wigwams for meditation and prayer, he arranged an oratory for himself in a lonely spot in the forest. He cut out in the bark of a great tree a cross—the symbol of his faith and of his present martyrdom—and there, amid snowdrifts and icicles, he would kneel in his shaggy garment of furs, and pray to Him who was as near to his suffering servant there as to the exiled apostle in Patmos. If He had not been, how could Jogues ever have lived through those days?

"At last, however, his masters growing tired of their patient slave, sent him back to the village, and there he remained till spring, trying to teach the savages about Him; telling them something of the glories of the sun and moon and stars, and something, too, of Him who had made them. But there they would not follow him, any more than the heathen Greeks at the opposite pole of civilization would follow St. Paul.

"At last, after more adventures than I can tell you now, he went about midsummer with a party of Iroquois to a fishing place on the Hudson, below Fort Orange; that is where Albany now stands."

Marjorie remembered the busy city and bustling terminus she had so lately passed, and tried, with a new interest, to recall the features of the surrounding scenery.

"Fort Orange was just a little rude fort of logs and palisades, after the fashion of those times, with a few scattered homes of settlers about it, and close to it a little Dutch church. I suppose this was the first Protestant church that Jogues had ever seen. Its pastor was a certain Dominie Megapolensis, who wrote a little history of the Mohawks. It is pleasant to know that these two good men met each other; and I am sure, after his year's exile among heathen savages, that Jogues was glad to find that the Protestants—whom he had been taught to call 'heretics'—were fellow-Christians, after all.

“While Jogues was near Fort Orange, he heard news that made him both desire and dread to return to the Mohawk town. He heard first, that one of the Iroquois war parties had come in from Canada with prisoners, doomed to the usual fate, and he felt that he ought to be there to baptize and absolve the sufferers. But then, too, he heard that a party which had gone to Three Rivers, carrying a letter from him to the French commandant—which was really a warning letter, though they didn’t know it—had been repulsed by the French with heavy loss, and that his death was certain from the enraged Iroquois if he ventured back. Van Curler, a leading Dutch settler, who, to his honor, had already tried to ransom Jogues, now urged him to escape from this imminent peril, and offered him a passage in a little Dutch vessel about to sail for France. We can imagine how poor Jogues’ heart must have throbbed at the thought of seeing his native land and his friends once more, after all his unspeakable sufferings. But he was not sure whether he ought to save his own life, or go back to try to save the souls of the unhappy captives; so to Van Curler’s amazement he asked to have a night for consideration and prayer.

“I am sure you will be glad to hear that he decided that ‘mercy was better than sacrifice,’ even where he himself was to be the sacrifice, and that it was his duty to save his own life when so good an opportunity was providentially offered, rather than expose himself to certain tortures and death for the sake of trying to do for others what he might never be permitted to do. So he accepted Van Curler’s offer with grateful thanks, and a boat was left on the shore, to enable him to reach the vessel. He had to steal away at night from the large, barn-like house in which he and his Indian companions slept, along with the settler’s family. He got away at last, but not without being severely bitten in the leg by the settler’s dog, and with much difficulty succeeded in pushing off the heavy boat, left high and dry by the tide, and in reaching the vessel. Even then, however, his troubles were not over. The Indians, furious at his escape, searched for him everywhere, and even came to look for him in the vessel where the sailors had hidden him as securely as they could. Fearing lest he might be found there, the captain of the vessel had him taken to the fort, where he was lodged in the garret of a miserly old Dutchman, who kept goods for selling to the Indians close to Jogues’ hiding-place, and separated from it by a partition so thin that they could have seen him if he had not hidden himself behind a pile of boards. He was a prisoner here for six weeks, and the old Dutchman ate most of the food that was sent him, so he was nearly starved, and his wounded leg was very painful, too. The Dutch minister visited him, and did all he could to cheer him in his solitude. They must have talked a good deal together, for the good pastor writes of him in his history, as a ‘very learned scholar.’ If you stop in Albany on your way home, and

pass the Phoenix Hotel, remember that it stands on the very site of this first 'Evangelical Alliance' meeting in America, between a Dutch pastor and a Jesuit missionary.

"At last the settlers, who, of course, did not want to quarrel with the Indians, succeeded in pacifying them with a large ransom for their captive; and the Director-General of Manhattan—as you know New York was called then—sent for Jogues to be brought to him on a small vessel going down the Hudson. So the poor fugitive missionary sailed down that beautiful river, then in all its native wildness, and reached the straggling village, clustered round a dilapidated fort, where now stretches over so many miles, your great city of New York. Yet even then, with its four or five hundred colonists, it was almost as cosmopolitan as now; for thirteen languages were spoken there at the time of Jogues' visit. A bloody Indian war was raging just then, and he must have felt pursued by the demon of carnage, for many of the settlers were killed during his visit. The Dutch Director-General received him very kindly, and gave him a suit of fine cloth to replace his tattered, savage garments. They paid him the honor, too, of giving his name to Jogues Island in the harbor. Finally he was taken on board a small sailing vessel, which would at least carry him across the sea to England.

"There was but little comfort even here for the refined and cultivated French scholar. He had for a bed a coil of ropes on deck, where the waves often drenched his clothing. On his arrival in the English port, new trouble awaited him; for a gang of ruffians boarded and robbed the ship while its crew were carousing on shore; and Jogues was left coatless and hatless once more.

"At last, however, he got a passage across the Channel in a coaling vessel, and was safely landed on the coast of Brittany on Christmas Eve, in time for midnight mass. Now he was at home! He asked shelter in a humble cottage, where he was hospitably received, but where, at first, by reason of his unconventional attire, he was taken for a poor but pious Irishman. But when his hosts found out something of his history, and saw his scarred and mutilated hands, their simple hearts were overcome with love and reverence. They gave him a woolen cap, or *tuque*, for his hatless head, and the peasant's daughters presented him with their own little treasure of hoarded *sous*. And, mounted on a horse borrowed from a trader of Rennes, he made his way, on Christmas morning, to the Jesuit College of the town, which he reached just before mass. He sent word by the porter to the rector, just putting on his vestments, that a poor man just arrived from Canada was waiting to see him, and the rector, eager for news of the mission, came at once to the vestibule, where stood this poorly-dressed and weather-beaten stranger. The rector had many questions to

ask, but ere long came this: 'And what of Jogues? Is he dead? Have the Indians killed him?'

'He is alive and well, and I am he!' was the reply. It is easier to imagine than to describe the effect it produced. That must have been a joyful Christmas Day in the Jesuit community, and their morning mass must have been one of heartfelt gratitude and praise."

There was a little pause. Marjorie drew a long breath, and exclaimed:

"Oh! I am so glad he got safely back," and Gerald, who had also been listening with fascinated attention, muttered to Alan: "Well, he was a plucky fellow!"

"Oh! but that's not the end of it," explained Millie eagerly.

"No," said Professor Duncan; "I sometimes wish it were! It would be pleasant to leave him to rest and meditate in the quiet cloister for the remainder of his life, fêted and lionized as he could have been, had he chosen, and telling wonderful stories of his adventures to admiring votaries. The French Queen sent for him, and she and her ladies felt it an honor to kneel and kiss the hands so mutilated by the Indians. The Pope sent him a special dispensation to enable him to say mass, which you know a priest who is maimed in any way is debarred from doing. If any man might have been justified for preferring to remain at home in safety, and not again risking exposure to those savage tormentors, Jogues was that man. But when the spirit of self-sacrificing love has once taken possession of a heart, it must go on in its divine mission. Jogues was a young man yet, and his indomitable spirit had not been vanquished by suffering. He shrank from lionizing homage, and cared only to follow his Master. So in the following spring he returned to the Canadian mission, and surely it was the nobler course.

"For the next two years he lived here in Montreal, where he found plenty of work to do, and dangers enough, too. At the end of that time a wonderful event happened. His old enemies, the Mohawks, sent a deputation to make a treaty of peace with the French, and with them came the long lost Couture, the young Frenchman whose life had been saved by being adopted by the Indians, and who now looked like an Indian himself. This embassy of peace was partly owing to his influence, and partly to the humanity which had been shown by the French to two Iroquois prisoners, brought to them by their Huron friends.

"The French were anxious to make this treaty more secure, and also to establish among the Iroquois a new mission, to be called The Mission of the Martyrs. Father Jogues was asked to be the leader of the French embassy. Just at first he shrank from returning to those scenes of suffering, and the dangers he knew so well. But if the 'flesh was weak,' the spirit was willing, and the hesitation was but momentary.

But he felt a strong presentiment of ill. He wrote to a friend in Latin: '*Ibo et non redibo*;' 'I shall go, and shall not return.'

"But he took the precaution of following the advice of an Algonquin convert, and wore a layman's doublet and hose, instead of the long black cassock, a silent preacher of a faith which, to the Indians, seemed, at first, to destroy all that they cared for in life.

"Jogues had for his companions a French engineer, two Algonquins, carrying gifts, and four Mohawk guides. The little party followed the route that Jogues had such reason to remember, and in re-crossing Lake George he gave it its first name of Lac St. Sacrament. On his way he visited Fort George, and met again the Dutch friends who had so kindly befriended him. Then he went on to the Mohawk town, which had been the scene of his torture and servitude, and appeared before his former persecutors in his new character, as the plenipotentiary of the great French power they were seeking to propitiate.

"The meeting passed off most harmoniously, though it was clear that the Mohawks still hated the Algonquins; but Jogues and his companions were advised to hasten home lest they should meet any of the four still hostile 'nations' of the Iroquois. Jogues, true to his unselfish and devoted spirit, would not depart until he had visited all the Indian homes, confessed and instructed the still surviving Christian prisoners, and baptized dying Mohawks. Then they crossed the country to Lake George, where they made bark canoes and descended the Richelieu in safety.

"One more journey lay before brave Father Jogues, and then he was to enter into his rest. The Mission of the Martyrs was still to be established; and though it was at first decided that Jogues should remain all winter in Montreal, he was finally sent back to the Mohawks, with a young French lay brother and some Hurons. On the way they met some Indians, who gave them information of a growing hostility among the Mohawks, which frightened their Mohawks into going back. But Jogues and his young brother pushed on in faith and hope, on their labor of love.

"But alas! what seemingly slight and trivial things often seem to be the means of thwarting our noblest designs. A harmless little bag which poor Jogues had left in the care of the Mohawks till his return, and which contained, as he took care to show them, only a few personal necessities, excited the suspicions of sorcery, never far from their superstitious minds. These suspicions were basely fostered for selfish ends by the cowardly Huron prisoners, and the prevalence of sickness and of caterpillars increased their superstitious dread. The Bear clan, one of the great Mohawk clans, broke out violently against the French, and took the war path in defiance of the treaty, to which the clans of the Wolf and the Tortoise still adhered.



“Unhappily, as we say, Jogues and his companions fell in with one of their warrior-bands, and were seized and carried off in triumph to the town of the savages, where the old indignities and tortures began again. And notwithstanding all the protests of the Indians of the other clans, the death of the missionaries was loudly demanded.

“The end was not long delayed. It was the middle of October, when the forest was all glowing with the rich autumn hues. The evening after the prisoners had been brought into the Mohawk town, a ‘brave’ entered the lodge where the bruised and lacerated missionaries were awaiting their fate, and invited Jogues to a feast. The father rose and followed the Indian to the lodge of the chief of the Bear clan. As he stooped to enter, a blow from the tomahawk of a savage concealed in the entrance pierced his brain and gave him the martyr’s death he had so often looked for. A friendly Iroquois, one of the prisoners whose humane treatment by the French had led to the proposals for a treaty, held out his arm to shield the missionary’s head, but the tomahawk cleft its way through it in its descent. Jogues’ companion in a few hours shared his fate, and the barbarians set up the heads of the martyrs as trophies on their wall of palisades.

“So you see, Miss Marjorie, that the story of Isaac Jogues belongs equally to our country and to yours. It was New York soil that was stained, and I think hallowed by the brave martyr’s blood, as it was also the scene of his year of captivity among the savages. And now, do you think there could be a braver man or a truer hero and martyr than this simple, humble, unpretending Isaac Jogues?”

“No, indeed! I had no idea there were such Jesuits as that!” exclaimed Marjorie, who, like the others, had been absorbed in the long and pathetic tale, told in Professor Duncan’s low, earnest tones, as if he were telling the story of an intimate friend to a single auditor.

“I think he was the bravest man I ever heard of. Just as brave as Regulus or any of those old fellows in our Roman history,” said Gerald, *sotto voce*, to Alan.

“I think he was braver, even,” said Alan, “for he did it for love to those wretched savages, and Regulus did it for the sake of his country.”

“‘The love of Christ constraineth us,’” said the professor. “That was the secret of Jogues’ courage, as it was of St. Paul’s, a braver man even than Jogues, for the Master he served was ‘despised and rejected’ by the whole cultured world, when he staked all to follow him. But it was the same spirit, and one hardly cares to make comparisons when the faith and love are the same.”

Marjorie felt as if she had got a good deal to think about, and she was not sorry when Dr. Ramsay proposed some music by way of relieving the depressing effect of

the professor's story. Marion opened the piano, and they all sang together some of their favorite hymns, with great spirit and sweetness. It was a new Sunday pleasure to Marjorie. As they sang, by Dr. Ramsay's request, the beautiful hymn, "When I survey the wondrous Cross," the tears came to Marjorie's eyes as she thought how truly the story they had just heard had illustrated its spirit. She wished she herself could only feel it as fully.

After tea she went with Gerald to the Cathedral. As they walked, they talked a little about the story of Jogues, and Gerald seemed quite to drop the cynical and sarcastic manner he wore at home. She could not help thinking vaguely that he had aspirations for something better than the low ideal of life that was presented to him there, and that he was dissatisfied with that, without having as yet grasped anything better. He seemed honestly puzzled to account for the tenacity with which the heroic missionary had pursued his mission to "such a wretched lot of savages." Marjorie referred to the allegory of the Northern Lights, but he said, "That was only poetry, and did not explain it at all!"

To Marjorie's surprise and delight, the evening sermon was on the text her father had quoted in his letter: "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." It was an earnest appeal to walk by that true and only Light, and it was followed by her father's favorite hymn, exquisitely rendered:

"Lead, kindly light, amid th' encircling gloom,  
Lead thou me on;  
The night is dark, and I am far from home,  
Lead thou me on!"

The tears rushed irrepressibly to her eyes as the soft, sweet, pleading music carried her thoughts back to her father's story of the experience of his own life; and her prayer went up to the Light that "shineth in darkness," to lead both of them—far from each other and the earthly home—as only that Light can lead any of us through the wilderness of this world.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### A SNOW-SHOE TRAMP.

The next few days seemed full of the stir of Christmas preparations, both indoors and out. The coming Christmas holidays were eagerly expected by the children as times of unlimited out-door fun, and nearly every member of the family had some important secret of his or her own; some urgent business to be transacted in private, or at most with a single confidant. Marjorie, as being a sort of neutral party, was in everybody's confidence, and was appealed to half a dozen times a day by Millie, Jack and Norman, as to which of half a dozen possible gifts would be nicest for each member of the family, from Dr. Ramsay down to Effie. Mrs. Ramsay, too, had a number of Christmas gifts and Christmas surprises on hand for several of the poor families in which she took a motherly interest, and Marion and Marjorie had plenty of occupation for their mornings, in making up various warm garments, dressing some cheap dolls, and preparing candy-bags to be ready before the more immediate Christmas preparations claimed their attention.

Mrs. Ramsay greatly approved of Ada's suggestion about the photograph of Marjorie to be taken for her father. She knew that no gift could possibly please him as much, and as there was no time to be lost, she arranged for an early appointment for the sitting. Marion went with Marjorie to the beautiful studio of the photographer, where Ada met them by arrangement, so that she might exercise her taste in suggesting positions which she considered effective. They amused themselves while waiting for their turn, by inspecting the winter photographs of all kinds and sizes; toboggan parties, snow-shoe clubs and skaters in masquerade. Ada showed Marjorie a photograph of the last ice palace, and the plan of the one in progress, which they could now see beginning to rise like a fairy palace from its foundations on Dominion Square.

At last the photographer was ready, and the important process began. Robin was to be in the picture—Marjorie had quite decided on that—for the photograph was to be to her father a real bit of home, and Robin was part of that. This complicated matters a little, for several of the fanciful positions Ada had suggested would not suit Robin's presence at all. At last Marjorie, tired of trying various positions, subsided into her old favorite one, half-curved up in a large easy-chair, where Robin sprang to his place at her side, and the photographer, catching the

happy effect and the right moment, took the photograph before either of the sitters realized that it was being tried. The result was so good that he declared there was no use in trying again, as he was not likely to get a better picture. Robin had not stirred, and Marjorie's position was excellent, and the picture would be all that could be desired.

Ada was rather disappointed, but consoled herself by persuading Marjorie to try a sitting once more along with herself, both in their out-door dress, and as Marjorie had worn her new blanket ulster and *tuque*, which was very becoming to her clear, pale complexion, gray eyes and dark curling locks, the two girls made a pretty contrast. This picture was to be Ada's property, but she generously offered Marjorie some copies of it for Christmas presents. And Marjorie thought it would be lovely to send a copy of it to Nettie Lane and Rebecca—and to Aunt Millie, too, and then her father would see both.

As they walked up Bleury Street, Ada proposed that they should go in to look at the Jesuits' Church, which Marjorie, remembering the story which had so interested her, was very willing to do. This church possesses no external beauty, being heavy and clumsy in appearance; but its interior is gorgeous with rich tones of color, and its ceiling is charmingly painted in frescoes of a soft tint of brown. Each compartment, into which the ceiling is divided, contains a separate subject, most of them being from the life of Christ. Marjorie was attracted at once by the pathetic picture of the Good Shepherd; but by and by Marion, who had a very appreciative eye for art, drew her attention to a quaint, realistic representation of Jesus as a boy, employed in Joseph's workshop, while his mother with her distaff, was close by. It was a very unconventional "Holy Family," and it touched Marjorie with its simple sweetness; the humble surroundings, the unconscious purity and earnestness of the face of the boy, occupied with the work he had then to do, yet with the presage in his eyes of other work beyond. It brought back to her mind the "loving obedience," of which her father had spoken. As she was standing absorbed in contemplating it, she was startled by hearing Ada's laugh, and tones, only very slightly subdued, of gay chatter near the door. She looked round, rather startled at this sudden intrusion on the solemn quiet that had reigned in the church, where a few silent worshipers were kneeling in prayer, and where the stillness seemed to breathe the spirit of worship. She saw that Ada's eldest brother had just come in, and with him a young man somewhat older than himself, whose appearance and expression distinctly repelled her at first sight. They were talking to Ada, and Dick was evidently anxious to talk to Marion, too, but she distinctly let him see that she would not talk there.

The spell of the beautiful quiet church was broken for Marjorie, and she was

quite ready to go, and as her companions had been waiting for her, they all left the church.

"I didn't know you were so 'high church,' Miss Ramsay," said Dick, who kept his place beside Marion and Marjorie, while his friend walked on with Ada, who seemed to find him most entertaining, to judge by the frequency of her merry laugh. "I thought you were a good Presbyterian, and didn't believe in paying respect to Roman Catholic churches."

"I was brought up to respect all churches, Mr. West," responded Marion, "not for the sake of the church itself, but of its associations. And as for Presbyterians, if you had ever learned the 'Shorter Catechism,' you would know that we are well taught to respect everything connected with the worship of God."

"Well, I stand corrected," said Dick. "But you see I didn't think you would allow that that was worship."

"I'm sure I saw true worshipers in there," Marion replied. "And I think it's a great shame for Protestants to disturb people who are worshiping in their own way, and to think they may behave just as they like, because it doesn't happen to be their church!"

"That's just what I've heard my father say so often," exclaimed Marjorie. "He says he used often to feel ashamed of the way tourists behave in churches abroad."

"Well, when I'm a tourist, as I hope to be soon, I'll try to be on my good behavior," responded Dick, good-naturedly. "But you know it was really Hayward there who was the worst of us, and you see he doesn't believe in anything, except"—and he laughed—"well, yes, I do think he believes in himself."

"Is he an agnostic, then?" asked Marjorie; with great interest.

Dick stared, then laughed a little. "I beg your pardon," he said. "But I don't think Hayward's anything so deep as that! He just thinks it's no use bothering about things that nobody can ever understand, and he likes to have a jolly good time wherever he is. That's why he's here this winter. He's English, you know, and he's just traveling about to amuse himself. He's a first-rate fellow, though, awfully entertaining."

That Ada found him so, there could be no doubt. They were evidently on most friendly terms, and the coquetry of Ada's manner was not lost on Marjorie, to whom it was a new development in her friend. She instinctively disliked the idea of Ada's intimacy with a man of Mr. Hayward's too evident type, and Marion strongly shared her feeling. Dick suggested that they should all continue their walk along Sherbrooke Street, to see how the new Lansdowne Slide was progressing; but Marion decidedly declined, as she had a great deal to do at home. So Ada walked on with the two young men, while Marion and Marjorie hastened home, agreeing as they did so, that

it was a great pity that Ada should see so much of her brother's fast friends.

"And I know that young man is a very bad companion for poor Dick," added Marion. "He used to be quite a nice fellow—though he was always very fond of pleasure—till he got so intimate with young men who drink and gamble and all that. Because his father's so rich, they do all they can to get round him and make him like themselves. I fancy his mother would be shocked if she could have seen him as my father has seen him—and brought him home, too, at night when he couldn't walk!"

"O, Marion, how dreadful!" exclaimed Marjorie. "But doesn't she know at all, then?"

"I fancy she must know something about it; but she has the idea that all young men of spirit are so, some time or other, and she thinks he'll settle down by and by. I believe his father is very much put out about his extravagance and idleness, for I fancy he doesn't do much in the office. But he is so engrossed with business himself, that he has hardly time to see much of his family, or even think much about them."

"Well, I'm glad my father's not like that, if it was to get all the money in America!" exclaimed Marjorie, and Marion warmly re-echoed the sentiment.

When they reached the house, an unexpected misfortune awaited them. From the study came sounds of pitiful sobbing, and when the girls entered it they found little Effie sitting on the floor in a tempest of sobs and tears, and beside her the fragments of the china cup which Marion had been so carefully painting for her mother, while Norman was trying to console the mourner, and endeavoring to fit together the broken bits.

"O, Effie! how did you do it?" exclaimed Marion; but poor Effie could not speak for the sobs that shook her little frame, and Norman had the magnanimity to confess that it was partly his fault; that they wanted to get a plaything that had been put up on the same high shelf, and he had been trying to hold Effie up to get it, when, just as she was taking it down, it dislodged the cup, and then Effie herself had fallen and bruised her forehead.

It was a great vexation for Marion, but she conquered it bravely, and taking Effie up in her arms, began to examine the bump on her brow, while Alan, who had just come in too, went to get something to bathe it with. But Effie only sobbed out:

"I don't mind the bump, Marion; it's the cup. Will it mend?"

"No, dear," said Marion; "I must just try to get another done yet. But you know you and Norman have often been told not to try to get things down for yourselves. And if you had been good, obedient children, the cup wouldn't have been broken."

"O, Marion! I won't ever, ever try again!" she exclaimed, and Norman, standing by silent and rueful, looked as penitent as she did.

Marjorie thought she loved Marion twice as much when she saw the motherly sweetness with which she soothed the still sobbing child, telling her and Norman that nothing was to be said about the cup to Mrs. Ramsay, who was out, as of course she was to know nothing about it till Christmas Day. And she promised to take five cents from Effie's and Norman's little hoard of savings, towards the purchase of a new cup, while Marjorie heroically offered—confidentially—to take Marion's place in helping Millie to dress a doll intended for a Christmas gift to Effie, so that Marion should have more time for her painting.

And finally, in order to cheer up the two downcast children, Marjorie offered to do what they had been daily teasing her to do; go and take a ride on their little toboggan, down the very moderate-sized slide the children used, in a field close by. So she had her first experience there, under Alan's supervision, Norman steering, while she, only a light weight, sat tucked into the front, making herself as small as she could. As we all know, it is generally, as the French say, "*le premier pas qui coute*;" and now that she had—not "broken the ice," but—tried the snow-slide, she felt as if she could venture another on a larger scale, with less nervousness and more pleasure than she had felt before, when looking at the sharp inclined planes erected for the slippery descent.

"It looks a little dreadful at first," Millie admitted; "but every time you go down you like it better. And when you know just what the toboggan's going to do, you're no more afraid of it than of skating."

Marjorie had learned to skate a little at home by her father's desire, and her cousins were going to take her to the rink by and by; but just at present there were too many other things to do, and the skating was not so much of a novelty as these.

When they got home, just as the tints of a soft winter sunset were fading out of the pink and amber sky, Norman ran to tell his mother, as usual, what they had been doing. "And Effie had a fall and got a bump," he added incautiously.

"What! not off the toboggan?" exclaimed Mrs. Ramsay, who was always a little nervous about this sport, though she knew her husband liked the children to do, within reasonably safe limits, whatever developed courage and muscle.

"O, no! it was when the cup—oh, dear, I forgot! That's a secret, you know, mamma, so you mustn't ask about it."

Mrs. Ramsay was quite accustomed to the little ones' blundering attempts to keep their Christmas secrets, and she was very careful always to respect their innocent mysteries, and to avoid tempting them to untruth by unnecessary questions; and indeed deceit was a thing almost unknown in that household; for all knew that it was considered the gravest of all offenses. So she only smiled a little as Norman

went on:

“It’s only a secret, you know, because it’s to be a surprise for you”—

But Millie cut Norman short: “You stupid boy! can’t you be quiet? It’s nothing at all, mother, only Effie and Norman were playing in the study, and Effie fell and bumped her forehead.”

“Well, never mind, dear, let me see the bump; and don’t scold Norman. Little boys can only learn by experience when ‘silence is golden.’ And I’d rather have him make ever so many blunders by frankness, than see him in the least sly.”

Effie soon recovered from her fall, the new cup was bought, and everybody tried to help Marion to get time to finish it. Marjorie detested dressing dolls as much as Marion liked it, but she would not let her cousin touch the one that she and Millie wrestled over for three whole evenings, after Effie was gone to bed, till “their baby” became a joke with everybody. For it was not a task that could be “cobbled up” in a hurry. Effie had very decided views on the subject of dolls, and would scarcely have felt grateful, even at Christmas time, for the most beautiful doll whose clothes were sewed on, since the duty of dressing and undressing her doll was one of its greatest pleasures to her motherly little heart. Happily Marjorie had not any Christmas work of her own to do; for her father, who had, even in the hurry of his own departure, procured appropriate gifts for each member of his sister’s family, had considerably counseled Marjorie to reserve them till Christmas, knowing that she would naturally like to have her share in the general interchange of gifts, and that she might be puzzled as to the selection. So she had these safely stowed away in her trunk, each in its neat paper packet, inscribed with the name of its owner, all ready for the Christmas-tree.

For they were to have a Christmas-tree. Dr. Ramsay, though he often objected to what he would humorously style “the monstrous regimen of children,” declaring that everything nowadays was being made subservient to them and their enjoyment, always felt that Christmas was more especially the “children’s festival,” and endeavored to make it a time of real happiness to his own family. And as he knew that one of the truest means of happiness is to help to make others happy, he tried to make this an especial element of the Christmas pleasures.

On Christmas Eve, for two or three Christmases past, he had given up his surgery for the evening, to the celebration of the festival and of the Christmas tree. The boys made a pilgrimage to a place on the Lachine road, where they had permission to select a suitable young spruce, which was tastefully decorated with tapers, bright-tinted ornaments and bonbons. The children were allowed to invite some of their young friends, and the doctor invited his young friends—the children of



a number of poor patients, who had little chance of Christmas presents otherwise, and for whom small inexpensive, but welcome gifts were provided by Mrs. Ramsay and Marion. In this way the little assemblage soon grew to some thirty or forty children. And besides the Christmas-tree itself, Dr. Ramsay, with the invaluable assistance of Professor Duncan, always prepared a little exhibition for their entertainment. The professor had a large magic lantern or stereopticon for which he had, each year, some new and original dissolving views prepared. This he always exhibited for the first time at the Christmas-tree, interpreting them as he went along, with what were as good as stories to the children. The year before he had given them a series of views from Dickens' Christmas Carol, which had been exceedingly popular, but the subject was always a secret from every one but Dr. Ramsay, till the evening arrived. The little exhibition was frequently repeated during the winter for larger audiences at Sunday-school festivals and similar celebrations; but it never came off with more zest and enjoyment—both to entertainers and entertained—than it did at the Ramsay's Christmas-tree.

As soon as the growing moonlight made it practicable to enjoy going out after tea, Alan and Jack insisted on giving Marjorie her first lesson in snow-shoeing, when there would be no spectators—to speak of—to laugh at her first attempts. They had to walk some distance to reach a suitable open space at the eastern base of the mountain, and then Marion's snow-shoes, borrowed for the time, were carefully strapped to Marjorie's moccasined feet by the long thongs of buckskin that tied the network to the front part of the sole, by being interlaced across the instep. Marjorie was shown how her toes were to rest on the snow itself through the opening in the snow-shoe, so as to have the necessary spring for walking, while she was to take as long steps as possible, putting the foremost foot well in advance of the other and keeping the snow-shoes exactly parallel with each other so as not to overlap, or "interfere," as Alan preferred to call it. As the snow-shoes she wore were very narrow ones, she did not find this very difficult after a little practice, though just at first she got the long narrow points behind interlocked two or three times, the result being a plunge into the snow, out of which she was pulled by her cousins, amid much merriment. After two or three lessons, however, she could walk quite easily and lightly over the surface of the deep snow, and Alan declared that before long she would be able to run as he did, on her snow-shoes, a feat which appeared to her almost an impossible one.

Both the boys were quite eager that Marjorie and Millie should accompany them on their moonlight tramp in search of the Christmas spruce, an expedition in which Gerald was to join them. But Mrs. Ramsay thought an eight mile tramp quite too

much for Marjorie in her present state of “training.” The boys were very unwilling to give up the plan, however, and Professor Duncan, hearing the discussion, declared that he should like tremendously to accompany them part of the way at least, and suggested that the girls should go just as far as they felt able to manage, and he would escort them back. And so it was accordingly arranged. Professor Duncan came to tea, and shortly after seven the little party set out, carrying their snow-shoes till they had got into somewhat open ground, where the snow afforded them a convenient surface on which to use them.

It was a glorious night. The moon, more than half-full, had the brilliancy which only a winter moon can have—shining from an unclouded sky over a landscape of dazzling white. Yet the brighter stars, at any rate, were not obscured, but shone with diamond-like clearness against the deep gray-blue sky. The shadows of the leafless boughs were defined on the pure white snow as clearly as if penciled on its surface, and the feathery points of the pines and spruces were more distinct in the silhouette than in the reality. The air was keenly cold, but to the snow-shoers it was only bracing and exhilarating. Marjorie felt its subtle influence, and did not wonder at the high spirits of the boys, as they sometimes ran races or made little detours across fences into fields, and sometimes dropped into line and made little jokes with Professor Duncan. He was in his most genial mood, too, and entered with spirit into the “quips and cranks” of the boys, occasionally giving them an original conundrum suggested by the impressions of the moment, and creating much amusement when the answer was either guessed or revealed—generally the latter. By degrees, however, no one knew how, the solemn beauty of the moonlight landscape sobered them into a quieter mood. And in a similar way, as it often happened, without any particular intention, Professor Duncan had got on his favorite subject: the old days of the French pioneers, and incidents of the guerilla warfare of those days which had taken place in that vicinity.

“Well,” said Gerald, “I shouldn’t have objected to some of those adventures. The excitement must have been something to make up for the hardship.”

“And what grand times they must have had,” said Alan, “when they had the country all to themselves, and could go on their snow-shoes all over the woods, with lots of game everywhere, and nothing to do in winter but shoot it and keep themselves warm!”

“Yes,” said the professor; “but it wasn’t such a fine thing to come across an ambuscade of Indians with their guns or tomahawks, and know that at any moment you might be scalped or carried off to a fate a thousand times worse.”

“No,” replied Gerald. “That was the other side.”

“Yes, my boy,” the professor went on, “it’s very nice for us to be enjoying ourselves here tramping on light-heartedly, with a fine clear landscape all about us, and nothing and no one to make us afraid. But it was quite another matter to have to stumble along among the shadows of the great trees and fallen logs, never knowing when you might hear the crack of an arquebuse or the heart-chilling war-whoop, or be picked off without warning by an invisible foe! Why, do you know, the colonists at Ville Marie were often practically prisoners within their palisades, not daring to go out to shoot game or cut firewood, except in armed parties as though in an enemy’s country, and then pursued back often with heavy loss. And the men got sick of staying mewed up in their fortifications, and no wonder, though they got a good lesson when Maisonneuve let them have their way, and then made such a plucky retreat.”

“Was that the one Uncle Norman told me about in the Place d’Armes?” asked Marjorie.

“Yes. He was a splendid fellow—that Maisonneuve: true Christian knight and gallant soldier!”

“Well, it beats me,” said Alan, “to understand how those people could give up everything else, and go on suffering all they did, for such a set of stupid, miserable savages as those Indians were!”

“Ah, my boy!” the professor replied, “that’s one of the lessons we can learn from only one Master! We can’t understand it till we get some of the spirit of Him who came to ‘seek and save the lost.’ Did you ever realize what the first Christmas meant? It was the same spirit, caught from the same source, that sent Paul to ‘fight with wild beasts at Ephesus’; the same that has sent men like John Williams and Coleridge Patteson to give their lives for murderous cannibals; it is just the same spirit that is keeping our brave Gordon even now, in what might seem to us little better than a living grave. But men can do such things only when they intensely believe and implicitly obey—

‘Theirs not to reason why,  
Theirs but to do or die.’”

“It’s strange,” said Gerald thoughtfully.

“‘I can do all things through Christ strengthening me’ said St. Paul. And look at his own roll of heroes ‘of whom the world was not worthy.’ ‘By faith’ they did these noble deeds. A noble ideal, a grand cause, and a leader who never fails us—with these three powers to inspire, men can do anything.”

“But the ‘grand cause’?” said Gerald.

“To follow Him who thought none too low to care for. ‘They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever!’ Look, Marjorie, there are some of your Northern Lights.” And he pointed where in the sky to their right, some scintillating shafts of light were quivering and reaching up nearly to the zenith.

“They don’t show so much in the moonlight,” he said; “but they’re there all the same.”

Marjorie’s thoughts went straight off Southward, and she wondered whether her father were looking at that same moon through the boughs of the orange-trees.

No one spoke for a while. Presently Millie remarked, falling back a little as she was vigorously keeping up with Jack: “I want to read all about those things for myself, can’t I, Professor Duncan?”

“You can and you ought, my dear. It’s a shame they’re not far more read among us. Marjorie, we Canadians owe your Parkman a debt of gratitude for giving us his graphic pictures of our early past. It was his volumes that first set me on that track; and I’ve got so enthusiastic that I’ve been ever since reading up everything I could find on the subject, till now the life of those old times is almost as real to me when I am walking about here, as is the life I see about me with my bodily eyes.

“But now I think you two girls have walked about half as far as you are fit for. Suppose we turn back.”

This was of course equivalent to a military order to turn “right about,” for the professor always had his way when he made up his mind; so the party divided; the three boys proceeding along the quiet country road, and the professor and the girls taking their way back to town.

“He’s a thoughtful boy, that Gerald,” said Professor Duncan, as if thinking aloud. “I hope he won’t be spoiled by the temptations of riches, like his eldest brother and too many of our Montreal boys! I’m thankful many a time that I hadn’t a rich father. It’s something sad to see a father toiling away at making money, wearing out heart and life in heaping up a fortune, just to throw his family into the embrace of the demon of self-indulgence, that I often seem to see, like a great boa-constrictor, strangling out all that is noble and manly and self-denying, and making limp, soft pleasure-seekers, instead of men strong with the bone and sinew of noble manhood. But I don’t despair of Gerald, especially since he has made Alan his special friend, and sees something better at Dr. Ramsay’s in the way of an ideal of life, than he sees at home.”

This was so much like her father’s way of talking, that Marjorie felt quite at home and was glad to let Professor Duncan run on in what was evidently half a soliloquy, without any attempt to interpose any remarks of her own. Millie, too, was

unusually silent, and perhaps both were getting a little tired, when the sound of sleigh bells was heard approaching them. As this was of course a common occurrence on that frequented road, they did not remark it particularly, till a familiar voice hailed them. Dr. Ramsay had thoughtfully driven to meet them on coming in from his evening rounds, suspecting that the girls would not be sorry to take off their snow-shoes and squeeze themselves into his cutter. Marjorie was by no means unwilling to avail herself of the comfortable sleigh, and both were soon tucked in among the warm robes.

“Sorry I can’t get you in too, Duncan,” said Dr. Ramsay, laughing.

“You know that next to good company, there’s nothing I enjoy more than a solitary tramp, especially on a glorious night like this. So good-night!”

And leaving the professor to his own meditations and the boys to bring home their tree in triumph, the girls were soon safely at home, and both so sleepy after their long walk in the frosty air, that they were quite ready to follow Mrs. Ramsay’s suggestion, and go off to bed, to sleep soundly till morning.

## CHAPTER IX.

### SEVEN SCENES FROM CHRISTMAS PAST.

Christmas Eve came in apace, and every one grew busier still as it drew nearer. By dint of great industry Marion managed to get the second cup finished, along with all the other things she had on hand, before the final preparations of cake and pudding making came on. Marjorie's photograph turned out a very good likeness indeed, both of herself and Robin; and she was in danger of feeling a little more vanity than she had ever done before when she saw the artistic and carefully touched picture that had a decided resemblance to the portrait of her mother which she had always admired so much. Robin's photograph, too, was considered a "speaking likeness," and the packet was at once put up and addressed to Mr. Fleming, just in time to reach him, if all went well, by Christmas Day.

The tree was duly set up, and the children found a day's pleasant occupation in decorating it with all the resources at their command.

Meantime Dr. Ramsay's poor patients—the Browns—had not been forgotten. Marion and Marjorie, as well as Mrs. Ramsay, visited them frequently, taking little comforts as they were needed. They met Miss Mostyn there one day, and by her request walked home with her, and were introduced to her orderly little house, and to the invalid sister, even sweeter and sunnier than herself, Marjorie thought, as she reclined in her invalid chair, her Bible on a little table by her side, and beside it a basket full of knitted socks, mittens and other warm things that were her own handiwork. She always sent Mrs. Ramsay a donation for her tree, and many little hands and feet were warmly clothed every winter by her busy knitting needles. She was a kind, quiet counselor, too, for many troubled hearts; and Marjorie was so taken captive by her sweet, tranquil face, full of the peace that "passeth understanding," that she gladly promised to go to spend an afternoon with the sisters as soon as the Christmas hurry should be over.

Gerald was told about the needs of the poor Browns, and not only gave a liberal donation out of his pocket-money, but talked to his father about them, till he got from him a crisp, new ten-dollar bill, which he brought in triumph to Mrs. Ramsay.

"My father was quite shocked when I told him the state they were in. He isn't really stingy at all; but he's so busy all the time that he hasn't time to think much about such things," said Gerald apologetically.

“Oh! I know that very well,” Mrs. Ramsay said kindly. “And it’s only when we see what misery is that we feel as if we must do something to relieve it. That’s why doctors learn to be so charitable,” she added, smiling.

Christmas Eve arrived at last. Gerald and Ada, who were to be among the guests, came early to help in the lighting up, after the boys had seen that all the tapers were securely fixed in their places. They helped Professor Duncan, too, to get his apparatus in place; and Alan told Marjorie and Millie that he knew what the pictures were to be about this time, as he had seen some of the slides; but he wouldn’t tell them beforehand; and indeed they were too busy to mind. For a small regiment of poor children, including two of the little Browns, came very early, and the girls had enough to do in removing the wrappings with which the mothers had done their best to send them out warm and decent to “the Doctor’s tree.” Then they had to be amused in the ante-room till the arrangements were complete, and a little bell rang to announce that all might enter.

It was a very pretty sight, with its lighted tapers and brightly gleaming fruits. The children were seated on little benches, to contemplate it at leisure, while Marion played and sang some Christmas carols, and all joined who could. Then Alan and Gerald handed down the little gifts to Mrs. Ramsay and the girls to distribute, Professor Duncan looking approvingly on, with a kind word or two to each of the children. The family gifts were all laid on a little table in a corner, covered with a cloth, and were not to be looked at till afterward; but there was a bag or package of bonbons for each of the guests, rich or poor, not forgetting Professor Duncan, who received his chocolate creams with much gratitude. There was a little interval for the enjoyment of these, and the inspection of the mittens and comforters and dolls, which last afforded special satisfaction to some little girls who had never had a new doll before. There was more music, and then some of the younger ones were sent home in the doctor’s sleigh, made still happier by buns and cake. And then the more formal entertainment of the evening began.

The lights were all put out except those which illuminated the large white screen on which the pictures were to be thrown. When all was ready, Professor Duncan took his stand in front with his long wand, while Alan acted as his assistant, and Dr. Ramsay sat down in front with the rest, to enjoy the exhibition.

“Now,” said Professor Duncan, “we are going to invoke the spirit of Christmas Past, our Canadian Christmas past, and see something of the heroism and endurance which nursed Canada into being. And first we have Christmas, 1535.”

The first scene looked like a view of the Arctic regions. A deep blue sky threw into bold relief a landscape of snow and ice. A bold, rocky, snow-clad bluff rose

abruptly to the left, while in the distance ranges of snowy hills loomed as a background behind gloomy forests of pine. A winding white riband of ice showed a river channel in which lay three small antique-looking barks, with masts, spars and cordage sheeted with ice and fringed with icicles. Out of great snow-drifts that half-concealed the barks, rose the top of a rude fortification of palisades on the shore; and from the port-holes in the ice-encrusted hulls of the ships, came gleams of yellow light, the only token of human presence in all that frozen wilderness. It was a picture of Nature's desolation, yet relieved by the signs of human courage and energy and endurance, giving it a new and pathetic interest.

"Now, who can tell what this scene is?" inquired Professor Duncan.

"I know," exclaimed Millie eagerly. "It's Jacques Cartier's ships at Quebec."

"Right," said the professor. "This picture is intended to give you an idea of the first Christmas Eve ever spent by Europeans in Canada; unless, indeed, the Norsemen came here when they were in America in the tenth century, but that point is doubtful. But, as I hope you all know, Jacques Cartier reached Quebec on his second voyage up the St. Lawrence, on September, 1535, and after visiting Hochelaga, the Indian village here, he made his winter quarters on the St. Charles at Quebec, close to the village of Stadacona. Well, most of you know what a miserable winter the poor fellows spent there, shut up in their ice-bound ships, and exposed to cold such as they had hardly dreamed of before. And then, you know, to add to their troubles, they were tortured by that horrible disease, the scurvy, which swelled their limbs till they became useless, and their throats and mouths till they nearly choked, and their teeth dropped out. During that dreary December it began, and made such havoc that twenty-six died before April, and only three or four healthy men were left to attend to the sick and bury the dead in the snow-drifts, the only way in which they could bury them at all. During that December, too, even the Indians who had been before so friendly, ceased to visit them, and they were left in dread lest their friendship should have turned to hostility. We can fancy, then, how sadly the thoughts of home and Christmas gatherings must have haunted their minds and their homesick hearts. No doubt they made such sorry attempts at Christmas-keeping as they could, and toasted King Francis and '*La Belle France*.' After a while, however, things brightened a little. Cartier learned from an Indian that a certain kind of spruce contained a cure for scurvy, and by the time that spring came back to loosen the ice-bound streams and gladden the weary hearts, the survivors began to feel health and hope returning to their own veins. One thing only I am sorry for when I think of those brave men and their hard winter: that such a gallant leader as Cartier should have clouded his fair fame by treacherously carrying off with him



the kind chief Donnacona and some of his braves, as trophies to France. That was the darkness that mingles with the light of his heroism, and it led the way to subsequent failure and disaster.

“And now for the second Christmas. This is Christmas, 1598.”

The second scene represented a moonlight night; the sky flecked with wintry clouds, through which the silver radiance of the moon showed a long, low, sandy island sprinkled with snow. On its flat and treeless shores rolled the long, foaming surge of the Atlantic. In the foreground was a gleam of frozen lake and a group of rounded sand-hills, in the shelter of which stood an uncouth, clumsy cabin, built of strangely assorted timbers, and banked up with bastions of snow-covered turf. There was no cheerful gleam of fire or lamplight in this picture, but a few strange and shaggy figures, with long beards and furry garments, making them look very much like bears erect, were scattered about the foreground; some watching the distance from a sand-hill, others strolling listless by the shore of the lake. It was a weird picture, oppressive in its wildness.

“This is Sable Island in the Gulf of St. Lawrence,” said the professor, “and these were, so far as we know, its first human inhabitants, certainly the first European ones. The second Viceroy of Canada, and the third, including Cartier, who tried to colonize it, brought out, for this purpose, a shipload of convicts; and as a precautionary measure, he thought, as he passed this Sable Island, that he would land there his ‘Forty Thieves,’ and come back for them when he had established himself safely on the mainland. The forty convicts were by no means sorry, at first, to be left for a time where they were, monarchs of all they surveyed, and could do just as they pleased. There were cattle on the island, left there by a French baron years before, and there were seals and walrus and otter besides, so that there was no lack of food. There were plenty of blueberries, too, and acres of cranberries in the grassy valley that surrounded the shallow lake in the center. So, for a time, they enjoyed their freedom, and were very well content.

“But the months passed away one by one, and no gleam of a distant sail met their watching eyes. They did not know why, and began to think they were basely deserted. But the truth was, that when De la Roche, having chosen a site in Acadia—that is Nova Scotia—was on his way back to pick up his ‘Forty Thieves,’ a great storm blew him across the Atlantic to France instead, and there a duke, who was his enemy and a rebel against his king, shut him up in prison, and kept him in it for five years. So winter came on with its heavy gales and bitter cold, and the men had to provide themselves with the best shelter they could. They built a cabin out of the timbers of the wrecks on it, for this island is called ‘the graveyard of the sea.’ But

soon they had no wood to light fires with, and they had to eat raw flesh, and after a time learned to like it. They replaced their worn-out clothing with the skins of the creatures they killed, and collected a great store of furs, which might be valuable some day. But there was no law and order among them, and every man did what was right in his own eyes. So quarrels arose and murders followed, and by and by there were only twelve left out of the forty; men clothed in fox and seal-skins, with beards grown to their waists, and hair that hung in a matted tangle down their backs.

“At last De la Roche found means to let King Henry know of their desertion, and the king sent a ship to seek them. When they saw it outside their shoals, they shouted and danced like madmen or wild animals. They were taken back to France with their store of furs which the greedy sailors at first seized as plunder. But when they were brought before Henry, in their strange grotesque garb, he found out this robbery, and made the plunderers restore their treasures. Some of them eventually went back to their island to spend the rest of their lives as trappers in that wilderness. There is no heroism to speak of in this story; but there is a lesson in it, and that is, that men, to be truly free, must be free from bondage to their own passions.

“And now, the third scene is on the coast of—well, it is so close to the boundary between New Brunswick and Maine, that it is difficult to tell which to call it, but then it was Acadia. This takes us to a new century. It is Christmas, 1604.”

The wild moonlight scene faded off the canvas, and another, lighted by the last glow of the past sunset, took its place. It represented a rock-bound shore, just where a broad river flowed quietly out into a wide, curving bay. A long, narrow, snow-clad island, which divided this river at its mouth, occupied the foreground of the picture. A thick fringe of cedars surrounded the island, and at its upper end was a rude fort and a little surrounding cluster of buildings, rudely fashioned of logs, and built in the form of a square. One of these was a house of rather imposing dimensions, surmounted by an enormous roof. There were other houses, storehouses, barracks, a long, low, covered gallery and a great baking oven, as also a small rude chapel, a little apart on a projecting point of rock. Figures of men in French doublet and hose were scattered about the vicinity, some hauling up boats filled with driftwood, others carrying casks of water from the boats to the settlement, which was surrounded with the usual wall of palisades. Here and there gleams of firelight came from the windows that the receding daylight had left in dusky shadow; and the gate of the palisaded fortification was wreathed with cedar boughs. Beside it stood a graceful athletic figure, in doublet and hose, apparently contemplating the scene, the naturally harsh outlines of which were softened by the rich tones of the

afterglow of the sunset.

"This," said Professor Duncan, "is the '*Habitation de St. Croix*,' the first real settlement in Canada, and if we except the visit of the Norsemen, the first settlement in North America. The figure at the gate is the noble Samuel de Champlain, true knight and gallant soldier, who may truly be called the founder and father of Canada. He had come out in the preceding spring, with De Monts the new viceroy of what was as yet only a wilderness, and with the Baron de Poutrincourt, the first Acadian seigneur. Instead of following Cartier and De la Roche up the gulf to Quebec, they coasted along the Bay of Fundy, and, proceeding southward, came upon this bay and the island which you see at the mouth of the river, called by them the St. Croix. On this bleak, isolated spot they finally resolved to begin their settlement, probably attracted to it by its capabilities for defense in the face of unknown dangers. Here they built the houses you see, and Champlain, always passionately fond of gardening, tried to cultivate a garden in the sandy soil, but in vain, for nothing would grow. There was plenty of fish in the sea and river, and the islands in the bay were alive with birds. So long as summer lasted they got on very well. They built a mill on the mainland close by, and sowed there, late in the season as it was, crops of rye and barley. But when the summer had passed away, and the rich glow of autumn had faded out in the dreary gray of winter, and the biting winds made their way through the crevices of their rude walls, chilling their blood and benumbing their energies, the wilderness life became a very different thing. They were thankful for the fringe of cedars that helped to screen them from the full force of the eastern blasts, but they had to go to the mainland, even in the wildest weather, for fuel and water. Indians, too, came to camp on the island, and anxiety as to the disposition of these uncanny neighbors compelled them to be always on the watch. Champlain was the life and mainstay of the exposed little colony. Nothing could daunt his courage or permanently depress his hopeful, cheerful spirit.

"But a worse enemy than the Indians could have been stole in among them with unseen but fatal approach. The same terrible disease which had attacked Cartier's party now prostrated the colony at St. Croix. The little graveyard soon had nearly half of the band of about fourscore, for its silent tenants; and those who recovered were sick with longing to leave this fatal shore. Champlain alone was undismayed. But when the balmy airs of spring returned, and the snow and ice melted in the warm sunshine, and the grass grew green at their feet, the weary colonists, while they sowed the island with grain they were never to reap, watched the horizon for the returning sail of Poutrincourt, who had gone to France in the autumn. At last, one June morning they caught sight of the welcome white wings in the distance, and

hailed with delight the Breton merchant Pontgrave, with his party of new colonists, with whom they might now go to seek a happier settlement.

“And now,” he continued, “we are going to make a jump of two years, and show you a more cheerful Christmas Eve in that happier settlement, Christmas Eve, 1606. You are to suppose yourself in another rude fortification, of quadrangular form, very much after the pattern, externally, of the one which is now disappearing; rather larger, more complete, and fortified with four bastions, mounted with cannon. The scene you are to look at now, is the interior of the dining-hall of the Baron de Poutrincourt, Seigneur of Port Royal, as this new and flourishing settlement in Annapolis Basin, Nova Scotia, was then called.”

The outlines of the landscape faded away into a bright interior scene, where the mingled glow of blazing firelight and torches fell on a merry company of Frenchmen assembled in a large, heavy-raftered dining-hall, with walls and ceiling of dark wood, throwing out into relief the faces and figures of the party. Conspicuous in the group was the noble bearing and expressive face of the figure they had seen at the gateway in the preceding scene; the figure of the dauntless Champlain. He was here under a new aspect, however. With a gaily-decorated collar surrounding his shoulders, and a long white napkin hanging down the front of his doublet, he was advancing at the head of a procession of fifteen French gentlemen, each bearing a smoking dish. That carried by Champlain was a boar's head, profusely decorated with cedar sprigs. Below the fifteen empty places at the long dining-table sat an aged Indian chief, with strongly marked features and a long, snowy beard, and with him several minor chiefs, their heads adorned with eagles' feathers, who were watching with eager interest the bearers of the smoking and savory viands. Around the great wide-throated fireplace, in which huge logs of wood were blazing merrily, sat a motley group of dusky warriors, squaws and children, watching, too, the advent of the feast, with hungry eagerness on their dark faces. A few dogs crouched beside them, all evidently deeply interested in the feast about to begin.

“Now,” said the professor, “this is Poutrincourt's dining-hall at Port Royal, in the days of the knightly order there instituted by Champlain, and called ‘*L'Ordre de Bon Temps*.’ You know you children sometimes talk about having ‘a good time’; perhaps this is where the expression came from. When the colonists were happily settled in the beautiful harbor of Port Royal, begirt with fair wooded hills and flashing waterfalls, Champlain, in order to beguile the tedium of the long winter, organized this *Ordre de Bon Temps*, composed of fifteen knights. Each took in turn the place of Grand Master, or Steward, signified by the decorated collar which he retained for one day, and resigned in the evening, with great pomp and ceremony, to his

successor. His duty was to superintend and provide for the meals of the day, seeing not only to stocking the larder, but to cooking the viands. And a goodly supply of viands they managed to get, between their stored provisions and dried fruits from France, and the game and fish that abounded in the surrounding country. Venison, moose meat, the flesh of the beaver, otter, bear, wild cat, and hare, wild geese, ducks, grouse, and plover, trout and sturgeon and other fish, caught at sea, or through the ice of a neighboring river, made a variety from which they were expected to have a new bill of fare every day. They often invited to their table some of the Indian chiefs, in particular their trusty old friend, the famous Micmac chief, Membertou, the aged, bearded man you see here; and a beard, you know, is as uncommon on an Indian as on a priest. Membertou became a professed Christian, under the teachings of the Jesuits, when they came later; and was always a true and stanch friend to the French. The history of this settlement of Port Royal, with its vicissitudes of prosperity and misfortune, and its tragic ending, is one of the most fascinating episodes of colonial history; but I must not dwell longer on it now. In the next scene we follow the fortunes of Champlain, who soon after had to leave Port Royal, abandoned for a time, to the rock of Quebec, where, you know, under his auspices, two years later began the permanent settlement of Canada.

“And so we come to Christmas Eve, 1608.”

This scene was again a moonlight one. In its clear luster, the great precipitous cliff of Cape Diamond stood out clearly against the dark blue sky, towering above the strip of beach below, along which ran a straggling row of wooden buildings. The most prominent was what looked like a cluster of three log houses, two-storied, crowded close together with an added “block house,” or rude fortress, surmounted by a square tower with pointed roof—apparently a dovecote, though available for more warlike purposes, the whole surrounded by a wall of palisades, round which, again, ran a moat, while cannon were mounted on platforms commanding the river. Along the shore boats were drawn up, some of them evidently Indian canoes. Through the narrow-paned casements glowed warm firelight contrasting with the cold luster of the moonlight and the dead whiteness of the snow which was piled in drifts along the shore, and covered the frozen river and the distant hills that showed spectral in the distance. At the open doorway was visible again the figure of Champlain, who seemed to be engaged in conversation with a group of long-haired Indians in shaggy robes of fur.

“I don’t think this picture requires much explanation,” said the professor. “You all know how Champlain, seized with admiration for the commanding aspect of Cape Diamond, founded Quebec there in 1608. He and his men felled the great

trees that grew along the shore and built the '*Habitation de Champlain*,' which you see there and of which we have the outlines preserved by his own pencil. And there he, too, with his men went through the stern experience of a Quebec winter, more bitter by far than that of St. Croix or Port Royal. Here, too, he was comparatively alone; for his mercantile companion, Pontgrave, had sailed for France in September, and Champlain was left with his axe-men and artisans. There was no *Ordre de Bon Temps* this winter, no gay and clever Marc Lescarbot, no courtly Poutrincourt with whom to while away in talk and pleasant reminiscence the long winter evenings. If the Order of the Good Time had existed, its steward would have been sorely put to it to produce any creditable dinners, for here there was little game at hand, and even the Indians, who depended on their hunting, were often almost famished. These poor wandering Montagnais laid in for their winter stores a large supply of smoked eels, which they left in the keeping of Champlain till they wanted them. When all else failed, they would come to the *Habitation* to reclaim them. One picture gives, you see, a group of these Indians who have come to Champlain probably to get some of their eels; and I fancy that he, always benignant and devout, would supplement this with some more generous Christmas fare from his own stores. And though they, poor creatures, understood nothing about Christmas and its sacred meanings, yet the gospel of human kindness practically preached, was something they could understand. They were very much like children, and in Champlain they always found a fatherly friend. When panic-stricken by vivid dreams of the fierce Iroquois raids, they would come in a body and beg shelter within Champlain's fort; and he would at least admit the squaws and the children, while the men kept watch through the darkness without. At one time, when the ice in the river was drifting loosely about, a band of starving Indians tried to cross in their canoes to beg for food. But the frail canoes were soon ground to bits by the floating cakes of ice, to which the Indians, squaws, children and all, had to take at last and cross on this precarious raft, which was driven to shore before the moving masses behind. The poor emaciated creatures, reduced almost to skeletons, excited Champlain's deepest compassion, especially when he saw them, after finishing all that the French could give them, seize and devour the carcass of a dog that had been lying for months on the snow.

"Besides the visits of these Indians and his writing and drawing, Champlain had little to break the monotony of the dreary winter life. Trapping foxes and watching the attempts of the hungry martens to reach a dead dog hanging from a tree, seem to have been the only amusements within his reach, and they were rather beneath the dignity of Champlain—and beneath his humanity, too, I think! But even men like him are hardly ever quite beyond the spirit of their times." Professor Duncan stopped for

a moment. Then as if a thought had just struck him and demanded expression, he went on:

“Only One of all the sons of men ever stood out in the bold relief of his own pure individuality from that web of surrounding influences which people now call ‘Environment,’ and that was He whose birth we are commemorating to-night. All other lights not only shine ‘in the darkness,’ but have their light mingled with the surrounding darkness.

“And now we are going to make a leap of more than a quarter of a century, and visit Quebec again on Christmas Eve, 1635. And this scene will be a sorrowful one.”

The picture faded out, but as it did so the outlines seemed to revive for a few moments, and a change came over the details. The old *Habitation* gave place to a straggling village of cabins and huts. Ships were anchored in the stream, and on the ascending ridge above the village where now is seen a spacious terrace, there stood a wooden fort and church with distinct guns and other fortifications, which Professor Duncan pointed out as the old Castle of St. Louis. Above, the stern old cliff still rose in the primitive simplicity of nature, uncrowned as yet with its martial tiara.

But soon the outlines of this picture faded altogether and were replaced by another interior picture. It showed a bare and by no means spacious chamber—a chamber in the fort of St. Louis. On the wall hung two or three pictures, one of them a portrait of the murdered King Henry the Fourth of France, the victim of Ravallac. Another represented a fair and graceful young lady with much sweetness of expression, in an almost conventual dress. A third was a picture of the Madonna and Child, by an early French or Flemish artist; while a large carved crucifix hung opposite the plain camp bedstead. On this lay the prostrate figure of a dying man surrounded by a group of figures with sorrow in their faces and their attitudes. A tall, athletic man in the long black cassock, and with the looped-up hat of a Jesuit, stood close beside the head of the sufferer, evidently reading the service for the dying. Officers in the French uniform stood around the couch. It was obviously the moment of watching for the last breath of the ebbing life, or shall we not rather say, for the passing forevermore out of death into life. The effect of the picture, with the subdued light falling softly on the mournful figures and bowed heads and pale, unconscious form, was very solemnizing. Professor Duncan allowed his audience to look at it for a few moments before he began, in a low and earnest tone, his explanatory remarks:

“Well, I don’t think I need say very much about this picture. It dates just a century after the first scene. With Christmas Eve, 1635, closed the earthly life of brave Champlain, who for nearly thirty years had been successively the explorer, the colonizer, the father of New France, as Canada was then called. He had begun by

taking possession of it for his master, the brave King Henry, and he went on for the sake of old France and New France, too, and with the nobler desire, growing stronger and stronger, to win this vast country as the possession of a greater Master still. In the twenty-seven years that intervened between this Christmas Eve and the last, he had crossed and recrossed the ocean many times, and had seen many changes in the great wilderness around him. New France had grown from one or two little settlements in the wilderness, into a colony. Quebec had grown into a village of nearly two hundred inhabitants, and its Fort St. Louis sheltered a garrison; while there were trading-posts at Tadousac, Three Rivers and the Lachine Rapids. Champlain had already pointed out the site of Montreal. He had laid great plans, in pursuance of which he had made long journeys, and had, unhappily, embarked in Indian wars. He had stood a siege at Quebec with his little garrison, had been forced to capitulate to the English, but had eventually received back, for France, the post he had founded and cherished with so much care and toil. He had brought out his fair young wife, Helene de Champlain, the original of that portrait; but she, never probably having really loved the husband provided for her in childhood, soon grew tired of the exile, even with the adoration of the Indians, and finally went back to France to take up the life of a *religieuse*, long her especial desire. But Champlain was devoted to his life work, and was faithful to it to the last. And now he was quietly passing away, watched over by the comrades and ecclesiastics with whom he had worked, half-soldier, half-missionary, and happily unconscious that the English colony already growing up on the eastern coast of the continent, re-enforced by the Dutch traders of Manhattan, was eventually to wrest from France the rich possessions he had devoted his life to secure to her sway. And yet, though nominally the property of another power, French Canada, remaining French in character, in language, in traditions, is even to-day a monument to the dauntless courage and energy of the noble Champlain.

“And now,” added Professor Duncan, “you have all been very quiet through this long lecture, and I am getting tired as well as you. You know when I get started on this subject, I never know when to stop. But we have only one scene now to look at, and about that I must not stop to tell you much, or you will all be going to sleep. I will just show it to you and tell you what it is. And then those of you who want to hear the story that belongs to it, can ask me for it at another time.

“Now for the seventh and last Christmas Eve from the Past.”

The sorrowful deathbed scene faded away, and in its stead rose the great trunks and branches of a wintry forest. Through the leafless boughs an orange sunset could be seen, the light of which still rested here and there on the trees and snow. A party



of Indians, principally women and children, were busy setting up the poles of a wigwam, and covering them with sheets of birch bark. Some of the men were visible in the distance, with bows and arrows, and in the foreground, helping in the work of preparing the wigwam, stood the same black-frocked figure who had stood in the last scene by the bed of the dying leader. He seemed to be carrying a large bundle of fagots for the fire to be lighted in the center of the wigwam. It was a strange, savage picture, the shaggy skins in which most of the Indians were attired, and their uncovered heads, giving a peculiarly wild aspect to the forest scene; while the ecclesiastical dress of the Jesuit made a curious contrast with the surroundings of the primitive wilderness.

“The other scenes I showed you,” said Professor Duncan, “have all been connected with the discovery and colonizing of our country; but, heroic as these memories are, they should have, on Christmas Eve especially, only a secondary place in our hearts. This picture is one of pure Christian self-sacrifice, endeavoring, in the spirit of its Master, to carry the light of life into the very midst of the uncomprehending darkness.

“You remember, some of you at least, that I have told you of the intense zeal and devotion with which the Jesuits, and noble ladies and laymen too, undertook the work of converting the Indians. Père Le Jeune, the Jesuit you see here, was one of the first of these noble and devoted men, who, whatever mistakes they made, certainly made none in believing that their Master’s presence would be ‘with them always’ in this labor of loving obedience. He and some of his brethren built a little log cabin on the bank of the St. Charles, near where Cartier first moored his ships, which they called ‘*Notre Dame des Anges*.’ Here they tried to labor among the wandering bands of Indians who came their way, and gladly taught all the children they could collect. But Père Le Jeune felt that he got on very slowly in this way, even in the preliminary work of learning the language. And so he bethought himself of going to live for a time among them, as one of themselves, in order to gain a hearing for the good tidings he had to tell them. He accepted the invitation of a party of Algonquins to spend the winter with them, wandering about the frozen wilderness in the search for the game which formed their only subsistence. What this meant for poor Père Le Jeune, what suffering from cold, hunger, smoky wigwams, and the low savagery of his companions, you can scarcely realize unless you read his own graphic and simple account of them in the ‘*Relations des Jesuites*.’ If any of you care to hear the story of this particular Christmas, which he gives there in full detail, I can give it to you on Sunday evening. But here is the scene of that Christmas Eve, as he himself has described it; the encampment in the evening, after the long day’s

tramp through the snow, and little indeed to hope for in the way of Christmas cheer! They had started without breakfast, and all that their hunters could find for supper for the party of twenty was—a hare and a small porcupine. ‘It wasn’t much for so many of us,’ mildly remarks the good Father, ‘but the holy Virgin and her husband Joseph were not so well treated on Christmas Eve, in the stable of Bethlehem.’

“And there we must leave Père Le Jeune for the present. As I have said, I can tell you the whole story of his Christmas at another time, and a very touching story it is! And now, I think, Marjorie,” said the professor, turning to look at her intently listening face, “that, leaving out of course the wholly dark picture of the ‘Forty Thieves’ on Sable Island, we might call these scenes of heroic endurance or heroic effort from our Canadian Christmas Past, a little cluster of Northern Lights shining amid the Northern darkness.”

Marjorie smiled back at Professor Duncan, partly with pleasure at the thought itself, partly at the memories that the thought called up.

Dr. Ramsay rose, as he said, to “move a vote of thanks,” not as a mere form, but from his very heart. “I venture to say,” said he, “that there isn’t one here who will not hereafter remember something of when, where and how our Canadian history began. Why don’t people make a greater effort to bring our modern improvements more fully into the service of education? The stage shouldn’t monopolize all that the age can do to instruct the mind. And teaching needn’t always go on just in the old ruts of dry recitations and mere mental cram! But we all thank you most heartily, Duncan, for all the trouble you have taken, and I hope these most interesting views will please and instruct many another audience.”

Gerald took the hint from a sign of Dr. Ramsay’s, and rose to say that he had much pleasure in seconding the motion; and the vote of thanks was passed accordingly, with great unanimity and much applause.

Then the children from without had all to be bundled up and sent home, some of those who lived farthest off, in the doctor’s sleigh. Gerald and Ada went too; and only when all were gone but Professor Duncan, did the Ramsay family begin to look at their own Christmas presents. It is scarcely necessary to say that this part of the programme gave general satisfaction, though perhaps, as is usually the case, the presents given were even more enjoyed than the presents received. One of the things that gave most pleasure all round, was the acceptable gift provided for Dr. Ramsay by the mother and children—a new medical book that he wanted, and which they had all subscribed to buy. Mrs. Ramsay’s fur-lined cloak—also a joint stock present—was no less enjoyed by every body. Professor Duncan was not forgotten, either, but rejoiced in the possession of a new book of Folklore. And the gifts from New

York were much appreciated by all the recipients.

As for Marjorie, she found herself the possessor of an excellent pair of snow-shoes, and dainty Indian moccasins to wear with them; besides other little presents from each of her cousins, down to a Christmas card from Norman and a sugar cat from Effie, self-denyingly saved for the purpose of presentation. But the most precious gift of all was, by what she thought a curious coincidence, of which her aunt might have given some explanation, an admirable photograph of her dear father, on the back of which was written below his signature, the text she already loved so well: "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

And so this long expected Christmas Eve also banished into Christmas Past, to the regret of all, even Effie, though her eyes were almost closing with weariness. But she declared she would rather "stay up and be tired, than be sorry afterwards that she had not staid up." And her only regret was—that inevitable one about most of our pleasant things here below,—that "it was so soon over."

## CHAPTER X.

### CHRISTMAS PRESENT.

Christmas Day was a bright pleasant day, not very cold, the sleighing excellent, and the streets full of people, driving or afoot, enjoying their holiday. Marjorie and Marion went to the Cathedral service in the morning, where they met Ada, her mother and Gerald, the only occupants of the Wests' pew. Marjorie enjoyed the beautiful service very much, and also the earnest and appropriate Christmas sermon that followed, in the true spirit of Christmas keeping. She involuntarily glanced at Mrs. West and Ada once or twice, to see how they took the preacher's exhortation to keep the feast in the spirit of love to others, as the fitting commemoration of the infinite love of God to men. But neither Mrs. West nor Ada seemed in the least impressed by it. The mother was wrapped up in the complacent self-gratulation of her luxurious surroundings, which seemed to her the chief good in life, as much as she was wrapped up from the cold in her rich velvets and furs. And Ada, poor child, had never been taught to look on going to church as anything else than a desirable form—a duty which ought to be attended to, and never thought of listening while there, for anything that could enter as an influence into her daily life. Gerald only seemed to be really listening, and once or twice his eyes met Marjorie's significantly, as some of the preacher's words recalled Professor Duncan's little homilies.

Ada wished the two cousins to come home with her to luncheon, but Marion would not leave her brothers and sisters on Christmas Day, and Marjorie preferred to accompany Marion. They walked on together, however, as far as they could, Mrs. West driving home alone, as both Gerald and Ada preferred to walk. Ada had a great deal to tell them about her presents—bracelets, books, trinkets, and, most delightful of all, the pretty little Swiss watch which she exhibited to Marjorie with great pride and satisfaction, and which excited in Marjorie just a little pang of envy. A watch was a thing she had so often wanted to have. But then she remembered that her father had once told her that by and by, when she was old enough to be trusted with it, she should have the precious watch her mother had once worn, and that would be ever so much better than any new watch!

But Ada had something besides her own presents to think of. She drew Marjorie apart as they walked on, and put into her hand a little square paper packet neatly done up and sealed at the ends.

"There's a little Christmas box from me, Marjorie! You must wear it for my sake, and keep it to remember your Montreal Christmas by."

Marjorie was greatly surprised. She had never thought of Ada's giving her a Christmas gift, and was inclined to feel vexed that she had none to offer her. But she thanked her warmly for the little unknown present which she put into her pocket till she should get home. As they walked on together, they encountered Dick West and Mr. Hayward strolling up from a tour of the French churches, where they had been looking at the gay Christmas decorations. As before, Mr. Hayward speedily monopolized Ada, who was very willing to be monopolized, and Dick West seemed no less willing to walk by Marion's side, while Gerald and Marjorie brought up the rear.

"You ought to go down to see Notre Dame Cathedral, this afternoon," said Gerald. "You haven't been in it yet, and the Christmas decorations are always very elaborate; they have a representation of the manger, you know."

"Have they?" said Marjorie.

"Yes. Won't you go down with Alan and me this afternoon? I know Ada will like to come, too. You know you've got to see the church some time."

Marjorie thought that if it was anything like the Jesuits' church, she should like to see it very much, so the little expedition was agreed on before they parted. When she and Marion got home, she found another Christmas pleasure awaiting her; a letter from her father and another from Nettie Lane, giving her all the news from home and full of kind messages from her old teacher and all her school friends, with Christmas cards from several of them, and, not least acceptable, from Rebecca, "with love and best wishes for Miss Marjorie." Her father's letter gave her a delightful account of all he was seeing and enjoying in her Aunt Millie's Southern home, where his descriptions of the warm sunshine and the flowers were such a contrast to her Northern experiences. Best of all, his health had already improved so much under the influence of the warm climate and the rest and change, that he declared Marjorie would hardly know him if she saw him now, for he was really getting fat. There were a few bright lines from her Aunt Millie, too, with messages for everybody at Dr. Ramsay's, and a double portion for Mrs. Ramsay, who had a note from Mr. Fleming also. It was only when these letters had been read and re-read that Marjorie remembered Ada's little packet and opened it. What was her surprise to find in a neat little box, a beautiful gold locket with her initials engraved on the back. It was very kind in Ada to think of it, Marjorie felt, and she had never dreamed of her doing so. But though Ada was generous enough when she was fond of any one, and though the presentation had given her no little pleasure, the idea had

been Gerald's and he had volunteered a contribution towards the purchase as well as superintended the engraving of the initials, but under strict injunctions that his share in the gift was to be a secret.

Gerald and Ada called for Marjorie, according to arrangement, and Alan was delighted to go, too. Near the church they met Professor Duncan, who undertook to act as cicerone on Marjorie's account.

"You see, you've got to know all about our Montreal antiquities," he said good-humoredly; "and I know these youngsters don't know half of what they ought to know about them, so I'll take pity on your ignorance."

As they entered the great church—said to be the largest in North America—Marjorie could not but gaze in astonished admiration at the long vista of stately nave with its lofty Gothic arches, the rich coloring that outlined the gallery, the white and gold that alternated with deep tones of crimson and blue, the richly carved pulpit, the gorgeous altars, the crucifixes and the large imposing paintings that attracted the eye. But after the first sensation of magnificence was past, she felt that what Marion said was true, and this church, with all its grandeur, wanted the harmonious beauty that had impressed her in the church of the Jesuits.

After they had looked at all the objects of interest, and the representations of the Nativity, the professor began to give them his historical reminders.

"You know, Marjorie, that not far from here is the spot where Maisonneuve, with his friends and Madame de la Peltrie, about whom you must hear some other time, first founded Ville Marie. The place was called *Pointe à Callière*, and their first place of worship was a little chapel of bark which was afterwards rebuilt in wood. But as Ville Marie grew larger, the church grew too small; and first Maisonneuve founded another church on St. Paul Street. Finally, about forty years after Champlain's death, they built a much larger one here, and this is its successor; not much more than half a century old. So, with all its size and beauty, it isn't so interesting to me as some much smaller and plainer churches. But we may as well go up to the top of the tower and have a view of the city from it."

They clambered up the long winding stair, and at last stood on the lofty platform, with the city spread at their feet in the afternoon sunshine, the mass of walls and roofs strongly revealed against the white ground, while on one side rose the snow-clad, pine-crested "mountain," and on the other stretched the wide, winding white sheet of river, studded with masts and hulls and flanked by the distant snowy mountains that stood out in dazzling purity against the clear azure sky.

"There! isn't that a glorious panorama?" exclaimed the professor, when they had taken breath.

“But O, Marjorie!” said Ada, “it doesn’t begin to be so beautiful as it is in summer! You mustn’t go up to the top of the mountain till it is quite spring, and then you will see how lovely it is. It’s prettier than any of the views I saw last summer when I was away.”

But it was pretty cold up there, and though Marjorie was delighted with the view and much interested in picking out all the streets and buildings she had already learned to know, they did not prolong their stay on their airy perch. As they descended, vespers were beginning and they waited a little to enjoy the rich deep strains of the organ and the chanting of the choristers.

To Marjorie, the music seemed heavenly, and she was divided between the desire to stay to hear more and the strangeness of being a spectator in a church instead of joining in the service. They left the church very quietly, and as they came out on the Place d’Armes, Professor Duncan told Marjorie that the great bell, called the “Gros Bourdon”—only rung at certain times—is one of the five heaviest bells in the world. The charming chime of eleven bells she had already heard repeatedly, for it is one of the “features” of Montreal Sundays and holidays, and is considered the finest on the American continent.

And now Professor Duncan proposed that they should jump on one of the street cars and go as far down as the old Bonsecours Church, since they were on a sightseeing expedition. They were soon at the Bonsecours market, and in front of the alley leading to the old-fashioned little church standing on the old St. Paul Street—the street of Ville Marie. Then they walked up to the modern front of the ancient church with the quaint inscription over the arched doorway, which none of the younger members of the party found their French quite equal to deciphering. It runs as follows:

*“Si L’Amour de Marie  
En passant Ne T’oublie,  
Si ton cœur est Grave  
De Lui Dire un Ave.”*

Professor Duncan told them that it meant that the passer-by was not to forget the love of Mary, but was to say an Ave to the Lady of Gracious Help.

They passed into the solemn, quiet-toned church, a complete contrast to the one they had left. The dark walls, relieved by tablets containing appropriate texts, beautiful frescoes of the ceiling, the odd, conical pulpit—all gave the impression of quaintness and antiquity and solemn repose. A tablet on the wall near the main entrance commemorates in French the name of “Paul Chomedey de Maisonneuve,

founder of Montreal, and donor of the site of this church.” The name, the spirit of the place, and the sailors’ votive offerings on the walls, seemed to carry the mind back to those old heroic days of the troubles and the glories of New France, about which they had all been hearing so much from Professor Duncan.

“What a pity,” he remarked, “that those tablets are in Latin, instead of being in French, the tongue ‘understood of the people’ here! Now, boys, here’s a chance for showing what you can do in translating some of these texts for us.”

Gerald and Alan simultaneously translated the text: “Christ washed us from our sins in his own blood,” while Marjorie, who was nearest to another one, half-shyly read, “We have redemption through His blood.”

“Well done, Marjorie,” said the professor, “I didn’t know you were a Latin scholar!”

“Oh! that’s very easy; I only know a little Latin. My father wished me to learn it.”

“That’s right; I wish more girls did.”

They went round to the back of the old church and looked at the weather-beaten stones that had stood so many years, and been consecrated by so many prayers, weighted with the burden of many a troubled, sorrow-laden heart, for is not human nature the same in all ages and under all outward forms? And then, having done due honor to the old church which had seen a young country grow up around it, they turned their steps homeward.

When Marjorie and Alan, with Professor Duncan, reached Dr. Ramsay’s door, they found Mrs. Ramsay just setting out in the doctor’s sleigh to go down with some little comforts for the Browns.

“Here, Marjorie,” said her aunt, smiling, “I think you would like to go with me. Alan can drive us, and then your uncle can stay at home to rest and talk to Professor Duncan, as I’m sure he will be glad to do, for he has been out most of the day. You see doctors can’t have a holiday even on Christmas Day!”

Marjorie willingly squeezed in beside her aunt, and Alan, perched half on the side of the cutter, soon drove them down to the narrow street where the Browns lived, and then drove on to leave a parcel for some other poor patient, while Mrs. Ramsay and Marjorie went in.

It was a much brighter scene, already, than on Marjorie’s first visit. The mother was able to be about, and the table was comfortably laid for the evening meal. The father was sitting up in bed, supported by pillows, watching with an expression of affectionate pleasure, the baby laid beside him, gently cooing to itself. The other children were amusing themselves happily with the toys they had received the



evening before; the boys with a little Noah's Ark, the girl putting her doll to sleep, as she had seen her mother hush the baby. The poor man smiled gratefully as Mrs. Ramsay wished him a happy Christmas.

"Indeed, mem, it's been that, an' I never would ha' thought I could have been so content lyin' here. But you an' the doctor's been that good to us, I'm sure we've much reason to thank the Lord for his mercies. You see I've got my doll here," he added. "I was tellin' Jenny there I wouldn't give it for hers, that she's hardly had out o' her hands since she came back last night, so full of the Christmas-tree an' all the things she saw, that she could hardly stop talkin' about them, even in her sleep."

The poor man was evidently glad to get an opportunity of pouring out the pent-up gratitude he had been feeling all day; and his wife, though quieter, seemed no less cheered and strengthened by the kindness and sympathy that had been shown to them. It was a pleasant little bit of Christmas brightness, even for Mrs. Ramsay and Marjorie, to see how much Christian love had gladdened that poor home and its inmates.

The rest of the Christmas day passed swiftly and pleasantly enough for Marjorie. When she and Mrs. Ramsay drove home in the gathering dusk, it was a picture of Christmas comfort to see the family group in the drawing-room gathered about the bright coal fire. They had dinner late—an unusual luxury; for Dr. Ramsay thought an early dinner best for his children, whom he liked to have about him when he was at home. Besides Professor Duncan, there were one or two young men, away from home, and one lonely school friend of Marion's; for both Dr. and Mrs. Ramsay liked to gather the homeless about them at Christmas time.

Before dinner there was both merry and sober talk, and a little music. After dinner, which was a plain, good, substantial Christmas dinner—including, of course, an orthodox pudding, brought in blazing with the traditional blue flame, to the unbounded delight of Norman and Effie—there was more music and a merry round game. And then the professor was asked by Dr. Ramsay to give them a reading of Dickens' Christmas Carol. This, as it happened, Marjorie had never read, and it was a rare treat, not to be forgotten, to hear its humor and its pathos both so sympathetically rendered, as Professor Duncan gave it to them.

He did not of course read the whole, but his selections gave them at least the cream of that most charming of Christmas stories. Jack and Millie went into fits of laughter over the Cratchits' Christmas dinner, and especially over the "two young Cratchits," who, every one said, exactly corresponded to themselves. Tiny Tim—well, who that ever hears or reads the story does not love Tiny Tim, and pray that he might live? It seemed as if the little family picture Marjorie had seen that afternoon

made her more able to enter into the spirit of the “Carol.” And when Professor Duncan ended with the concluding words, “And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God bless us—every one!” it seemed to her a most appropriate ending for a wonderfully happy Christmas Day.

## CHAPTER XI.

### PERE LE JEUNE'S CHRISTMAS.

When Professor Duncan arrived at Dr. Ramsay's on Sunday afternoon, he found an expectant little audience awaiting him there. Gerald had specially requested that the professor should not be asked to tell the story until Sunday, in order that he might be there to hear it; and Ada, who was always glad to avail herself of any opportunity of being with Marjorie, had willingly accepted the invitation to come to hear it, too. Millie was delighted at the prospect of a "quite new" story, and Norman and Effie were rejoicing in the hope of bears and other wild beasts being in a story that was "all out in the woods." So the professor did not get any peace to talk, even about General Gordon and the slow progress of that relief expedition, on which the eyes of the civilized world were just then earnestly fixed; so many reminders did he get about the tale he had promised to tell.

"Well," he said, "my heart seems full of Gordon, and I think a good many of our hearts are heavy enough about him just now! But it oughtn't to be a long step from Gordon to Père Le Jeune; for the cause was the same, and the two men were actuated by the same spirit: the spirit that makes East and West, Frenchman and Englishman, Protestant and Jesuit one in serving the same Master and doing his work!"

"Yes, indeed," said Dr. Ramsay, "the longer I live the more I am persuaded that that is the only center of unity, the only true uniting force."

"But we mustn't keep these young folks waiting for the story. I know, when I was their age, I wasn't so fond of morals as I am now, and it's rather hard to have it put at the very beginning instead of coming orthodoxically at the end," said the professor, with a smile at the expectant faces about him. And then he stretched himself out in his easy-chair, with one arm about Effie, who had perched herself on the side of it, and began his story, looking into the fire in a dreamy way, as if he were looking at the shadows of the things he had to tell.

"I told you then," he went on, "how this Père Le Jeune and the brethren who were with him, had established themselves at their rude little mission-house of *Notre Dame des Anges*, where in winter the intense cold so penetrated the crevices of their log-built walls, that even the great blazing fires they kept up in their wide fireplaces would not keep their ink from freezing unless it was kept close to the fire!

It was well for Père Le Jeune that he had this preparatory training for his next winter.

“He and his comrades were working away, trying to get some knowledge of the Indian language from a rascally Indian who had been taken over to France, where he had been baptized and had got a little surface scratching of Christian instruction, with probably a good deal more inoculation of civilized vices—an awful misnomer that, by the way! This Indian’s name was Pierre, and you may as well remember it, as he is a prominent figure in the story.

“Besides learning all he could from Pierre, whom he used to bribe with tobacco when he began to get tired of his task of instructor, Père Le Jeune got two little children to teach, and was so happy in teaching them the catechism and the *Pater Noster* in Latin, that he declared he would not exchange them for the most cultivated audience in France. And when the wandering Indians would come to encamp in the neighborhood, he would stand at his doorway, ringing a bell, as his brother St. Francis Xavier did at Goa, till he had gathered about him a little assembly whom he would teach as best he could, giving them a porringer full of peas when they had said their lessons well, to make them want to come again. As soon as he was able, he translated the Catechism and the Lord’s Prayer into Indian rhymes, for you know he had no hymns for them, and it used to give him the greatest pleasure to hear the little redskins singing through the woods, these rhymes that he had taught them.

“But he got on so slowly, in spite of all his efforts, that he thought he must try another plan to get nearer to these Indians whom he wanted so much to persuade to become servants of Christ. And for this end he determined to cast in his lot for a whole winter with one of the wandering band of Algonquins who used to roam about in search of prey on the shores of the Lower St. Lawrence and through the rocky wilderness around the sources of the St. John. Another Jesuit Father—a good man named Père De Noue, of whom I may tell you another time a very touching story—had gone to stay for a few weeks with such a hunting party, some distance below Quebec, and had come back half-dead with cold and semi-starvation, which was not encouraging for Père Le Jeune; but he was a stronger man, and thought he could stand it.

“So one lovely day in October when the soft Indian summer sun was lighting up the glowing woods, Père Le Jeune embarked in one of the Indian canoes and bade farewell to his anxious comrades and to his friend Champlain. He took with him a little store of biscuits, beans and other things of the same kind; and his friends, being of St. Paul’s mind, made him take a little keg of wine, in case of need. This wine, however, proved rather a troublesome gift at the very outset; for at their first camping-place on a beautiful island in the St. Lawrence, Pierre managed to get hold

of it, and drink enough to make him a raving madman. That night poor Père Le Jeune had to spend, hidden from this wretch, in the woods, on a few leaves spread on the ground—‘a bed,’ he quaintly remarks, ‘which had not been made up since the creation of the world.’”

“I think that would be jolly,” broke in Norman, with sparkling eyes.

“Wait till you try it, my boy!” said his father. “It’s well Père Le Jeune doesn’t seem to have been a rheumatic subject. I hope he had a blanket!”

“He had his cassock,” replied the professor; “and a kind squaw covered him with a sheet of birch bark.

“Well, that was the beginning, and things went on in much the same way. Pierre was the only interpreter that the poor father had, and as yet he knew but little Algonquin. Pierre’s brother, who was called Mestigoit, was the chief of the party, and very friendly to Père Le Jeune. There was a third brother who was an Indian sorcerer, and who, being jealous lest his own influence should suffer, did all he could to oppose and annoy the Jesuit, while Pierre, as might have been expected, was but a broken reed.

“The party traveled in their canoes from one point to another, so long as the weather continued mild, seeking fish, birds and other game. Sometimes a storm threatened their frail barks, and sometimes they would be half-starved while weather-bound on an island. At last they had to lay up their canoes, and take to tramping on foot through the savage wilderness, over swamps, through streams, across rocks and morasses and fallen trees, encamping for a time where game could be found, and then marching on to a fresh hunting ground. As the cold grew keener and the snow began to make the footing more treacherous, the good Father’s experiences became harder still. When they stopped at night, after a long day’s tramp, he was fain to keep himself warm by helping the squaws to cut their poles and set up their wigwams, as you saw in the picture, while the hunters went off to try to find a supper.

“The wigwam was made by digging out a circular space in the snow, making an embankment round it, in which the poles were planted. These were covered with sheets of birch bark, while a curtain of bearskin hung over the doorway. An opening was left in the roof above the central fireplace, to let the smoke out, and for bedding, the ground was covered with hemlock boughs. As you may suppose, the smoke did not all escape by the hole in the roof, and the birch bark walls did not keep out much cold; so they had to light great hot fires in the center, and Père Le Jeune did not know which was the worst, the fire that half-roasted his feet, the keen, piercing cold that penetrated the crevices in the bark walls, or the smoke that often made his eyes

smart so much that, when he tried to read his breviary, it seemed written in letters of blood.

“One other annoyance he tells us about very naively; that was the Indian dogs that followed the party, and would seek to share his bed at night or wake him up by careering over his body in search of a stray morsel or a bone. The first he did not so much mind, as the animal heat helped to keep him warm, and as we know he had no warm coverings for his couch of hemlock. But the worst of all was, that sometimes for days together, the hunters could find no game, and as Père Le Jeune had long since divided his own little store with his famishing companions, they were left at such times with nothing to stay their hunger. At this Christmas time we are speaking of, the smaller game was very scarce, and there was not yet snow enough to enable them to hunt the moose on their snow-shoes—their chief dependence in winter. On that particular Christmas Eve, as I told you, they had started without breakfast, and for supper they had to divide among twenty, only a small porcupine and a hare. But as I said, the good Father thought, not as he might have done, of Christmas feasts and wassail bowls in France, but of the two poor wayfarers in the stable at Bethlehem, who, perhaps, he said, were not so well treated as he!

“I like to picture the good man to myself, that evening, leaving the noisy chatter of the smoky wigwam, where the Indians added to the smoke of the fire that of the long pipes, which at such times were their only solace. I like to picture him going out to meditate in the dark, silent forest, under the light of the Christmas stars, where the only sound that broke the stillness was the cracking of a bough in the keen frost, or the dropping of a twig on the hard crust of the snow. I like to think of the diamond points of the stars, and the soft quivering streamers of the Northern Lights gleaming through the giant arms of the forest-trees, lighting the darkness, and drawing his thoughts from perhaps dreaming of gorgeous Christmas services in great cathedrals, to that simpler but more solemn scene under the open Syrian sky, when the ‘glory of the Lord’ shone round the shepherds keeping their watch by night. Was he not himself like a shepherd watching over his wandering sheep, or better, Marjorie, a ray of the Northern Lights shining in the darkness and waiting to see it dispelled by the full light of the ‘Star in the East,’ and the ‘good tidings of great joy which should be to all people’?”

“And then I can imagine him, cheered and refreshed by such thoughts as these, making his way back to the little camp, where the two wigwams that sheltered the party were visible by the light that streamed through the crevices of the birch bark, from the fire within. Lifting the bearskin curtain, he would enter the smoky atmosphere that made his eyes smart with pain. Then he would make his way by the

light of the red glowing pine knots, among the prostrate forms about him, of men and women, children and dogs, till he found a couch on the bed of hemlock boughs, where, lying down, he could still see the stars through the opening overhead. By and by, as he was dozing off to sleep, he would feel a weight laid on his body, or a cold nose close to his face; telling him that one of the rough, shaggy dogs was thus trying to find a warmer corner, nor was the additional warmth it afforded him unwelcome. And then he no doubt thought again of the stable at Bethlehem, where dumb creatures shared the first shelter of Him whom the wise men from the East came to worship as a King.

“Christmas Eve passed into Christmas morning, and the half-benumbed sleepers arose, but not to Christmas comfort or Christmas cheer. They could make up the fire and keep themselves warm, but breakfast there was none, nor any hope of it, for even the bones of last night’s feast had been devoured by the hungry dogs. The hunters took up again their bows and arrows and set out on a fruitless quest. The emaciated squaws sat silent and depressed, or soothed the hungry babes, while the older children tried to forget their hunger or bear it with a grave endurance worthy of little ‘braves.’ When the good Father repeated his *Pater Noster*, he dwelt with greater fervor than usual on the petition, ‘Give us this day our daily bread,’ and he would fain have directed the famishing creatures to Him who hears the young ravens when they cry. But he knew too little of their language yet, and the wretched Pierre would give him no help; indeed seemed, as he says, ‘possessed by a dumb spirit.’ So he could but pray for them as he wandered through the forest, trying to appease with what he could find there, the cravings of hunger, which, as he says, makes the wolf come out of the forest, but which drove him farther in, seeking the buds of trees, which he ate ‘with relish.’ And then he found some strips of deerskin, such as you have for straps to your snow-shoes, which the dogs would not touch, but which made his Christmas dinner, and which he gratefully called ‘good.’

“There was nothing more for him or any one else that day. In the evening he went to visit the other *cabane*, as he calls the wigwam. He found things there much the same as in his own. The young hunters who had been out all day, were sitting weary and dejected by their lack of success, and the gloomy prospect of starvation. The good Father was ‘touched to the heart’ by their despair, and tried to speak to them some words of consolation, some hope of better things; and then returned to his own wigwam to pray for those who could not pray for themselves. The renegade Pierre, probably through seeing him thus employed, was moved to ask ‘what day it was?’ Père Le Jeune replied that ‘to-day was the feast of Christmas.’ I suppose that some memory from his past life must have momentarily touched the wayward heart

of the 'apostate,' as the father calls him; for he turned to his brother, the half-crazy 'sorcerer,' and explained to him that that was the day when Jesus, the Son of God, had been born. Noting the surprise of the 'sorcerer,' Père Le Jeune spoke to him of the goodness of God who could and would give them the help they needed, if they would ask Him. Pierre was silent; for once he abstained from contradiction. Père Le Jeune seized the favorable moment to ask him to translate for him into the Algonquin language, two prayers, the one to be said by the Father himself, the other by the Indians. Pierre was willing, in the extremity of their need, to try anything that might possibly bring relief. Accordingly the two prayers were at once dictated by the Father, and translated by Pierre, who agreed also to act as interpreter on the morrow; and then commending the matter to his Lord, according to his wont, the Father lay down to sleep, hoping for good to come out of evil.

"Next morning, with such small resources as he could command—a crucifix and some pictures from his breviary—he arranged a little oratory which he thought might impress the savages. Then he assembled the whole of the party and addressed them, mainly by the mouth of Pierre, to whose interpreting he did not care to trust himself altogether. Under these difficulties he explained to them, in the simplest language, that he was forced by the extremity to speak to them; that it would be their own fault if they were not succored; that God was goodness itself; that nothing was impossible to him, and that even though they had rejected him, yet, if they would now truly believe in him and hope in him, he would not refuse to hear. And as the poor starving savages had now lost hope in their bows and arrows, they were glad to catch at what he offered, and promised to do whatever he might command. The Father, rejoiced at this, read the prayer he had written for them, asking them if they were willing thus to pray to his God with true and sincere hearts. They all exclaimed, 'We are willing!' They then followed the example he set them by falling on their knees with uncovered heads. Then all joined hands and raised their eyes to Heaven, while Père Le Jeune repeated in Algonquin a simple, earnest prayer, asking Him who has promised to hear and answer prayer, to give food to these poor people, promising, on their behalf, that they would believe in Him and obey Him from their hearts, and ending by saying, '*de bon cœur*,' as he tells us, that he himself was willing to die that they might live, and that they might know Him too.

"But his host, Mestigoit, touched by these words, begged him to take them back; for, he said, 'we love thee, and do not desire thy death!'

"But Père Le Jeune replied, 'I wish to show you that I love you, and that I would gladly give my life for your salvation, so great a thing is it to be saved!'

"Then the Indians joined hands, and, kneeling as before, they repeated after him



the prayer he had composed for themselves. In this prayer they solemnly promised that if God would give them food, they would henceforward believe in him fully and obey him entirely, and asked him who had died for them to help them to believe in him perfectly. Even Pierre and the 'sorcerer' joined in this prayer, the Father remarking, 'It is for God to judge their hearts.' Then the hunters went to the chase cheered and hopeful.

"The results justified the good Father's faith. Several beaver were caught from a dam which had previously been abandoned. I am sorry, boys, I can't tell you how they were caught, for Père Le Jeune doesn't tell us, though he saw one captured. I don't care either to kill things or to see them killed, myself, but if ever a man might be excused for being glad to see a poor animal taken, Père Le Jeune might, then! They caught a porcupine, too; and even a moose-deer was brought home in triumph—an unexpected prize when there was so little depth of snow. Each of the hunters had taken something, except Pierre alone.

"As they brought in their game, Père Le Jeune met his host with outstretched hand and full heart. Mestigoit joyfully recognized the help that God had sent and inquired what they must now do. Père Le Jeune replied that they must thank God who had helped them. 'And wherefore, indeed?' exclaimed the incorrigible Pierre; adding, 'We should have found this well enough without his help!'

"Poor Père Le Jeune felt the reckless words like 'a poniard stroke,' for he well divined what their effect would be. Still, however, Mestigoit seemed desirous of following the instructions of Père Le Jeune, and would probably have done so but for the strong opposing influence of the 'sorcerer.' A feast was of course immediately prepared, and the Father attended it in order to lead the hearts of the savages to recognize God's goodness, and return thanks for his help. But just as he was about to do so, Pierre, who was angry that he had taken nothing, and had refused to act as interpreter, rudely interrupted him and insolently ordered him to be silent. Père Le Jeune said that he would not, for if Pierre was ungrateful, the others were not so.

"But the 'sorcerer,' jealous for his own influence and now freed from his fear of starving, exclaimed: 'Be silent! thou art a fool! This is not the time to talk, but to eat!' Père Le Jeune, in distress, asked him if he had not eyes, if he did not see the good hand of God? But he would not listen and the others were too submissive to his influence even to speak. And so the feast proceeded, and, without any thanksgiving, the Indians fell upon their prey like ravenous animals, 'like swine,' as he says himself, 'devouring their acorns without any regard to the hand that feeds them.'

"It was a terrible disappointment. He had rejoiced so much over the answer to

his prayer, and had hoped so much from the result. But all he says is: 'They were filled with content, I with sorrow. But it must be left to the will of God. This people's time is not yet come!'"

"Poor Père Le Jeune!" exclaimed Mrs. Ramsay; "and yet why should we say 'poor'? a man so rich in faith and Christian patience is to be envied rather than pitied!"

"I should like the people who doubt whether these Jesuits were Christians, to hear that story," said Dr. Ramsay. "How bigotry cuts the roots of Christian kinship. That was about—when, Duncan? I'm no good at dates."

"Nor I, generally," he replied. "But some I never forget. That was in the year 1633, two years before Champlain's death; and Champlain died, you know, exactly a hundred years after Jacques Cartier landed at Quebec. There's a small mnemonic system for you! And by the way, it was just about that same time, that a Jesuit going to Scotland, to convert your forefathers—and mine too, for that matter—was hanged in Edinburgh for his zeal, by 'that sanctified person,' King James! Think of those two extremes, one of the brotherhood going to the enlightened Scots, and the other to the savage Indians, and both, alike, taking their lives in their hands!"

"Well, we Presbyterians at any rate have no reason to bless King James!" said Dr. Ramsay, with a slight smile; "yet there might have been some little excuse for him, for, if I mistake not, it was about that same time that others of that same brotherhood were instigating the cruel persecution of the Moravians, the butchery and exile of men, women and children, for the same 'greater glory of God!'"

"True enough!" replied the professor. "Such havoc does human bigotry and ecclesiasticism make of the pure Gospel of Love! There have been queer things done in the name of Christianity; and not a few by Jesuits. But let us be glad of the noble things that have been done in the same name, in true following of Christ. We mustn't forget the light in thinking of the darkness! You were speaking of Gordon as showing the same spirit with Père Le Jeune. And those eleven young Cambridge graduates, led by William C. Studd, of whom I was reading the other day—that's worthy of a heroic age, too! Think, Alan and Gerald, of a Cambridge honour-man and athlete leaving all his English ambitions behind him, and going to China to devote his life to a people whom too many professed Christians regard as the very scum of the earth, not to be allowed to contaminate this Western continent! No wonder such a man makes other fellows listen to him, in the colleges, wherever he goes!"

"Yes," continued Professor Duncan, "the spirit that sent Père Le Jeune to carry light into the darkness, isn't dead, nor ever will die. 'Lo, I am with you alway,' and it's true."

Gerald and Alan looked very thoughtful, and Marjorie sat listening with intense interest. But both she and Millie wanted to know more about Père Le Jeune, and Jack re-echoed Millie's eager inquiries:

"Did he get safe home? How did they get on the rest of the winter? Did he convert the Indians after all?"

"The rest of the winter was much like what I have told you about in the beginning," said the professor; "but although they heard of people starving to death around them, they seem never to have been in quite such despair again, though things looked dark enough at times. After the snow grew deeper they had no more scarcity of food, for then, on their snow-shoes, they could catch as many elks as they needed. But the traveling was something terrible! Père Le Jeune went up nearly to the top of one mountain, 'armed with horrible rocks,' from which, they told him, under a clear sky he could have seen at once Quebec and Tadousac; and he shuddered to look at the wild expanse of hills and precipices and rocks, through which his party had to make their way, carrying with them their luggage, such as it was. When they had to take to dried meat, he became ill from the lack of other food, and was laid up for three weeks, during which time he had much to bear from the sneers of the 'sorcerer,' who detested him, and who would have insisted on his carrying some of the baggage when weakened by illness, if Mestigoit had not interfered and taken it on his own sled—a sort of toboggan. It was well that he was able to join in the march when necessary, for the aged or feeble members of such a party were sometimes killed when unable to walk further. Père Le Jeune must have been glad when, at the end of January, the party turned their faces in the direction of Quebec; and still more thankful when, in March, the 'sorcerer' and Pierre left the party to go on before them to the St. Lawrence.

"At length, early in April, the party, including Père Le Jeune, reached the river and embarked once more in their boats. As the Father was still weak and exhausted, Mestigoit undertook to convey him, with Pierre, to Quebec in his own canoe. They had a stormy voyage, and a hair-breadth escape from destruction by the floating ice. At last, on a tempestuous moonlight night, they came in sight of the rock of Quebec; but masses of floating ice lay between them and the shore, lined with piles of the dislodged ice. Mestigoit shot his canoe adroitly through the drifting cakes, and reaching the edge of that which was still firm, managed to get Père Le Jeune safely up upon the fixed ice, six feet above the water. We can well imagine how thankfully the weary Father must have made his way, at three o'clock in the morning, to *Notre Dame des Anges*, and how gladly his anxious brethren must have opened to his knock. Remember, they had heard not a word of him for six weary months, and did

not know whether he was alive or dead, till then!"

"Thank you for the story, Duncan," said Dr. Ramsay. "It makes me wish that I had time to read up these things, as you have. It is better than a sermon; for it's a sermon and a tonic in one."

"What's the text of the sermon, Uncle?" asked Marjorie, who had been thinking of her father's comments on the story of the Northern Lights.

"The text? Well, it might have more than one text, I think. What's your idea, Marjorie? for I'm sure you have one."

"Oh! it made me think of something my father said once about the text, 'The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not.' For you see the Indians didn't comprehend him, did they?"

"No! that's not a bad idea, Marjorie," said the professor. "Certainly they didn't comprehend much, poor creatures. And Père Le Jeune has no conversions to tell of on that pilgrimage. But yet, even the ignorant can feel where they can't comprehend; and I think such an example of self-sacrificing love could scarcely have been lost altogether, even on them. I don't doubt that its fruits were reaped by others, if not by Père Le Jeune. And to us, every such noble Christian life is an ideal and an inspiration."

"Yes," added Dr. Ramsay, as they rose to go to tea, "and a rebuke to our modern rose-water Christianity that pampers itself with luxury, and talks to no end, and sings:

*"Shall we, whose souls are lighted  
With wisdom from on high,  
Shall we, to men benighted,  
The lamp of life deny?"*

and then drops a half-grudged dollar or so into the missionary collection, and troubles itself no more about the matter! Why, those poor Salvation Army people who were arrested last week for making a disturbance, are a hundred times more in earnest than at least two thirds of our average church Christians! There is the spirit of Père Le Jeune among them. I tell you, Duncan, I've felt a lump in my throat more than once when I've seen them—women as well as men—kneeling down to pray in some of the miserable streets and alleys where few people ever go who can help it, and heard them putting all their hearts into their prayers for the poor creatures about them, till even the hardest would seem a little softened, for the time at least. Well, we're all ready enough to judge others! Let us remember Père Le Jeune and Isaac Jogues, and try to catch the inspiration of the same spirit where they caught theirs!"

“Amen!” exclaimed the professor, while the younger ones looked grave and thoughtful, and even Ada, for a little while, had not a word to say.

## CHAPTER XII.

### A NEW YEAR'S PARTY.

For New Year's Day, Marjorie had a pressing invitation from Ada to spend the day with her.

"It will be such fun," Ada said, "for you and me to sit in the drawing-room, as I always do, and see all the gentlemen who come to see mamma. Some of them come to see me, too," she added, with a rather conscious smile. "I think it's great fun, any time, but it will be ever so much nicer to have you to talk to while mamma is talking to the gentlemen."

Mrs. West was to have a musical party in the evening, and Marion and Alan were invited to come then, Marjorie of course remaining to dine with Ada. Marion, as a rule, did not go to gay parties. She did not care for them herself, and neither Dr. Ramsay nor his wife cared to have their children frequent large and late entertainments, which, as Dr. Ramsay expressed it, combined a maximum of frivolity and extravagance with a minimum of healthful recreation; or as Mrs. Ramsay more briefly put it, were a great waste of time and money. But Marion loved music and sang very sweetly, so that a good musical party was a real pleasure to her; while for Alan, not yet arrived at the dignity of being invited to "grown-up parties" generally, this one was a great treat; procured for him, as he could easily divine, through the joint mediation of Gerald and Ada, because his sister and cousin were asked, and they knew that he would not like to be left out.

The old year passed away as usual, giving place silently to the new, with its unknown burden of cares, responsibilities, joys and sorrows. To Marjorie it seemed as if the year just ended had been the longest and most eventful of her life. Her Aunt Millie's marriage closing one chapter of it; the opening of a new chapter, with new scenes, new friends, new interests; her father's absence; and last, not least, the new thoughts and inspirations that had come to her, marked off this past year very distinctly from all the rest. More especially, the new light that had come to her since she had heard so much about the "light that shineth in darkness," had become a real and living force in her life, and, combined with the thought of her father, almost unconsciously influenced her thoughts and judgments and acts. And when she looked back to last New Year's Day, she could scarcely believe that she was only one year older.

There was a nice New Year letter from her father before it was time for her to go to Mrs. West's, for he had taken care to calculate very carefully the mail arrangements, so that his letters should arrive just at the right time. He had many pleasant scenes to describe, besides the New Year wishes and counsels; and he was much cheered, as he said, in the separation to find that she was so happy in Montreal. And she looked bright and happy enough, her aunt thought, when she came down in her warm wraps ready to be driven to Mrs. West's by her uncle as he went to see his patients.

Ada was watching for her friend, ready to greet her with a hearty kiss, and a "Happy New Year!" She expressed great admiration, too, of Marjorie's appearance, when her out-door wrappings were laid aside. For of course she had to wear a dress suitable for the evening party, and the one evening dress she had was the pretty pale maize-colored cashmere that had been her bridesmaid's attire at her Aunt Millie's wedding, which had been made under the special supervision of the bride, and had pleased even her father's critical eye. It was very becoming to her dark hair and eyes, and clear, pale complexion; and she wore as her only ornament, Ada's pretty locket. Mrs. West, as well as Ada, admired her dress, all the more that it was "from New York," for, whatever her prejudices against Americans might be, they certainly did not extend to American fashions. She herself was richly dressed in velvet and lace for her New Year's reception; and Ada looked charming in a blue silk afternoon dress which, as she explained to Marjorie, was to be exchanged for a white evening dress for "the party."

If Ada found the afternoon "reception" amusing, it was more than Marjorie did. The callers were all strangers to her, and the greetings and good wishes sounded for the most part, rather flat and stereotyped. The luxurious drawing-room, too, did not seem quite such a vision of beauty as it had the first time she had seen it. She felt the satiating sensation of too much ornament, too much ostentation of richness and luxury. The air was laden with the fragrance from the open conservatory, and the gracefully arranged vases of flowers that were scattered about the room; the servants were attentive in handing the delicate refreshments in readiness to the guests, and the glow of the bright coal fire sparkled on gilding and rich draperies and charming pictures; but all this had lost the first charm of novelty, and Marjorie could not feel so much herself, so free and bright, as she did in Mrs. Ramsay's simple but home-like drawing-room, or in the dear, homely "study," littered as it often was with the play of the children. The very magnificence about her seemed to pall upon and oppress her, and she no longer wondered that it was evidently so commonplace to Ada and Gerald, who openly disdained the multiplicity of "gewgaws."

As for the talk that went on, it was very much in keeping with the surroundings. It was all, or almost all, what her father used to call "outside talk," and it all ran on the same track. The weather was discussed, and the chances of a thaw, with the prospects of the progress and completion of the ice-palace, in time for the Carnival, now fixed for the end of the month. Then the various arrangements for that were canvassed. The new toboggan slides to be opened, the French Canadian trophy to be erected on the Champ de Mars, the grand ball, and, in particular, the expected visit of the Governor-General and his wife, with its attendant festivities. This seemed to be the inevitable round. One or two gentlemen indeed referred to matters of public interest. Bismarck's policy, the progress of Wolseley's Nile expedition, and the fortunes of the Canadian *voyageurs* with it, the probable fate of Gordon and Khartoum, were cursorily touched upon; but were soon dropped, for it was evident that the fair hostess whose mind revolved in a small circle of outward interests more or less connected with herself, "cared for none of these things." Some of the gentlemen made some of the smallest of small talk for Ada, in which Marjorie disdained to take part, as an implied insult to the intelligence of girls nearly fourteen! As the afternoon faded into dusk, and the gas was lighted in the pretty crystal chandeliers, the visitors grew more numerous and the visits still briefer, as every one seemed hurrying to accomplish his allotted round; a hundred seeming to be no unusual number. Mr. Hayward made his appearance about five, to stay to dinner; and then Ada's spirits rose at once, and her tongue seemed to go faster than ever. The young man was evidently a favorite both with mother and daughter, and knew how to ingratiate himself with both. He had been accompanying Dick on his round of visits, leaving out certain "old fogies" to whom Dick had still to pay some "duty visits," and when the ordinary callers began to thin off, Mr. Hayward kept Mrs. West and Ada amused with a run of satirical little comments on their friends and acquaintances whom he had been visiting. Mrs. West never showed much animation of manner. She was indeed exceedingly lazy, and moreover rather affected—

“——that repose

Which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere.”

Mr. Hayward's rich English voice, and soft, drawling English accent just suited her, while the vein of raillery and the way in which he "touched off" the peculiarities of her friends, seemed to entertain her greatly. Marjorie wondered a little how both she and Ada could enjoy so much this "making fun" of their most intimate friends, and she noticed that nothing kind or pleasant was said of any one; and that the satirical remarks were particularly biting when clergymen or their families came under



discussion. And as she had a natural dislike of satire and satirical people, she ceased to listen to the talk, and was soon absorbed in an album of fine foreign photographs which Mrs. West had, years ago, brought from abroad.

At dinner Marjorie for the first time saw Mr. West, who looked like what he was—a shrewd, energetic business man, with a good deal of the complacency of success about him. Two things were particularly apparent, that he was very fond and very proud of Ada, and that he enjoyed a good dinner; and indeed the long and elaborate dinners rather bewildered Marjorie. So many courses, such luxurious appointments, and most of all, the variety of wines, were a new experience to her. She met with some banter from her host for persistently declining to drink anything but water, and noticed with surprise that Ada drank her glass of champagne with great satisfaction. Mr. Hayward and Dick West evidently thought that any one who could refuse good champagne must be little short of a lunatic, but they evidently did not consider Marjorie's abstinence worth notice, while she cared as little for their opinion. Mr. West, however, did look worried when he noticed Dick helping himself to wine more freely than he approved, while Mrs. West seemed a little uneasy lest his annoyance might find expression in words and be construed into a reflection on their English guest. So that the latter part of the dinner was not very satisfactory and the hostess rose to retire as soon as she could, remarking that Ada had to change her dress for the party.

"Dear me!" said Mr. West, "I thought she was quite fine enough already! Well, Ada, we'll see what a swell you are, by and by. I suppose you mean to be the belle of the evening."

He evidently thought she would, when she appeared in the drawing-room in a fairy-like apparel of white gossamer and lace, with a garniture of blue just sufficient to contrast effectively with her golden hair, the delicacy of her fair complexion, and the soft roses in her cheeks. She wore a little cluster of rosebuds to match these, on the breast of her dress; and she made a charming picture, of which her father might be excused for feeling proud. Marjorie and she made a happy contrast, and as a counterpart to Ada's pink rosebuds, Marjorie had a bouquet of white and tea-roses, which Ada had arranged for her. Alan was enthusiastic in his admiration of both the girls, when he arrived with Marion; and if his expression of it was not quite so open to Ada as to his cousin, it was very evident that his boyish eyes were strongly fascinated by Ada's charms, which he had never seen to such advantage before. Mr. Hayward was more adroit in his flattering attentions, however, and Marjorie could not help seeing with vexation that they had already somewhat turned Ada's silly little head. There were several very pretty girls there, however, "grown-up young ladies,"

who naturally divided the young Englishman's attention—not altogether to Ada's satisfaction.

There was a good deal of music, both vocal and instrumental, some of it very good. There was some brilliant execution on the piano; but Marjorie specially enjoyed a charming violin solo, which seemed almost to speak the voice of human emotion and longing and aspiration, and called up to her mind some of the grand scenes she had seen when with her father among the hills the previous summer. Several ladies sang, most of the songs being pretty trifles of the day. One young lady sang, with great vivacity and animation, some of the pretty French Canadian songs. As she sang them in French, Marjorie could not catch many of the words; but Alan told her that the air which she liked best was called, "*A la Claire Fontaine*," and was a great favorite among the French Canadians. The words, he said, were great nonsense; but he and Marion would sing them to her some evening at home, and she could see them for herself. Marion sang several songs, most of them being Miss Proctor's words and great favorites with Marjorie, who had heard them already. One little song, however, which she sang towards the close of the evening, was new to Marjorie, and both the words and air delighted her. It ran thus:

"A little flower so lonely grew,  
So lowly was it left,  
That heaven seemed like an eye of blue  
Above its rocky cleft.

"What could the little flower do  
In such a lonesome place,  
But strive to reach that eye of blue,  
And climb to kiss heaven's face?

"There's no lot so lone and low,  
But strength will still be given  
From lowliest spot on earth to grow  
The straighter up to heaven."

To Marjorie it seemed as if this song belonged to the same order as her story of the Northern Lights, and the pictures of lovely Christian heroism with which Professor Duncan's narratives had been filling her mind. She was thinking of Père Le Jeune and his steadfast faith and hope among the wretched heathen savages, when she heard Mr. Hayward's languid tone addressing some one near him:

“Miss Ramsay has rather a nice voice; it’s a pity she wastes it on namby-pamby things like that.”

“I can’t agree with you,” said the young lady to whom he was talking. “I think it’s a lovely song.”

“O, well! that’s a matter of taste; but it’s great nonsense all the same.”

“I must say I don’t see where the nonsense is,” said a young man beside them, whose pleasant, intelligent face Marjorie had noticed before, when she had been told by Gerald that he was studying for the Church. “The man who wrote it, Gerald Massey, wasn’t given to nonsense, at any rate.”

“Oh! Gerald Massey! a sort of radical socialist, isn’t he?”

“Well, I don’t know much about his opinions,” said the other, “but I do know that he has the true spirit of Christianity in him, and that song preaches a real spiritual truth.”

“Oh! there you get beyond me,” said Hayward, sneeringly. “I thought that what you called spiritual truths were ‘played out’ now; that there wasn’t any room for them any more. In fact, I don’t know what ‘spiritual’ means, nor I think do half the people that use the word! It’s just a phrase that may mean any thing or nothing.”

“Yes,” replied the other young man gravely, “it does mean very different things to different people! I find, in the highest authority on such points, that no one can understand what ‘spiritual’ means, unless he is willing to have his eyes opened from above.”

Hayward shrugged his shoulders. “You must excuse me,” he said; “I for one have no desire to penetrate into such profound mysteries. The world I do know is a very good world, and it’s enough for me.”

And then he suggested to his companion that she should have some refreshments, but she declined, having had some already.

“If you’ll excuse me then, I think I’ll have some myself,” he said, and passed on.

“Poor fellow! what a proof he is of the very truths he rejects, if he could only see it,” remarked the other young man to his companion, as they looked after him. And then he added, “It’s not right to joke about such matters, but one can hardly help feeling that his insensibility to spiritual influences is partly due to his familiarity with a very different kind of spirit!”

Gerald had been standing near while this little discussion had been going on. He, too, looked after Hayward, as he disappeared, and observed to Marjorie:

“I just detest that conceited Englishman! I wish he had something better to do than loaf about the world to kill time! Dick hasn’t been the same fellow since he’s been here, and he seems to want to lead him into harm’s way. And he flatters my

mother and Ada into thinking that there's nobody like him! But come, Marjorie," he added, "you haven't had any supper yet. Come in and have some now."

They went on into the dining-room, where game, jellies and ices were temptingly laid out, with an abundance, also, of wine and spirits. When he had helped Marjorie, Gerald looked about him, and presently caught sight of his brother standing with Mr. Hayward, by the sideboard, both helping themselves liberally to champagne.

"There, isn't that too bad!" exclaimed Gerald, in intense vexation. "Dick will make a fool of himself before he knows it, if he goes on like that. I must go and stop him! I know what I'll do!"

And going up to his brother, whose flushed face showed already that he had had considerably more than was good for him, he whispered a few words into his ear. Dick immediately left his companion and went out of the room, returning after a few minutes' absence with Marion, who looked a little uncomfortable as she noticed his excited manner, but sat down beside Marjorie, while he went for an ice for her.

"I hope you'll forgive me, Miss Ramsay," said Gerald frankly. "I know you're so good you won't mind. I didn't know how to get him away from Hayward there," he said, glancing to where the young Englishman still stood; "so I told him I thought you hadn't had any supper yet. And then he went off at once. For you know he thinks ever so much of you."

Marion smiled comprehendingly, with ready sympathy for Gerald. "I'll try to keep him from going back there again," she said, as Dick returned. And she did so, disinterestedly enough; for she did not care in the least for Dick's society, and she had a particular abhorrence of even the most distant approach to intoxication. Her detestation of the habit, and her pity for young West combined to make her proportionately indignant when Alan remarked, on the way home, that he thought champagne "a first-class institution."

"A first-class institution for ruining young men," replied Marion warmly; proceeding forthwith to give Alan a forcible temperance lecture, a point on which she had very decided views, and in which she was warmly re-enforced by Marjorie, who perhaps produced most effect by describing the evident distress of Gerald at his brother's weakness, and the insidious influence of the tempter who added double force to the temptation.

"Well, it is too bad," he said. "And Gerald's just as steady as a boy could be, though he does take his glass of wine too, with the rest. But then he has Dick's example before his eyes, and that makes him careful. Anyhow, I can get on very well without champagne, and I'm not likely to get much of it! So you needn't worry, Marion."

## CHAPTER XIII.

### TREASURES OF THE SNOW AND ICE.

The Christmas holidays were fairly over, and Marjorie got settled down to school work again, after the long break. Ada and she went together, the first morning, as Marion went only at a later hour for certain classes. Ada introduced Marjorie to her special friends, and it was not long before she felt quite at home among her new companions. Most of them were bright, clever girls who liked to study, and Marjorie was pleased to find that she could take a fairly good place in her classes, though these included some girls a year or two older than herself. In German she found herself rather before her companions, though the Montreal girls had naturally the advantage in French, having plenty of opportunity for practicing speaking it, if they were so disposed. Even Ada could do a little shopping in it, when necessary.

Marjorie had petitioned for leave to add drawing to her other studies, having taken a fancy to it from seeing her cousin paint; and her father had willingly consented, only exhorting her to begin at the beginning, and be thorough as far as she went. The hour at the drawing-class soon became one of the pleasantest in the day. It was a great pleasure, also, to go with some of her cousins, or with Ada, to see the pictures in the little Art Gallery, on a fine afternoon, when the light was good enough to show them to advantage. Both Dr. Ramsay and Mrs. West had season tickets, and Marjorie spent a morning there before the holidays were over, enjoying the pictures all the more because there were not so many to look at as there had been in other art exhibitions which her father had taken her to see in New York. Ada, who had never had any stimulus to take an interest in such things before, began now to try to see what made Marjorie enjoy them so much, and even her lessons grew somewhat more interesting to her from the effect of Marjorie's zeal and industry. Marjorie herself was trying her best to overcome her natural tendency to be "desultory," against which her father had warned her, and she was succeeding tolerably well. He had counseled her to be very sparing in her reading of story books—a great temptation to her.

She resolutely abstained, therefore, from even looking into one, except on Saturdays, when she allowed herself the treat for an hour or two over one of Sir Walter Scott's novels, which were all in Dr. Ramsay's book-shelves, and of which

she had as yet read only one or two; not nearly so many as her cousin Millie had already devoured.

Millie and she had long talks about them, when they went on their regular Saturday afternoon excursions, sometimes on a snow-shoe tramp to the house of a friend two or three miles off, at the other side of the mountain, and sometimes to see the new toboggan slides which were being prepared for “grand openings” at the Carnival. And one fine Saturday afternoon Alan, who had a particular friend in the club which owned the “Lansdowne Slide,” arranged to take the girls down that one on a “trial” afternoon, when only the members of the club and their friends were permitted to be present. It was at the east end of Sherbrooke Street, just to the right of the mountain slope, on an open incline, where, as Alan told her, they played “golf” in summer and autumn. And as Marjorie did not know what “golf” was, he tried to explain this old Scotch version of “hockey” or “shinty,” at which he knew that his father and hers had often played when they were Edinburgh students.

As they slowly mounted the slope to the wooden platform and “send off,” Ada and Millie pointed out the steep flight of wooden steps that ran up the mountain close by.

“It’s too slippery to go up now, you know,” said Millie; “but in summer I often go up, and when you get to the top it’s splendid!”



## TOBOGGANING ON MOUNT ROYAL.

"I'm going to do something nicer than that, when summer comes," said Ada. "You know, Marjorie, I took some riding lessons last fall, and my uncle in the country is going to have a pony broken in for me, and I'm going to ride on the mountain with Gerald. Can you ride? For if you can I'll lend you my pony some day for a ride."

Marjorie's eyes sparkled at the thought. She had been a few times on horseback when among the hills with her father, and she thought it the most delightful exercise in the world, and the greatest pleasure.

"Wait till you've been down the toboggan slide, Marjorie," said Alan. "Riding's nothing to that!"

But when they had mounted the wooden steps which led up to the high platform from which they were to begin their descent—Alan carrying the light toboggan—and when Marjorie looked down the steep, slippery, inclined plane, she thought it rather a fearful pleasure; and felt as if, despite her experience on the children's slide, she had hardly nerve enough to trust herself to the giddy descent. She wanted to try, but all the encouragement her companions could give, could not overcome the involuntary reluctance that she felt to take the final step of seating herself on the toboggan when poised on the edge of the slippery descent. Alan assured her that it was particularly safe, as there were so few toboggans there, and no one was immediately following. But she still shrank back and declared that they would have to go down without her, the first time, at least. So Ada and Millie arranged themselves; Ada holding tight to the sides of the toboggan, Millie grasping her waist as tightly; Alan threw himself on it behind them, putting out one foot to steer, and away they went. Marjorie held her breath for a moment, but before she had caught it again, they were at the foot of the "send off," and gliding down the white hill below with a speed that did look exhilarating; taking them down to the foot of the long slide in about a minute.

It was fascinating enough, and by the time that the others had made their toilsome way up again, she had made up her mind to hesitate no longer, but sit down in the toboggan without thinking about it. There was room enough for them all, and they put her between the other two girls so that she might feel safer. She held Ada with a desperate grip, and half-shut her eyes as they shot off. But in a moment they were at the foot of the giddy plane, and then she could really enjoy the swift gliding over the hard, smooth snow; then came a second leap down a chute, or little sudden descent in the snow, and then an easy progress, slowing gradually as they reached



the level ground, when they all scrambled to their feet, laughing for glee over the successful descent. They went down two or three times more, walking nearly half a mile up each time; and Marjorie agreed, as they walked home, glowing with exercise, that, after all, the pleasure of tobogganing had scarcely been overrated.

"You see the benefit of a good example, Marjorie," said Alan. "If you hadn't had our heroic example first, you wouldn't have got your own courage up!"

"Yes," observed Millie, "and that's one reason why Professor Duncan tells us all those stories."

"Why," said Ada, "he doesn't want us all to go to live among the Indians, even if there were any wild ones any more?"

"No," said Alan, laughing; "but I suppose we shall all have lots of disagreeable things to do; and he thinks such examples will help to make us brave. I daresay I shall have plenty of such experiences if I am an engineer, as I want to be."

But Ada was evidently pretty tired, and Alan asked her to sit down on the toboggan, so that he might draw her home. And when they had left her there, the other three took their way, in the rosy winter sunset, down to Dominion Square, growing daily a center of increasing interest, now that the stately ice-palace was rising day by day into its fine proportions and sparkling ethereal beauty. It was being hurried on now, so as to be completed by the time fixed for the Carnival; and there were few days when Marjorie, with one or other of her cousins, did not manage to go to inspect its progress. It was built on the model of a Norman castle, and its towers, bastions, battlements and "donjon keep" began to be defined with some distinctness. It was built of solid blocks of ice about three feet long, a foot in height, and eighteen inches in thickness, all the layers being solidly frozen together.

When the bright winter sunshine enfolded and penetrated the crystal mass, seen against the clear blue sky, it gleamed and sparkled in a thousand exquisite gradations of light and shade, from softest ethereal tints of gray to the diamond glitter of the icicle point. This afternoon the rosy glow of the sunset seemed to give it the delicate tints of mother-of-pearl.

To Marjorie, the silent uprising of this wonderful palace without the sound of hammer or axe, seemed to be an embodied fairy tale; one of the "fairy tales of science" spoken of in the lines her father had taught her from "Locksley Hall." She only wished he could see it, as it grew in beauty; and she did her best to give him some idea of it, by describing it in her letters. And there were other ice wonders, too, to describe. Down in the more strictly French portion of the city there were trophies rising, which, if less remarkable for stately beauty, were just as wonderful in their way. On the Champ de Mars, close to the old court house and beautiful new

Hotel de Ville, there was a great round tower rising tier upon tier of enormous courses of ice blocks. It was, according to Alan, "for all the world like a giant wedding-cake constructed on the model of the Tower of Babel." It was called a *condora*, and Professor Duncan told them that the idea came from Russia, and was a bit of barbaric oriental architecture, making a curious contrast with the Norman ice castle which by rights should have belonged to the French.

Then on the Place d'Armes, associated with the feat of the French Horatius—as Professor Duncan called Maisonneuve—there was growing up, under a canvas covering, a great ice-lion, which no one was to see till it was completely finished and formally unveiled, as a part of the Carnival celebration.

As the time drew close, the city began to put on more and more of a holiday aspect, and multitudes of strangers arrived daily. Every time Marjorie went towards Notre Dame Street or across Dominion Square, she was sure to see sleighs containing newly-arrived travelers from east or west, north or south. Numbers of Americans, especially, poured into the city every day, and the papers soon numbered the visitors by thousands. The Windsor was a gay and busy scene, with the handsomely caparisoned sleighs constantly dashing up to the portal, or from it, full of merry groups of sightseers. The ice-palace was fast receiving its finishing touches. The clear crystal battlements and turrets, with their machicolated edges, now sparkled with dazzling luster in the sunlight. Flags floated from the round towers at the entrance, and within the workmen were busy fitting up the rooms on each side of the main entrance; rooms which, however, were not to contain anything more poetical than a coffee-stand on the one side, and "Johnston's Fluid Beef" on the other, both of which Dr. Ramsay warmly approved of, as being just the thing needed in such a place and in such weather. For the cold was certainly growing keener every day. It seemed as if the ice-palace were brewing cold weather, and within its solid walls one might get a very fair idea of what Arctic cold might be like.

One night, just before the commencement of the Carnival, Alan came in, saying that they were lighting up the palace for the first time with the electric lights. The girls, he said, must come at once to see it. "Jack and Jill" were off before Marion and Marjorie could get on their wraps; and they and Alan soon followed through the keen, cold, January night, lighted by a pale but growing moon. But the moonlight seemed to fade away when they came in full view of the palace, and they exclaimed with delight as the wonderful fairy vision met their eyes. It was such a sight as is rarely seen; a sight to haunt one's imagination for a lifetime. It seemed a veritable palace of light, a fairy tale materialized. For bastions, towers and battlements seemed to throb and sparkle throughout, with a clear, pure and living light, like the fair,

tremulous shimmer of mother-of-pearl; the dentated outlines of turrets and battlements glittering, sharply defined against even the moonlight sky. Every crystal cube of its massive courses glittered with the white, lambent light; and yet, as they gazed, they could hardly believe that it was not a dream or an illusion.

“Why, Marjorie! this must be the work of your kind Light-spirit, taking pity on our Northern darkness.”

Marjorie started from her trance of delight, and turned smilingly to greet Professor Duncan, who had been attracted, like themselves, by the wonderful and beautiful sight. With him was the clergyman whose church he and Dr. Ramsay attended.

“And does Miss Fleming keep a familiar spirit of her own then?” asked the minister playfully.

Professor Duncan explained, and gave the substance of the little story of the Northern Lights in a few words. He seldom forgot anything that struck his fancy, which was one reason why his conversation was so entertaining to young and old.

“It’s a pretty fancy,” he said, “and this made me think of it at once. One beautiful thing is apt to suggest another, and this is ‘a thing of beauty,’ though it can hardly be ‘a joy forever,’ even in this Northern clime! But seriously, you know, I suppose that the Northern Lights are essentially the same in nature with the light that is sparkling through that luminous crystal pile. And, by the way, do you know what is the supposed explanation of the phenomenon of the Aurora Borealis, scientifically considered?”

None of the young people had ever heard it, and Marjorie and Millie were eager to know.

“Well, you must know, the real nature of electricity is a mystery. No one knows more than that it acts in certain ways, and is a part of that great and omnipresent energy which I of course regard as simply one manifestation of what Wordsworth calls the—

“‘Motion and the spirit that impels  
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,  
And rolls through all things.’”

The phenomena of electricity, you know, are caused by the meeting of two opposite states of the electric fluid, as it is called, positive and negative electricity; though just why, and under what conditions these two opposite sorts are developed, science as yet refuses to say. Now, as of course you know, electricity is readily excited by friction; and different sorts of friction, or friction under different circumstances, will

produce different sorts of electricity. Now it is supposed that the friction of the earth's atmosphere against the earth, as both are in motion, develops electricity, just as does the rubbing of glass with a piece of silk. And as the earth's motion is most rapid at the equator, and slowest at the poles, positive electricity is excited in the atmosphere of the tropic and temperate zones, while at the poles it is negative. And as wherever there is an interchange between these two we have electrical manifestations, it is supposed that this interchange in the North, in certain states of the atmosphere, produces the Northern Lights, the Aurora being brightest where the interchange is most active. This is only hypothesis, but it affords a reasonably probable explanation."

"Thank you, Professor," said the minister. "I think you have made it quite clear, and it's very interesting to me; I never heard it before."

"And so, you see, out of the meeting of these two intrinsically dark and silent forces, in the regions of cold and darkness, God evolves light."

"Just as easily as He did of old," observed the minister, "when he said 'Let light be,' and light was!"

"And now," continued Professor Duncan, "man, by availing himself of these laws, can draw this same powerful, invisible form of Energy into the service of humanity, and in such beautiful ways as we see here, yet only as he follows its laws and keeps up the connection with the invisible power."

"I declare, my dear professor, you are outlining for me a capital sermon! You will hear it again one of these days. Talk of sermons in stones, you have struck sparks of light out of ice! I think I shall set my Bible-class to studying all the beautiful texts about light."

"It would be a most interesting study," said the professor. "You young folks had better try it, too. That parable of light and darkness runs right through the Bible."

Marjorie thought it would be a very good thing to do, and the following Sunday, after dinner, she and Marion took their Bibles and began their search. They were astonished at the number of suggestive texts they found, beginning with Genesis and ending with Revelation. There was the "burning bush," the "pillar of light," the prophetic visions, the "great light seen by the shepherds," and the light Paul saw in going to Damascus; besides the imagery of Revelation, and innumerable metaphorical references to light and darkness. The parable did, as the professor said, run right through the whole Bible, quite as much as did that other one of life and death, and indeed, as Dr. Ramsay remarked, the two were significantly interchangeable.

When the professor came in on Sunday evening, each of the girls had a long list

to show him of the passages that had most struck them. Each of them, too, had chosen a favorite text. Millie's was, "In Him is light, and no darkness at all." Marjorie still adhered to her old favorite, "The light shineth in darkness." And Marion thought that the most beautiful of all was in the description of the heavenly city, "Jerusalem the Golden."

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

"Yes," said the professor, "that is a grand hope. You see, Marjorie, the light will not always shine in darkness, and your Northern Lights won't always be needed, any more than the sun or the moon."

"No," said Marjorie, as if half-reluctant to admit it.

"But the Northern Lights won't be forgotten, nor their lonely labor of love. 'I know thy works' is the message to each of the working churches. And He does not forget! There is another text that I like to remember when thinking of the glory of the future: 'They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever.'"

## CHAPTER XIV.

### CARNIVAL GLORIES.

After a Sunday which was marked by a quietness that seemed unaffected by the presence of so many strangers and the prospect of so many exciting novelties, the celebration of the Carnival began. Alan who was the most enthusiastic member of the household in regard to the diversions of the week, kept the rest duly informed beforehand, and planned with careful calculation how Marjorie, in particular, could manage to see the largest share of all that was going on. Dr. Ramsay, of course, was too busy a man for much sightseeing, and carnivals were no novelty to either him or Mrs. Ramsay. And as Alan was a rather youthful escort for his sisters and cousin, much satisfaction was expressed when Professor Duncan accepted sundry hints thrown out by Marjorie and Millie, and placed himself at the disposal of the party, for the four great evenings of the Carnival.

Monday evening had two events on the programme—the opening of the new *Tuque Bleue* toboggan slide, and the unveiling of the colossal ice lion. As this new slide was the one which, from its convenient nearness, the young Ramsays meant to frequent, Alan, Jack and Millie were very anxious to be there at the opening; so it was arranged that they should go there first, staying just long enough for Alan to take them down the slide once or twice, and then walk down to the *Place d'Armes*.

The *Tuque Bleue* slide was a purely artificial one, the tall wooden platform being erected in a large open field, stretching from St. Catherine Street to Sherbrooke Street, thus giving sufficient space for the toboggans to gradually come to a stop. The electric light made the gay scene as light as day; a huge bonfire close by threw its ruddy glow athwart the white light, and black shadows and Chinese lanterns and soaring rockets added to the picturesque effect. The inclined plane from the platform, about forty feet high, was divided into five spaces by raised lines, so that five toboggans could come down abreast without any risk of collision. As soon as the slide was declared open, a number of toboggans waiting at the top with their merry crews, shot down with lightning speed, and were in a few moments at the end of the course—their occupants quickly scrambling out of the way of those that were following as fast as safety permitted. Marjorie declined to be enticed to the platform for that evening, preferring to stand beside Professor Duncan and watch the animated scene. And indeed she had never even dreamed of anything like it before.

The long white expanse of snow, bright with the variegated lights, the thunderous and constant rush of the fast-flying toboggans, the merry shouts of their occupants, the picturesque crowds of spectators, most of them arrayed in blanket costumes of many colors, red, white or blue, with gay striped borders, made the scene quite unique, more like a page out of a fairy tale than a bit of actual reality.

Both Marjorie and Professor Duncan were standing absorbed in the fascination of the spectacle, Marjorie trying to distinguish Alan and Jack and Millie, as they flashed past among the rest, and too much engrossed to notice the by-standers moving to and fro close by. But suddenly a very familiar voice and intonation sent her thoughts flying off to old home scenes, before she was conscious of the reason. The next moment she looked eagerly around. Yes, sure enough! there was no mistake about it. Not ten yards off, as intent as she on the spectacle, stood Nettie Lane, her father and a cousin of Nettie's, also well-known to Marjorie. It looked so strange, yet so homelike, to see them. As Marjorie darted toward them, Nettie looked round, and there was a delighted recognition. Marjorie had hardly thought she should have been so glad to see her old school friend again.

"Well, now, isn't it funny we should meet you so soon!" exclaimed Nettie, when the first exclamations of surprise were over, and Professor Duncan had been introduced to the strangers.

"When did you come?" asked Marjorie.

"Oh! we got here Saturday night, and we were awfully tired yesterday. We're at the Windsor, you know, and to-day we were driving all round the city. Father wanted we should see it, but we were most frozen when we got in. I think it's frightfully cold here, so we had to stay in to get thawed. And we were going to find you out the first thing in the morning; but it's splendid, isn't it, meeting here? I think it's all lovely! But I should be frightened to death to go down in one of those things."

"Oh! it's not so bad when you get used to it," remarked Marjorie, with a little pride in her enlarged experience.

"Have you been down in one, then?" Nettie asked, much impressed, and Mr. Lane, who had been talking with Professor Duncan, laughed and said that "Nettie would never be happy now till she went too."

"There are my cousins now," said Marjorie. "See, you can get a better sight of them now—they're just stopping—and getting up."

"What! that tall lad in the blanket suit and red cap and sash?" asked Nettie, regarding him with great admiration as a distinguished-looking personage, quite eclipsing his more soberly attired companions.

The three had now had all the tobogganing they wanted for that evening, and

leaving the track, came round to meet Marjorie and the professor, and were duly introduced to her New York friends. As the latter were also eager to go to see the ice lion, they all went on together, Mr. Lane hailing a sleigh near the entrance, into which the whole party managed to squeeze themselves by dint of a little ingenuity. As they drove down town, both Marjorie and Nettie had a hundred questions to ask. Nettie explained that their visit was quite a sudden idea. Her father had some business in Montreal, which he thought he could accomplish best in person, and as her aunt and cousin in New York wanted to come, he thought he would take Nettie also. Her aunt had remained at the hotel, having had enough of the keen, frosty air for one day.

“Father wanted mother to come,” explained Nettie, “but you know how busy she always is, with meetings and things. She thought it was very nice for me to go, but she said she’d rather stay at home and attend to her poor people, than go to all the carnivals that ever were.”

Marjorie felt a livelier emotion for esteem for Mrs. Lane than she had ever known before. After knowing Mrs. West, she could better appreciate Mrs. Lane’s Christian zeal and devotion, even if she had judged her dear father too rashly.

They had not nearly got through the rapid interchange of queries and answers when they found themselves down at the great square, where the tall church towers rose stately in the white electric lights. Marjorie tried to explain to Nettie something of the gallant feat of *Maisonneuve*, that had become so associated in her mind with the *Place d’Armes*, but Nettie was too much interested in the present fireworks to care much about—

—“old, unhappy, far-off things  
And battles long ago.”

Mr. Lane, however, was genuinely interested in the reminiscence, and was delighted when he found in Professor Duncan a companion who could gratify his desire for information about the past as well as the present. Their sleigh was drawn up with others on the edge of the square, whence they could see fairly well over the crowds that encircled the point of interest. Amid a great blaze of fireworks, hissing rockets, Roman candles and colored lights, the lion was unveiled, crouched on a pyramidal pedestal of ice, at the sides of which stood ice-fountains, apparently playing, the whole being encircled with great white cannon balls of ice and snow. The lion himself showed as much spirit as was possible with his hard and cold composition. He sat with head erect and open mouth and paw half-uplifted, as if in angry menace.



"Not quite so bad as the American eagle, as he is generally portrayed," remarked Mr. Lane after they had scrutinized him for a few moments, getting a good view of his great head in profile from their post of observation.

"What a jolly lion!" exclaimed Alan.

"I think he's a beauty!" exclaimed Nettie enthusiastically; and Marjorie and Millie wanted to know whether he was English or French.

"Both, I'm glad to say," said the professor, then added musingly:

"I wonder what he's thinking of—the dynamite explosion at St. Stephen's, or the fortunes of our brave men in the Soudan, or Gordon shut up still, I fear, in Khartoum!"

"Yes, indeed," replied Mr. Lane. "He has enough to make him look anxious. It's a ticklish time for your Government just now."

And the two gentlemen began to talk politics, while the others watched the lion in silence, as blue lights began to burn and throw about him a weird effect; rapidly changing as yellow, green and rose-colored fire and smoke-clouds varied the coloring. Several showy pyrotechnic devices followed, while the rockets and Roman candles continued to go up, and showers of colored meteors came down about the gleaming sides of the lion, who remained calmly grim and unflinching to the end, when at last he was left to keep his lonely watch through the silence of the moonlight night. Weeks after they all remembered how the lion had suggested Gordon's solitary watch in the desert. For when the sad news came, they knew that that very day Khartoum had fallen, opened to the Mahdi by the traitor Faragh; and that a treacherous stroke had ended at once Gordon's lonely watch and his brave and devoted life.

As they drove up to Dr. Ramsay's house to deposit the young people there, it was settled by Alan's suggestion that Nettie should come to spend the following afternoon with Marjorie, and that they should all go together to see the opening of the new slide at St. Helen's Island, in the evening.

Accordingly, next day, Mr. Lane brought Nettie up to the Ramsays', where she was introduced to Mrs. Ramsay, Marion and the little ones. She was eager to see how everything looked in a Canadian home, and went especially into raptures over the toboggan standing in the entry, and the snow-shoes hanging up in the hall. But her admiration reached its height when Effie came in, rosy with play, her bright eyes and dark locks just peeping out of the peaked *capote* of her little pink-bordered blanket-coat; for it was a bitterly cold day, and the warm *capote* was a needed protection.

"Oh, you cunning little thing!" she exclaimed when she had kissed and hugged

Effie—more to her own content than Effie's. Millie looked up from her book with a surprised and rather indignant expression in her keen eyes, which Marjorie rightly interpreted, and laughingly explained that Nettie did not mean to use the word "cunning" in the sense they usually associated with it. Effie understood the admiration well enough if she did not the word, and went off to get her Christmas doll to show, that "Millie and Marjorie had dressed for her," while Norman brought in their own little toboggan for exhibition, and offered Nettie a ride on it. As for Robin, he justified his mistress's high opinion of his sagacity by his evident cordial recognition of Nettie, with whom he had been a great favorite.

Cold as it was, Nettie thought she should like to go for a brisk walk along Sherbrooke Street, and Marjorie and she set out, well muffled up, for Nettie had added a "cloud" and some other wraps to her outfit since she had experienced "carnival weather."

"I think your cousin Marion's just lovely, Marjorie," said Nettie, as soon as they were out. "And your aunt's real handsome, and I'm sure she's very kind, though she's so quiet. But they're all splendid! I think it's ever so much nicer for you to be there where it's all so lively, than to be all alone in a dull poky house all day."

"I'm very fond of my aunt and cousins," said Marjorie, "but you know 'there's no place like home,' and I should never find any house 'dull or poky' where my dear father lived."

"Well, anyhow, it's a very good thing you've got such a nice home to live in while he's away," rejoined the practical Nettie, and this, at least, was incontrovertible.

They walked far enough to get a distant view of the "Montreal slide," at the other end of the street, crowded with tobogganers in spite of the cold. By that time, however, they were glad to turn, but not before a gentleman they met had stopped to warn them that one of Nettie's ears, which was exposed to the bitter wind, was getting frost-bitten. She was very much frightened, but Marjorie told her it was nothing, it would be all right in a few minutes. And then she rubbed it with the corner of her fur cape, which her uncle had told her was the best thing to do under such circumstances; much better than using snow. And presently Nettie declared that her ear was burning so that somebody must be praising her to the skies.

As they passed the Wests' handsome mansion, Marjorie pointed it out to Nettie, telling her how Ada and she had become great friends. Nettie admired the exterior exceedingly, and declared that she would give anything to see the inside. Marjorie did not see very well how she could be gratified, however. The Wests' house was full of visitors just now, and Ada was engrossed, of course, with them, and Marjorie

thought that Mrs. West might consider it a great liberty if she were to take a friend of hers there unasked. However, fortune favored Nettie. As she wanted to go to the hotel for something she wanted to show Marjorie, the two girls went down to the Windsor, and Nettie took Marjorie through the spacious and beautiful drawing-rooms of that fine hotel. As they passed through, Marjorie encountered Ada and her mother, who had been paying a visit to a friend also staying there. Of course Ada, who had not seen Marjorie for several days, stopped to talk, and Nettie was duly introduced, and to her great delight received an invitation to come with Marjorie to pay Ada a visit next day. Nettie showed her friend her own room, commanding an excellent view of the ice-palace, and said that her father wanted Marjorie to dine with them the next evening, and that he was going to invite the whole Ramsay party, Professor Duncan included, to come to see the “storming” of the ice-palace from the windows of their own rooms, which could accommodate them all.

As soon as tea was over at the Ramsays’ that evening, the girls hastened to be in readiness for the sleigh in which Mr. Lane was to take down Marion and Marjorie as well as his own party, to see the illumination of St. Helen’s Island. The others, Alan, Jack and Millie, were to walk down with Professor Duncan, and meet them at the shore; and they started first, quite undaunted by the extreme cold of the evening—the keenest of the week.



INSIDE THE ICE PALACE.

The swift-gliding sleigh bore the others down so quickly that they had plenty of time to drive across the smooth, icy highway to the illuminated slide, which showed distinctly from the crowded docks, and near which a mimic volcano was blazing with crimson light, varied now and then by green and blue, giving it rather a lurid aspect, while showers of rockets rising from it completed the volcanic resemblance. Hundreds of torches, carried by the French Canadian snow-shoe clubs, were massed about the slide, while gay Canadian songs were sung by the snow-shoers.

The party in the sleigh, however, agreed that the scene was quite as pretty and effective from the shore, and soon drove back, meeting the walkers at the place they had agreed on. From thence they could see the clustered torches gradually forming into two long lines of light, as the snow-shoe clubs formed into procession and crossed the river highway, spanning completely the half-mile of river "boulevard," while marching across. It was a pretty sight to see all the different clubs filing past, each in its own distinctive variety of blanket costume. Alan pointed out each individual club as it passed, telling them something of its history or "local habitation," for there was a muster of clubs from all the surrounding points. The "Trappeurs," in their conspicuous blue and white costume, attracted most notice from their fine imposing appearance, and the spirit with which they sang the lively "Trappeur's" song, and then glided into the martial refrain of the old Marseillaise.

"Twere worth ten years of peaceful life,  
One glance at their array!"

quoted Professor Duncan laughingly, as the last of the long procession passed them. "Well, I'm glad they're not 'boune for battle strife,' as many such a band used to be, in the old times of the border forays between their ancestors and ours, Mr. Lane. May there never be occasion for border warfare again!"

"Amen!" exclaimed Mr. Lane. "Annexation or no annexation, the United States and Canada are two countries that can't afford to quarrel, and never will, I believe, so long as there are so many sensible and Christian men on both sides of the line."

"Even over the loaves and fishes?" said the professor.

"If we tided over the Trent affair, we can tide over the fishes," replied Mr. Lane, as the driver turned his horses' heads, and the pedestrians moved on, Millie this time being squeezed into the big, accommodating sleigh. But before they parted, Professor Duncan and Alan declared that Mr. Lane and his party must drive back to St. Helen's Island next day, to see the model of a trapper's or lumberer's shanty, which was erected there, in order to show visitors a little bit of the wild life of the hunter or *voyageur* in the backwoods. It was arranged, therefore, that the American visitors should go next day, taking Marjorie and also Alan to act as showman and explain it all; for he had once gone out with a hunting party, and had lived for a time in just such a shanty. Professor Duncan said that he would walk over himself, and probably meet them over there.

Next day was not quite so cold, and there was a threatening of snow, which was regarded with some anxiety lest it should spoil the enjoyment of the great event of the evening and of the week—the "storming of the ice-palace," to which Marjorie

was looking forward with highly wrought expectations, having declined all description of it in advance, as she wanted it to be “quite new and unexpected,” and “not like a story of which you knew the end beforehand.” Mr. Lane’s sleigh drove up for them early in the afternoon, and Marjorie was not to return home till after the event of the evening.

It was only a short drive across the frozen river to the pretty island—pretty even in winter—with its raised outline clearly visible, and its trees graceful in the contour of their leafless forms. The American visitors looked with great interest at the broad, smooth white channel of the firmly frozen river, the gleaming villages scattered along its opposite shore, with sleighs of all sorts and sizes crossing to and fro, the solid line of the Victoria Bridge to the right, and the long mass of the city stretching down the river to the left. Mr. Lane thought it must be very like Russia, and Nettie, regardless of the cold, thought she should like to stay there all winter, especially as Alan promised her unlimited tobogganing if she would do so.

“There’s the Hunters’ Camp,” said Alan, as the horses dashed up the little ascent from the river. Under some tall arching trees stood the little “shanty,” built—walls, roof and all—of round logs. Without lay the carcasses of one or two fine deer, while hares and game hung along the outside wall, and a few fish of different kinds were suspended beside them, all hard frozen. They found Professor Duncan walking about inspecting these, and talking to one of the hunters, dressed in a blanket-coat and trapper appendages, about the habits and haunts of the animals. After the strangers had looked at these trophies of the chase, they proceeded to inspect the little cabin, which, Alan told them, was an exact model of the “real thing.” The professor showed them how ingeniously the logs were morticed into each other at the ends, so as to make the walls as close as possible; how the roof was formed of the halves of the round logs alternately reversed, so that it made a tight roof not unlike a tiled one, at a distance, and how ingeniously the door was hung on wooden hinges, with a wooden latch pin, not a nail nor a bit of iron being used in the whole construction.

“All done with the ax, every bit of it; for you see there are no hardware shops in the forest, and necessity is the mother of invention.”

When they entered the low door, as they were politely invited to do by the gentlemanly hunters, they found the interior quite as ingeniously arranged as the exterior. At one side a sort of rude shelf was constructed of boughs, on which was strewn the bedding of hemlock branches.

“Just like Père Le Jeune’s bed, I suppose,” said Marjorie, and the professor assented, adding, however:

“Minus the shelf, of course. They couldn’t have luxuries in such temporary arrangements as wigwams.”

In the middle burned a large fire of blazing logs, the smoke of which ascended through the hole in the roof, though a percentage, at least, was wandering about the cabin, again recalling Père Le Jeune. Above it was suspended from a hook a great iron pot, in which some fish was being cooked, which the hunters insisted on letting their guests taste, in little tin camp plates. A wooden shelf, fitted into the wall, answered the purpose of a table, and a smaller one supported a tin jug and basin; primitive toilet arrangements. Caps and coats hung from wooden pins.

Alan surveyed it all with great satisfaction. “I expect I shall see enough of this sort of thing, by and by, when I am out on ‘surveying parties,’” he said; adding: “You know in the regular lumbering shanties they have berths like those all round the walls—sometimes two tiers of them—where the men sleep, sometimes twenty or more in one shanty.”

When they had all inspected the place and its fittings to their satisfaction, they walked about the island a little, admiring the view of the city, with its mountain background, very much the same, of course, as that which passengers by water receive on approaching Montreal by the river steamboat.

“You can hardly imagine how much prettier both the view and the island are in summer, when the ‘mountain’ there is one mass of green, and the island, too, is as pretty a little park as you could wish to see. And by the way, Marjorie, did I tell you how this island came by its name?” said Professor Duncan.

“No,” said Marjorie; “how did it get it?”

“From the fair Helene de Champlain. You know I told you that Champlain brought out his beautiful and religious young wife to Canada, where she did not remain very long, however, not caring, you see, for the rôle of a lonely ‘Northern Light.’ But while she was here she was greatly charmed with the beauty of this island, and bought it for herself with her own money. And that is how it comes to be called St. Helen’s.”

Marjorie remembered how she herself had thought that it would be “nicest” to be a sunbeam, and how her father had replied. And she felt sorry that Helene de Champlain had not proved herself more worthy of her brave husband. And she wondered how she could go into a convent and leave him to do his work all alone. The professor added:

“I have no doubt, however, that she helped to excite some interest in Canada among the good people about her. She would tell them about the poor Indians and their children, and she probably did something to excite the great enthusiasm that

soon sprang up in France about the Canadian Mission.”

They had reached the place where the sleigh was awaiting them, and the ladies and Mr. Lane took their places, Alan preferring to walk back with Professor Duncan.

“What a lot of things that professor does know! Why, Marjorie, he’s just like your father for always being able to tell just the things you want to know!” exclaimed Nettie, while Marjorie smiled with pleasure at the recognition of her father’s stores of knowledge, which had always seemed so vast to her.

“Yes, yes; the professor certainly is an exceedingly well-informed man. I consider that we are much indebted to you, Marjorie, for the pleasure of his acquaintance,” said Mr. Lane.

“And Alan’s a real nice boy, too,” said Nettie, feeling that his merits should not be passed over in silence. “And I think he’s quite handsome, too, in that blanket costume. It suits him exactly. I wish he would give me his photograph to take home.”

Marjorie replied that she didn’t think he had any good ones of his present self.

There was a little discussion as to what the party should do next; and it was arranged that Marjorie and Nettie should be dropped at Mrs. West’s to pay the visit on which Nettie had set her heart, while the others drove on to see some snow-shoe races then going on, and would return to take them to the Victoria Rink, to look in at some fancy skating that was going on there.

Fortunately Ada was at home. She explained that all the others had gone out sightseeing, but that she was rather tired of it, at any rate, and had staid at home, thinking that Marjorie and Nettie would probably call that afternoon. Nettie was enthusiastic in her open admiration of everything she saw, and Ada was as willing to exhibit as the visitor was to admire. The drawing-room, the conservatory, the library, the dining-room, Ada’s own room, were all visited, and the multitude of beautiful things they contained duly scrutinized. And Nettie admired everything, from the statuary and pictures down to the ornamental coverings of the steampipes, and the artistic tiling and fittings of the grates. Ada, who had always an unlimited supply of candies on hand, treated her friends liberally to walnut creams and French bonbons as they sat and talked, Ada having as many questions to ask about New York as Nettie had about Montreal. The two got on very well, notwithstanding Ada’s professed objection to Americans, and the fact that, whatever she might say of Marjorie, she could not consider Nettie as anything but a “real American.” But with Ada, as with many people, theory and practice were somewhat disconnected.

When the sleigh returned to take them up, Nettie knew far more accurately all the details of the interior she had just seen than Marjorie did yet, and being of a very



practical turn, she was much impressed with the amount of money that must have been spent on it.

"How I should like it if we could have just such a house as that!" she exclaimed as they drove off. "O, father! it's such a beautiful house! I wish you could have seen it."

"I've no doubt of it," said Mr. Lane, smiling. "I've seen some of these Montreal houses before. But I don't think you are very badly off at home."

"I don't think you'd want to change with Ada if you knew all about it," said Marjorie. "I think it's a great deal nicer to have a mother like yours, who cares about giving her money to missions, and looking after poor people, than to have the sort of mother Ada has."

"You're right there, Marjorie," said Mr. Lane, whose quick ear caught the low-toned remark. "Nettie has got a mother who's a woman in a thousand. I only hope she'll follow in her footsteps."

The two New York ladies had been left at the Victoria Rink, where Mr. Lane and the girls joined them. It also was decorated for the Carnival, the chief ornament being a little Gothic tower in the center, built of ice, from which in the evenings colored lights were showered in profusion. The fancy skating was very good; and the ladies watched with admiration the graceful turns and twists which the skaters performed, as if it were the simplest matter possible to keep one's balance on one foot on a glassy surface. But they soon grew tired of it, and were very glad to go back to the hotel before the early dusk began to fall, and have a rest before dinner. Nettie and Marjorie ensconced themselves in one of the recesses off the great drawing-room, and there, luxuriously installed in one of the comfortable little sofas, they talked away till the gong sounded for dinner.

It was a pleasant novelty to Marjorie to sit down at one of the well-appointed little dining-tables in the magnificent frescoed dining-room of the hotel, in which Nettie told her the great ball was to come off on an evening later. She and Nettie amused themselves in selecting the dishes with the longest French names from the elaborate menu, and were sometimes disappointed in the results. At last the fruit and ice-cream appeared, and the long-protracted dinner concluded with a cup of coffee. Marjorie for one was not sorry when it was over, and they adjourned to the drawing-room, where they found her cousins already arrived. They were soon joined by Professor Duncan, and then they all proceeded to their posts of observation upstairs. Marjorie was glad when it turned out that she, with the two gentlemen, were to have a room and a window to themselves, as she knew she should enjoy the sight far better for the absence of the brisk comments of Nettie and

her cousin.

By the time they reached the windows, the large square below was one black mass of people, crowded as close as they could stand around the space to be occupied by the besieging band of snow-shoers near the ice-palace, glittering in its intense white radiance. Every available point of vantage in the vicinity was occupied; even the trees served as a roost for adventurous sightseers, while pillars, projections and roofs were all utilized.

"There they come—see the advancing line of torches," said the professor, pointing up the square.

On they came, in long procession of two and two, like the one of the preceding evening, the flaring torches they carried throwing out the light blanket suits with gay borders, and the bright tuques, sashes and hose, while the snow-shoes on which they tripped so lightly looked like tadpoles on the snow. Each club carried its own standard, and the men sang snatches of spirited songs as they marched in time to their own music. The whole aspect of the mimic army conveyed an impression of abounding physical energy and overflowing animal spirits, quickened by the sharp frosty air. For the snow flurry that had threatened had passed over, and the sky and atmosphere were brilliantly clear. As the *Tuque Bleue* Club passed beneath the windows, Marjorie eagerly scanned it to see whether she could discover Alan and Gerald, who both belonged to it. It was not long before she singled them out, walking together, and pointed them out to her companions.

"Ah, yes! they make a nice contrast, those two. Alan's such a strapping, broad-shouldered fellow, just cut out for the profession he wants to follow, and Gerald's a fine, thoughtful-looking lad. I often wonder what he'll make of himself," said the professor, half-soliloquizing.

Onward strode the long array of men, looking like an army of knights in white armor, and winding round the palace, encircled it with their cordon of moving lights. And then the fervor of the fray began. One rocket after another whizzed forth in the direction of the luminous palace, till soon the air was filled with a shower of fiery projectiles describing all manner of curves of light against the sky. Lurid serpents glided up into the air, circling round the palace as if intent on its destruction. Then from the tall tower of the castle, on which the moving figures of the defenders could be distinctly seen, came a counter-fire; the flashing lines of light meeting and crossing, the sharp whizz and crack of the fireworks keeping up a semblance of a real assault; now seeming to strengthen in its force, while again the besiegers seemed to rally and put forth all their strength in sending forth torrents of fiery arrows on their foes. Now and then, when the contest slackened, a side fire from the Windsor would be poured

into the *mêlée*. Suddenly, as the mimic battle went on, the pure white light of the crystal pile changed into a yellow glare, while clouds of smoke arose above its battlements. The yellow passed into a lurid red. The spectators held their breath. It was almost impossible to resist the illusion of a castle in a blaze of real flame. An almost painful interest invested the brave defenders, who still kept their post aloft on the tower. But presently the glare softened, faded into a deep purple; then an exquisite soft blue light pervaded the building, changing, in its turn, to a pale sea-green. Finally even this faded away; and as the last shower of fiery arrows spent itself harmlessly in the air, the palace stood once more in its crystal purity, gleaming with its clear, throbbing white brilliancy, like a vision of ethereal beauty that no mortal power could harm or destroy.

“‘*Nec tamen consumebatur,*’ and yet it was not consumed,” quoted the professor, when it was all over. “I hope we may take it as an omen of the condition of our brave Gordon, unhurt after all he has passed through.”

And so, no doubt, it was, but in a sense not meant by the speaker; for ere long they knew that on that very day Sir Charles Wilson had arrived before Khartoum to find it fallen, and Gordon relieved, indeed, and at “rest from his labors.”

“But it seems to me,” he added, “a symbol of a soul that has been sorely tried by temptation, and yet unharmed; nay, all the purer for the battle fought and the victory won! You remember, Marjorie, the song your cousin sings, ‘Cleansing Fires’:

“‘For the gold must be tried by fire,  
As the heart must be tried with pain!’”

“Well, now, that’s a capital idea,” said Mr. Lane, as Marjorie, who had been spell-bound by the spectacle, silently assented. “I’ve known just such a case myself. I believe there’s a meaning in everything, if one could just hit on it.”

“I’m sure there is,” said the professor. But now the long white train of white-uniformed knights had begun their retiring march, and the professor suggested that the younger members of the party should walk on with him and watch their progress up the “mountain,” to which they were now bound. The girls and Mr. Lane, too, gladly followed the suggestion, and they walked up in the rear of the departing army, watching them winding in a living line of light, up the mountain path and along its brow. Led by Professor Duncan, they walked till they gained the platform by the Reservoir, from which point they could at once watch the motions of the procession of lights and enjoy the effect presented by the gleaming white palace sparkling like a great pearl in the city below them. Having, finally, followed the snow-shoers back on their downward course, they encountered Alan and Gerald, who had “deserted,” as

they expressed it. Alan persuaded Mr. Lane and Nettie that it was not yet too late for a slide down the *Tuque Bleue*, which was almost in their way. Thither they went accordingly, and Nettie, in a whirlwind of fear and delight about equally mingled, accomplished the object of her ambition—a “toboggan ride,” which would be a tale to tell for years to come. Mr. Lane was persuaded into going down also, but declared, as he pulled himself up from the snow, that, “while it was well enough for once, once was enough; and that it was high time that they were all at home and asleep, instead of turning night into day in this fashion.”

Next day there was the grand drive which is always a “feature” of the Carnival, when a long train of sleighs, in which was represented every species of vehicle to be found or devised in Montreal; making a procession almost long enough to encompass the city. There were all the *bona fide* equipages, from the richly robed family sleigh, high poised above their runners, to the tiniest and lowest cutter, which was one drawn by a goat, which Marjorie had formerly admired; while another, only a little larger, had harnessed to it a donkey arrayed in as full a tobogganing costume as a donkey could wear. There were great drays and primitive country sleighs, and a tall, old-fashioned vehicle driven by a negro coachman. Then there were the great trophy sleds; one piled up with a pyramid of snow-shoers, another with tobogganers; a large old boat of antiquarian interest mounted on runners; an Indian canoe similarly equipped, and a mammoth toboggan labeled “Baby,” an exaggeration of one well known at the *Tuque Bleue* slide. The day was bright and comparatively mild—an ideal winter day; and the visitors with Marjorie enjoyed the drive from a balcony of the hotel, which of course was on the line of march. In the evening they all went down to witness the closing scene of the Carnival; the “storming” of the *condora*, or great ice-cairn down town, in which the French Canadian clubs figured. The huge white tower rose in six narrow circles, each the top of a separate wall of ice, and these ledges were all outlined with snow-shoers, while the apex of the whole was crowned by the colossal effigy of a snow-shoer, in the deep blue and white uniform of the “Trappeurs.” A surrounding phalanx stormed the stronghold with their rockets and fiery serpents, the attack being a second edition of the one on the ice-palace the night before. Some very fine fireworks added to the general effect; and the dense crowd, including a large part of the French population of the city, seemed immensely delighted, uttering gleeful exclamations of “*Bon!*” “*Joli ça!*” “*Magnifique!*” as one pyrotechnic display after another blazed forth in its short-lived beauty. Marjorie was amused and interested as the professor pointed out to her some of the rude little sleighs of the poor *habitants*, which had brought up their little loads of eager sightseers from the country homes, for the rare and long-

expected pleasure. And there they sat, a picture of simple-hearted, thorough enjoyment, laying up recollections of these wonderful sights, which would brighten their monotonous lives for months to come.

Mr. Lane and his party were going to look into the Victoria Rink on their way home, as there was a skating carnival going on, to which Mr. Lane had received tickets of admission from one of his business friends.

Nettie insisted that Marjorie should go with them, promising to drive her safely home after they had just taken a look at the gay and picturesque scene. It was, Marjorie thought, more like a fairy tale than a reality. The great building was brilliantly illuminated; the fairy-like ice grotto was charmingly decorated with brilliant flowers, and the throng of quaint and fanciful figures, gliding in graceful, undulating motion to the inspiring music, made a picture worthy of the unique scene. The characters who glided past in endless succession had all, surely, stepped out of books or stories. There was, Marjorie was certain, Haroun-al-Raschid himself. Next to him came an Italian peasant girl; then a stately cavalier, and a red Indian with deerskin shirt and leggings and befeathered head. And there was a court lady in powdered wig and high-heeled shoes. And then came a stalwart ecclesiastic—could it be Père Le Jeune?—and arm in arm with him, in doublet and hose, with plumed hat—surely that must be Champlain! Between the bright and varied dresses of the swiftly moving throng, the continuous surging sound of a thousand skates grazing the ice at once, and the sweet strains of the floating music, Marjorie did not know whether she were awake or dreaming; but she had all the sensation of being awakened from a dream when Mr. Lane's authoritative voice declared that "it was eleven o'clock, and high time to leave all this theatrical tomfoolery, and go home like sensible folks, to bed."

And so ended the glories of the Carnival; and next day Nettie and her friends, like many other visitors from afar, were to turn their faces homewards.

## CHAPTER XV.

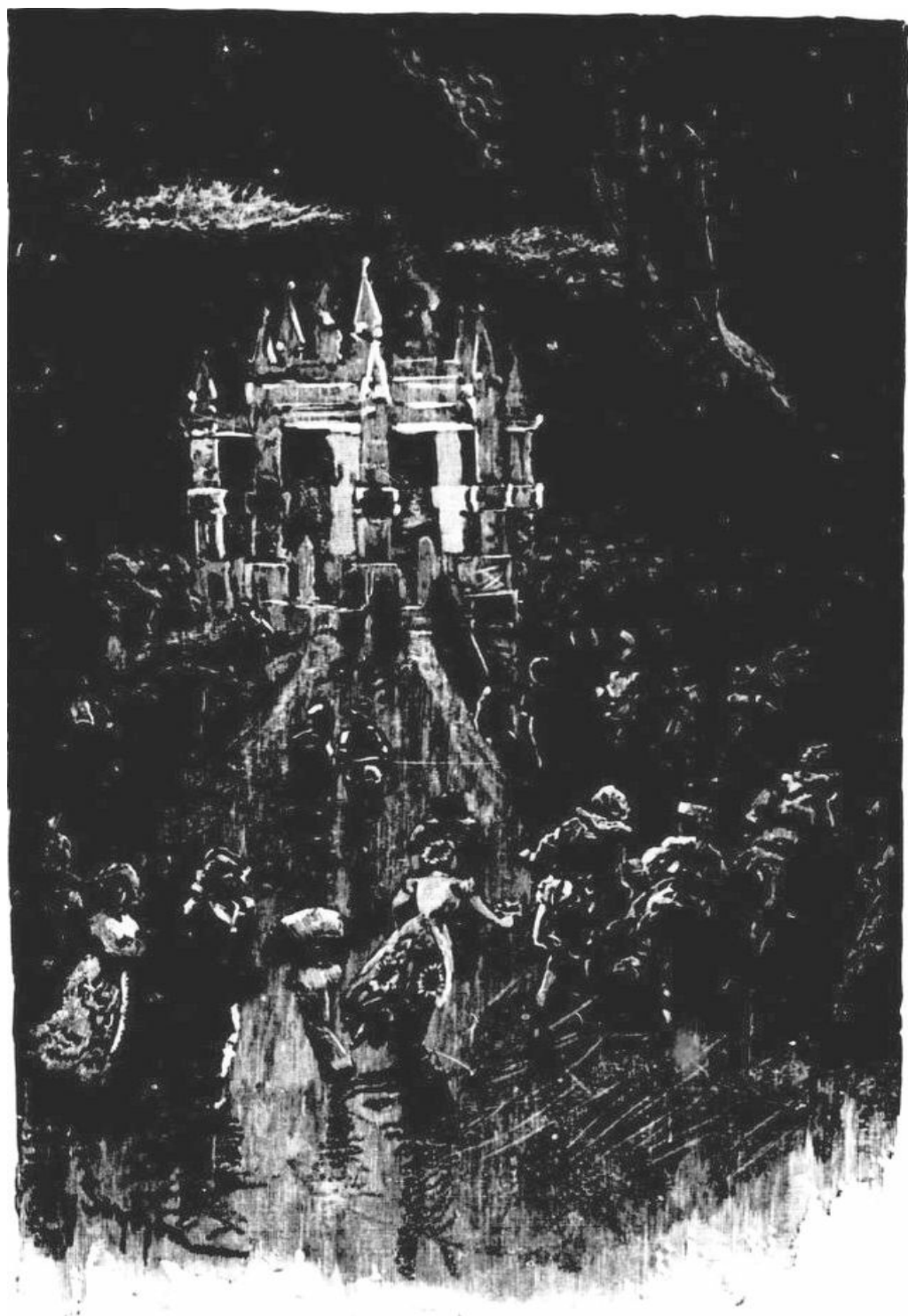
### PERE DE NOUE.

Mr. Lane had decided to leave Montreal by the evening train. Nettie and her aunt and cousin would have liked to stay to get a glimpse of the grand ball at the Windsor that night, but Mr. Lane would not spare another day; so Nettie reluctantly prepared to tear herself away from what had been to her like a scene of enchantment. Marjorie went shopping with her in the morning, and tried to restrain Nettie's ardor to possess herself of all manner of souvenirs of the Carnival; miniature snow-shoes, toboggans, photographs of the ice-palace, which abounded wherever they turned. Marjorie persuaded her to be satisfied with copies of the illustrated Carnival numbers of the *Witness* and *Star*, in the way of pictorial representations, as Mr. Lane had already bought one excellent photograph of the ice-palace; and she herself procured copies of the picture papers to send to her father and to Rebecca, knowing how the latter would be delighted; in the first place with the remembrance, and in the second, with the wonderful pictures of the tobogganing and snow-shoeing and all the icy wonders of the Carnival.

After the shopping was done, Marjorie acted as cicerone to show the others the churches. They went to Notre Dame and then to the old Bonsecours, where the subdued and foreign tone, and the humble kneeling *habitants* impressed Mr. Lane very much; for this is the favorite church of the French Canadian, and much frequented daily.

Coming back along Notre Dame Street, they turned into the "Gray Nunnery," Nettie being most eager to see a French convent. They looked around the quiet courtyard, such a strange contrast to the bustling, crowded street they had just left; and Marjorie showed Mr. Lane the primitive old gray stone building near the gate, which had been the first chapel founded by Marguerite de Bourgeoys in the seventeenth century, and which is now used for some kind of warehouse. Then they read the tablet on the present substantial stone chapel, which commemorates the name and the fame of the devoted and benevolent Marguerite. And when a gentle, sweet-faced nun conducted them into the great *salon*, she pointed out, in her broken English, the portrait of the foundress, with its kind and sensible face; and Marjorie at once excited the pleased interest of their conductress when she began to tell her friends what she had learned about the labors of love of this noble-hearted French

maiden for the poor Indian children in the early days of Montreal.





## FANCY DRESS CARNIVAL, AT THE VICTORIA RINK.

Last of all they went to the Jesuits' church, and there they were all delighted; first with the beauty of the interior with its rich artistic decorations, and then with the exquisite organ music, for there was a practice going on, and they had the benefit of it.

Marjorie took lunch with her friends at the Windsor, and in the afternoon Professor Duncan came by appointment to take them to see the University. The library and museum were of course the chief points of interest. Marjorie thought it would be delightful to live among those long rows of books, and have nothing to do but read them—a pleasure which Nettie declared she would never envy her. But Nettie was delighted with the museum, and especially with the specimens of wild Canadian animals. She was not at all impressed with that black unintelligible-looking object which the professor told Mr. Lane was the oldest Canadian fossil yet discovered, and which had caused a great deal of discussion among naturalists. Nor did she care much for the long rows of cases of minerals and moths and butterflies; but the beaver and foxes and deer and bears were inspected with the greatest interest, in which Marjorie fully shared; for were not these the very creatures which sometimes came into the professor's stories? He himself pointed out the different kinds of deer; showed them the great ox-like head of the moose, with its immense breadth of nose and of horns; and the smaller, though somewhat similar type of the elk and the caribou, with their completely different horns, rounded and pointed instead of flat and branching. He pointed out the curious third horn of the caribou deer, pointing downward along the creature's nose, and Marjorie thought she should have no difficulty now in remembering what these different species looked like. Then they looked at the finer, more graceful heads of the ordinary red deer, so beautiful and appealing with their large soft eyes, that the girls wondered how men could ever be cruel enough to shoot them, and Professor Duncan admitted that he was quite of their opinion, whereat Mr. Lane laughed heartily, and said that he only wished he had the chance to bring down such a fine quarry.

Nettie looked with much interest at the beaver, with his flat trowel of a tail; and the raccoon, with his bushy body, sharp nose, grizzled eyebrows and black eyes, and at the slender mink and soft-furred otter, which would now be real creatures to her, instead of mere names of furs. Then they went to look at the birds, and after pointing out the principal song birds, the professor showed them the varieties of aquatic birds; the tall cranes and herons, the soft-tinted ducks, the great, solemn loon, with his black head and white collar, which frequents only solitary places, and

dives below the water whenever an enemy approaches.

But the hour for the departure of Mr. Lane and his party was drawing on, far too soon for Nettie, who could hardly bear to leave “dear, delightful Montreal,” and all her new friends, and begged Marjorie to write to her long letters, telling her about everybody and everything.

Professor Duncan and Alan, as well as Marjorie, went to the station to see the travelers off, and many regrets and good wishes were exchanged. Mr. Lane was most earnest in his thanks to Professor Duncan for the pleasure which his society had added to a most delightful visit, and in his hospitable invitation to come to see him, and “do” New York with him, as they had “done” the Carnival together.

“Good-by, Marjorie! come back as soon as you can,” Nettie called out as a last word from the window of the train. Then with the usual shriek of the locomotive, they were off, making Marjorie feel, for the moment, as if she had lost a link with her old home-life. But she soon forgot this in hearing Professor Duncan and Alan discussing, as they walked home, the battles in Egypt, of which the news had just come, and the grave situation of Stewart and his troops, not to speak of General Gordon, about whom the anxiety was growing stronger every day. It was not long before their worst fears were confirmed.

A few days later Professor Duncan came in for his usual Sunday evening visit, with a saddened look and a lack of his usual animation.

“So it’s all over out there, Ramsay,” he said to his friend the doctor.

“You think the worst is true, then?” replied Dr. Ramsay. “I have been trying to hope still.”

“I fear—I fear,” said Professor Duncan sorrowfully. “It seems too sad to be true, but it’s only too probable. In fact, treachery’s what I’ve been fearing all along; and they say it was on the twenty-eighth. While we were enjoying the mimic siege of the ice-palace, that tragedy was being enacted over there.”

But Norman and Effie did not at all enjoy this grave and solemn talk, and Millie, though she had taken a profound interest in Gordon’s fate, thought that it should not swallow up all other subjects, and asked if they were not going to have that other story the professor had promised to tell them.

“O, yes! about my good Père De Noüe,” he said, “the first martyr of the Canadian missions. Well, it isn’t so difficult to turn from Gordon to him, for, though the good Father is by no means a martial figure, he showed that he could be a hero, too, and one with the very same spirit in him—of humble, unconscious self-sacrifice. It is pleasant, too, to realize that whoever may live or die, that spirit, ‘the Spirit of the Lord,’ abideth forever.”

“Strange,” said Dr. Ramsay, “I never thought of taking that text just in that way before! But it is wonderfully true, and it ought to be the great consolation when ‘a leader in Israel’ falls, and for the time it seems as if all was lost.”

“Let me see then,” said the professor, answering the wistful looks of the children, who were afraid that one of these digressive discussions was impending. “I must begin at the beginning, I suppose, and tell you that when Père Le Jeune first came to Quebec, Père Anne de Noüe—for that was his full name—a scion of a noble family in Champagne, came as one of his three companions.”

“Why did they call a man ‘Anne’?” asked Millie.

“It was very common for men on entering a religious order, to take a new name, often the name of a saint; and I suppose Père De Noüe chose St. Anne as his patron saint, and took her name. Père Le Jeune tells us that poor Père De Noüe was very seasick on their voyage out; and they had good reason, when they landed at Gaspé, to take all the comfort they did out of the passage occurring in the service for the day, ‘Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world,’ for at Tadousac, they had a horrible foretaste of the barbarity of the Indians, in the fate of some Iroquois prisoners whom they vainly tried to save from torture and death. And they knew that such a fate for themselves was by no means an improbability.

“When they all got settled down in their little log-built convent of *Notre Dame des Anges*, surrounded by palisades like a fort, more Jesuits came to them; till their family numbered six priests and two lay brothers. The priests slept in little cells eight feet square, off their refectory; and they had besides, a chapel, a kitchen, and a lodging for workmen. For they had a little farm, kept pigs and cows, and cultivated fields of rye, barley, wheat and maize. Père Massé, was wont to be called *le Père utile*, ‘the useful Father,’ because he looked after the cows and pigs, and Père De Noüe had a more difficult task in managing the workmen, who seem to have been often discontented, though Père De Noüe’s mildness succeeded in keeping down their grumbling, and making them fairly content with their unequal wages, which of necessity were somewhat uncertain.

“Père De Noüe does not seem to have been gifted with much capacity for learning languages, so that he could not do a great deal in the way of converting the Indians; but he did not think any useful work beneath him. Père Le Jeune tells us that some of the Indians took a curious fancy during the winter, that Père De Noüe caused a cold wind that was blowing, by going out early to work in the wood when the sky was red. It seemed that they were accustomed themselves to remain at home when the sky was red, and then the wind did not blow; and they were sure that if Père De Noüe would only give up his unseasonable excursions, the wind would

cease to blow.

"In the end of January of that same winter, the one preceding that of Père Le Jeune's pilgrimage, about which I have told you, some of the friendly Algonquins were encamped at Cape Tourmente, below Quebec, and sent an invitation to the good Fathers to come to visit them in their wigwam, and partake of their game. The Fathers were unwilling to offend them by refusing to go; and moreover they heard that an Indian well-known to them had died down there, and had left two orphan children, whom they wanted to secure, in order to send them to France to be educated as missionaries. So Père De Noüe determined to take the journey, by no means an easy one. For, as Père Le Jeune says, the only inns were the woods themselves, where, when night drew on, the travelers would clear a round space with their snow-shoes for shovels, and make a big fire in the shelter of the wall of snow; while a little melted snow and dried eel served for supper. Compare that with the Windsor, Marjorie!"

"I don't think Alan would care much to go on such a hunting party as that," said Millie, while Marjorie felt half-ashamed of her sumptuous dinner at the hotel.

"Well, they reached the hunting camp in safety, and the savages were very glad to see them, though they showed it only by exclaiming: 'Ho! ho! ho!' their usual greeting. They hastened to 'put on the muckle pot,' as the Scotch song says, and boil some elk flesh in snow-water for their visitors' supper, and as the young hunters brought in some beavers, these were added to the feast, the Indians astonishing Père De Noüe by the amount they could devour.

"But the Father could not eat the half-cooked flesh as they did, and before long he felt that he must return, or he would soon be too weak to do so. He was indeed half-starved, for the little store of bread that he had carried with him was greedily taken by the Indians, who said that he could eat as much of it as he wanted, when he returned home. And while on his way home, with the sled load of flesh that the Indians had bestowed on him, he fairly gave in from sickness and exhaustion and exposure to a bitter wind, and could go no farther until Père Le Jeune, being informed of his condition, sent a messenger to carry bread and wine to revive him. Rest and refreshment, however, soon restored him from the sick exhaustion caused by exposure, starvation and the close, smoky atmosphere of the reeking wigwam.

"I have told you this incident to show you that Père De Noüe, though not naturally adventurous, shrank from no hardship or peril to which he was called. One of his most marked characteristics, indeed, was his passion for implicit obedience to his superior in all things. He was a man of a most sensitive conscience, and nothing gave him so much pain as did fear of having neglected any duty. We do not hear

very much about him during the eventful years that followed. As his bad memory kept him from mastering the Algonquin language, he seems to have devoted himself mainly to the spiritual needs of the French about the forts, or of the Indians with whom he could communicate through an interpreter. He was most attentive to the sick, and, sharing all the hardships of his charge, he would cheerfully fish in the river, or dig for roots in the woods, in order to ‘feed his sheep,’ literally as well as metaphorically.

“In January of the same year that saw the martyrdom of Isaac Jogues—1646—Père De Noüe became, as I have said, in a sense the first martyr of the Canadian Mission, though it was not by the hands of savage men. He set out from Three Rivers with two soldiers and a Huron Indian, for the fort which the French had built at the mouth of the Richelieu, where he was to say mass and hear confessions. They all, of course, walked on snow-shoes, the soldiers dragging the baggage after them on their small sleds. The soldiers were awkward at walking on snow-shoes, and were greatly fatigued after their first day’s march of eighteen miles. Père De Noüe was now an old man of sixty-three, and could not help with the baggage, but he was more accustomed to snow-shoes, and was not so much worn out by the tramp. At night—a bitter cold night—they made their camp on the shore of the frozen Lake St. Peter, in the way I have already described, clearing a round spot in the snow, heaping it up as a shelter against the wind, and then building a large fire in the middle of the circle.

“All lay down to sleep, and slept soundly. But about two o’clock in the morning Père De Noüe, who had been troubled about the fatigued condition of his companions, awoke and looked out. It was a brilliant moonlight night, such a night as that of our tramp, when the boys went for the Christmas-tree. The broad highway of the frozen lake looked invitingly clear, open all the way to the dark border of pines on the other side. Père De Noüe conceived the idea of going on in advance, and sending men back from the fort to help his comrades to draw their sledges. He knew the way well, and had no fears. So directing his companions to follow next morning the tracks of his snow-shoes—as he felt sure he should reach the fort before nightfall—he left behind him his blanket and his flint and steel, taking only a piece of bread and a few prunes in his pocket.

“But before dawn the clear moonlight grew clouded over and a snowstorm set in, which left the good Father in darkness, in which he completely lost his way. He wandered far out on the lake, and even when day dawned, he could still see only the snow close about and beneath him. On he toiled through the fast-falling snow, often returning on his own track, and at last, when night came on, he dug a hole in the

snow close to an island, and lay down to rest, without fire or covering. Next day he pushed on again, and, sad to say, passed near the fort without seeing it, and walked some distance further on.

“Meantime his companions, unable to trace the tracks of his snow-shoes, quickly covered by the snow, had also wandered from their course, and had camped, the first night, on the shore of the same island, not far from Père De Noüe. The Indian, though ignorant of the country, determined to push on alone, and soon reached the little palisaded fort, with its little garrison of a few men, doing sentry duty to watch the Iroquois. Here the Indian found to his surprise that nothing had been seen of the Father, and a search party started at once. They quickly found the soldiers; but in vain they ranged the ice in all directions, shouting and firing to catch the wanderer’s ear. All day they searched in vain, returning at night baffled and fearing the worst. Next morning two Christian Indians went out with a French soldier, and finding the Father’s track by the slight depression it made in the snow that had covered it, they followed it up till they found him—where the Angel of Death had found him already. He had dug a second hole in the snow, and there, kneeling bareheaded, his eyes raised towards Heaven and his hands clasped on his breast, he had met death with the fortitude of a martyr and the tranquillity of a saint, just as, I am certain, our lamented Gordon met it in the Soudan!”

The children, who had listened intently, were looking very serious; Norman and Effie, indeed, looked ready to cry, for they could understand this tale better than that of Père Le Jeune’s trials.

Presently Mrs. Ramsay said gently: “It is a beautiful story, Professor Duncan, and, as you say, it shows very clearly the oneness of the Divine spirit of Love. How it recalls the words: ‘Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.’”

“Yes; those two did it, in the same spirit and by the same strength,” said Dr. Ramsay reverently.

“But,” said Marjorie, “why does it say that ‘we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren’? It can’t mean every one, surely.”

The professor smiled. “It means that we ought to hold ourselves in readiness to do it, if need be.” Then seeing that the young folks looked surprised, and Marjorie a little doubtful, he added:

“Yes; children, that is one of the secrets of love, that only love can know. But every true mother knows it, does she not, Mrs. Ramsay?”

“Yes, indeed,” said Mrs. Ramsay, with the loving, gentle smile that her children knew so well.

“And the ‘ought to lay down our lives’ implies the ought to give everything else when called upon—time, labor, wealth, culture, energy, everything we have or are, to feel that it all belongs to Him whose we are and whose are our brothers, too. Sometimes that is harder than the other. Gordon himself said, ‘To give your life to be taken away at once, is one thing; to live such a life as is before me is another and more trying ordeal.’”

“I hope that Père De Noüe’s self-sacrifice was appreciated,” said Dr. Ramsay.

“I feel sure the lesson wasn’t lost,” replied the professor. “Three years later, one of those Christian Indians who found his body fell a victim to the Iroquois, when the Huron Mission was almost exterminated by these savages. And it is specially recorded of him that he received his death-blow in exactly the same posture in which his friend and teacher, De Noüe, had resigned his life. Depend upon it, no act of true, loving self-sacrifice is ever lost! The misfortune and the fault of our vapid, useless sort of Christianity, as Gordon called it, is that it has lost, to a great extent, the sense of this and the power to do it. The world needs a new waking up to what Christ taught, and what it means to be his disciples.”

“Well, I hope none of us shall forget the practical lessons you have given us, Duncan,” said Dr. Ramsay.

Marjorie, at all events, did not.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### A NEW ACQUAINTANCE.

The weeks seemed to pass very quickly after the excitement of the Carnival was over, and things had settled down again into their ordinary course. Marjorie was much interested in her studies, and was making good progress in them. She wanted to surprise her father by the improvement she had made in various directions, especially in her drawing, at which she would have worked longer than was good for her, had she been allowed. She was very anxious to draw one good head from a model before her father's return, and her teacher told her that she might begin shading very soon, if she continued to progress so well in her outlines. Her enthusiasm spurred Ada on to take a stronger interest than she had ever done before, in the lessons, which had previously been gone through mechanically, as a sort of necessary evil. Now she began to see that they might actually be a source of pleasure—a new revelation to her. In her own home there was no one who took any interest in such matters, except, indeed, Gerald, who, however, had been apt to look down upon "girls' lessons" as rather beneath his notice. She had a fancy for drawing, too, though she was very impatient of the tiresome straight lines and curves, and was eager to paint plaques and panels at once. The frequent juvenile parties and their unsettling effects, prevented her making the progress she might otherwise have done, for she was by no means wanting in quickness of comprehension, and indeed would sometimes learn more rapidly than Marjorie, though she was too apt to forget as readily. But Marjorie was still her favorite companion, and she would do a good deal to win the approbation of the friend who had so completely won her affection, without, indeed, having cared much to do so. But Ada was a winning, kind-hearted little maiden, and Marjorie had grown more attached to her than she could have believed possible.

Miss Mostyn, who was fond of Ada, too, and had not forgotten her interest in Dr. Ramsay's American niece, invited the two girls to spend an evening with her invalid sister and herself. They lived in a charmingly neat little house, on a quiet, unpretending street, and Marjorie thought that, after all, it could not be so very hard to be an invalid when one had so much brightness about one—such pretty flowers and dainty work, not to speak of the attractive-looking books arranged on a little table within easy reach. But the brightest object within the little room was the invalid



herself. She seemed even brighter than her active sister, whose face was sometimes a little clouded by her care and concern for the poor people whose affairs were almost always on her mind.

“But you see, my dear,” she said to Marjorie, “when I come home worried about things, it just puts it all away to look at my sister’s face; for she never worries about anything. It seems just a special gift to make up for her affliction.”

But “Miss Matilda,” as she was called, did not look in the least like an “afflicted person,” as they all took tea together at the daintily set little table drawn up beside her couch. She seemed, indeed, overflowing with happiness as she talked to the girls, asking questions about their work and their pleasures, pleased with Marjorie’s glowing description of the ice-palace, which still stood in all its beauty, though it was but seldom now that it shone at night with the clear, pearl-like luster from the light within, which gave it such an unearthly beauty; very much as the face of the invalid shone with the inner light of a truly happy heart.

“It’s too bad you can’t see it, Miss Matilda,” said Ada sympathizingly.

“Ah, my dear, I’ve learned to know that there are better things to enjoy than those we can see with the outward eyes. It’s a lesson worth all that it cost, too, though you may not think so now. There are things that it’s harder to submit to than that.”

“Yes,” said Marjorie, “I think I know what must be harder—to see so many things you want to do.”

Miss Matilda smiled and said: “Yes, that’s a good guess, dear. It used to be the very hardest thing for me to bear cheerfully; to know that there was so much work to be done for my Master in the world, and not to be allowed to do it, when I did want to so much. But then I learned to feel that if my Master wanted me to do it, he would give me the power; and as I had given myself completely into his hands, I felt I must be satisfied with his plans for me, and not try to make better ones for myself. And, trust me, dears, that’s the real secret of happiness and peace; there’s nothing like it. Since I learned it, I’ve been as happy as the day is long. There’s a pretty little verse that Dr. Ramsay once quoted to me from Burns, and I’ve never forgotten it:

“‘For Happiness must have its seat  
And center in the breast;  
The heart’s aye the part aye  
That makes us truly blessed.’

And it’s so true that everything the heart wants is to be found in God.”

Marjorie and Ada talked about this as they went home, and agreed that it did

seem strange that an invalid so shut out from ordinary enjoyments, should be so happy.

"I suppose it's because she's a Christian," said Ada; "but I didn't think that being a Christian made people happy. Mr. Hayward's always talking about religion as a thing that spoils people's lives, and keeps them from having any fun. And I'm sure he always seems jolly enough without any."

"Yes; but what would he do if he were a helpless invalid like Miss Matilda?" asked Marjorie.

"Oh! he says he would kill himself if he had to live such a life. He has a brother who is an invalid, and he says he could never stand it."

"Then you see Miss Matilda is better off," Marjorie replied. "I don't think Mr. Hayward is nice at all, Ada, and I wish you didn't like him so much."

This, however, was a subject on which Marjorie and Ada never could agree, and the former knew that her words were wasted when she objected to Mr. Hayward, who still frequented the Wests' luxurious home as a privileged visitor. Every one said that Dick West was getting worse and worse, and that he never would do any good while he frequented the society of his questionable friends. His mother, at all events, made no attempt to remove him from the influence of Mr. Hayward's companionship. Gerald continued to dislike him as much as ever, but he found little sympathy when he expressed it.

He and Alan were both studying hard, in order to pass their final school examinations in the spring. Alan wanted to go out on a surveying party for the summer, though his father wished him to enter the University in the autumn, desiring that each of his boys should have the benefit of a liberal education, whatever vocation they might afterwards follow.

Gerald had not yet decided what he was to do after his college education was completed, but thought at present that he should like very much to go with Alan, if they could secure an appointment on the same expedition. He was tired, he said to Alan, of the featherbed life they lived at home, and he should like to try a little "roughing it," and have a little adventure by way of variety.

His birthday occurred in March, and it had been a long-established custom that he should have some of his most intimate boy friends to dine with him on that occasion. Alan, of course, was invited, and was very particular—for him—that his attire should be in the most correct style, and that his tie should be of the most becoming shade. Millie teased him by declaring that this was entirely on Ada's account, and Marjorie laughed, and declared that she quite agreed with her, whereupon Alan professed to be very indignant, and intimated that it would be as

well if certain persons would mind their own business. Marion, like the good elder sister she always was, adjusted his tie, scrutinized his general appearance, and declared he “would do,” without making any such ill-natured insinuations. But she stopped him, as he was rushing off, to whisper a word in his ear.

“All right, Moll! You’ll see how moderate I’ll be,” he said, and went off whistling his favorite air, “*A La Claire Fontaine*.”

“Where’s Alan?” asked Dr. Ramsay, when he came in to tea, noticing his empty place; for it often happened from the doctor’s frequent absence from meals and his preoccupation with his patients, that he did not know or remember such little matters as invitations, though these were not of very frequent occurrence so far as the young folks were concerned. Mrs. Ramsay explained where he was.

“I wish they didn’t have these boys’ dinner parties,” he said, frowning slightly as he was apt to do when a little worried. “They have all the long string of courses, and wine just like their elders, and, if it does nothing worse, it puts all sorts of nonsense and extravagance into their heads. I don’t believe these youngsters will enjoy themselves half so much to-night as Marjorie’s father and I used to do, when we had our college cronies in for a bit of supper and a ‘crack.’ And we thought it a very fine supper, I assure you, if we had a bit of Finnan haddie and a Welsh rabbit, with a tumbler of toddy to finish off with, for you see we weren’t total abstinence in those days. But we never took more than one tumbler, or two at the outside, and even then our studies never suffered. But nowadays the boys must have their claret and sherry and their champagne, and so on, and poor Dick West’s a sample of what it comes to.”

“Well,” said Mrs. Ramsay, “I think you would have been better without even your glass of toddy; and I shouldn’t think that any great improvement on the champagne. The toddy hasn’t done Scotchmen too much good.”

“O, yes! I know you’ll be bringing up poor Burns next; and you’re right enough, my dear. Total abstinence is by far the best thing on the whole, either for both physical and moral health, especially in this climate of ours, and with the wretched stuff they generally sell here for whiskey. But, you see, if one is autobiographical at all, one must stick to facts, and I was only comparing our Scotch ‘plain living’—if not ‘high thinking’—with the luxury of our modern Sybaritism. One thing is certain: Sybaritism will never make men; and our rich men’s sons will never be equal to their fathers. Well, I’m glad, for my boy’s sake, that I’m not a rich man.”

“Some people would say ‘sour grapes,’” replied Mrs. Ramsay, “but I don’t.”

Alan came home in high spirits. They had had such a splendid dinner; everything just like a grown-up dinner party, “ending up with some first-rate songs.” And Ada

“looked stunning,” too; he had never seen her look prettier!

Mrs. Ramsay and Marion both noticed, a little uneasily, Alan’s flushed face and excited manner. “I suppose the champagne was good, too,” observed his mother.

“Oh! I didn’t take much, really; only one glass, and a little claret; I don’t care for sherry a bit. But some of the boys had several glasses, and I don’t think Gerald liked it altogether.”

“Well, my boy,” said his mother earnestly, “I should very much prefer your not taking anything of the sort. You’ve never been accustomed to have it, and I don’t want you to get into drinking habits. I wish, that to please me, you would promise to abstain altogether; at least till you are twenty-one, and can judge better what is good for you. And then I hope you will be actuated by a desire to seek the good of others as well.”

“Well, mother, I’ll think about it; I would do a great deal to please you, you know,” he said, stooping for her good-night kiss.

“Mamma is more nervous about Alan,” said Marion, “because she had a brother who spoiled his life by getting into drinking ways. And she has a fancy that Alan is very like him. I hope he will do what she wants him to do, or we shall always be uneasy about him when he’s out of our sight.”

After this, it was rather remarkable how often the subject of total abstinence came up in the course of the Saturday tramps, which Marjorie enjoyed weekly with her young cousins, when Alan and she generally had pretty long talks, and how many things she found to say in its favor, both for the benefit of Alan and Jack. And these remarks were by no means without effect, for Marjorie was so good a comrade that she had a good deal of influence with both boys. She had become quite expert at snow-shoeing, and so accustomed to the toboggan slide that she had lost all fear, and only regretted that the advancing season must soon put an end to this and other winter sports. Occasionally they varied the exercise by going to the rink for an hour or two, and Marjorie tried hard to learn the “Dutch Roll,” and “Outside Edge” from Alan, who was very willing to act as instructor. Gerald, too, skated very well, so that Marjorie had no lack of teachers and helpers. She had certainly improved very much in health and strength since she had come to Montreal, and had grown plumper as well as taller, so that Dr. Ramsay declared that she would be a good illustration of the benefit of a sojourn in a doctor’s family, as well as of a winter in Montreal.

One evening early in March, they had all been at the *Tuque Bleue* slide, and as Alan and Marjorie returned with Marion who had been with them, Jack and Millie lingered a little behind, for now the days were so much longer that it was quite light at six o’clock; and these two liked to get all the fun they could, now that it would be

so soon over. Even when the tea-bell rang they had not turned up.

"Where are Jack and Jill?" asked Dr. Ramsay a little uneasily, as he noticed their absence.

"Only at the slide," replied Alan; "they couldn't tear themselves away when we did."

"I hope they haven't got into any mischief," he said. "They ought to be in in time for tea."

"I'll go and hurry them up," said Alan good-naturedly, for he noticed that his father looked rather more worried than was usual with him.

Presently he returned, laughing. "They did have a 'spill,'!" he said, "but there's no great harm done.

'Jack fell down and broke his crown,  
And Jill came tumbling after.'

But it's only the toboggan that got broken this time, and it's a wonder that it has held out so long, with Jack using it."

"Then they're not hurt?" said the doctor, looking relieved.

"No, only a bump or two; Jack, I fancy, will have a black eye for a day or so, though."

And then the two came in looking rather crestfallen and disheveled, and very eager to explain that "it wasn't bad steering at all, but only because Willie Foster would run his toboggan too close, and his went faster than theirs."

"Well, children, you know you ought to be very, very careful, as I have often told you," said Dr. Ramsay. "I'm afraid you are growing reckless, and I'm glad the toboggan's broken, for you will have to get on now without one of your own, and be satisfied to get a ride from Alan so long as it lasts. I always did think I had a little 'second sight' about me, for I don't often feel so uneasy about you. But I've just been seeing a case that rather upset me. I'll tell you about it after tea."

The doctor, however, only made a pretense of taking tea, and scarcely ate a mouthful. This was not unusual with him, but it was unusual to hear him volunteer an account of any of his patients, especially painful ones.

His present "case" was sorrowful enough. It was that of a poor little French boy whom he had been called in to see when passing near the spot where he lived, not far from the railway. He had been playing with some other children in a snowbank, had slipped and rolled down just as a locomotive was approaching, and had had his arm so crushed and torn, that he had had to amputate it at the shoulder.

"O, father! how dreadful," exclaimed Jack and Millie together, while Marjorie

grew pale and sick at the thought of a child suffering so much.

“I didn’t tell you about it just to shock and pain you,” said the doctor; “but because I want some of you to go to see the poor child as often as you can. He ought to have been taken to the hospital, but ‘he is the only son of his mother, and she is a widow,’ and it would almost have broken her heart to let the child go away from her. So, as she seems a very tidy, careful creature, I thought it best not to press the matter. Probably the child would fret more with homesickness than would counterbalance the good of the hospital nursing. These French Canadians do cling so to their little homes, however humble they are! And this is such a poor one. The mother takes in washing, and manages to keep the boy and herself. He did work in one of the factories (and he isn’t eleven years old yet) but the confinement was too much for him, for he’s a puny little fellow, and she wouldn’t let him go any more, though she tells me he wanted to do it to help her. But the little room is very bare, and I want you to see that the child wants nothing that he should have, either in the way of diet or a little cheer.”

There were several volunteers at once for this kindly office, and Dr. Ramsay gave directions as to just what diet was to be prepared for his little patient, Mrs. Ramsay undertaking to superintend this, a frequent office of hers where poor patients were concerned. Marjorie was glad to have an opportunity of putting in practice some of the lessons she had learned lately, especially as the Browns did not now need so much attention—the man being able to be about again. Marion and she went down next day with the doctor.

The little boy was lying very pale and weak in the bare but tidy little room, his mother busy with her ironing. It was in a narrow French street where the houses looked old and grimy, and all the little shops had French names. That of the little boy was Louis Girard. His mother was a pale, thin little woman, looking exhausted with her night of grief and watching, and yet ironing away at her table as if nothing had happened. She told them, in her broken English, that her little boy was so good and so patient; “*comme un petit ange*,” she added, resorting to her French to supplement her English.

The boy was too weak to care to speak, and only feebly noticed their presence. Marion offered to relieve her by sitting up with the child that night, but the poor mother explained that the neighbors were very kind; “*très bonnes*,” finding that Marion understood her French, in which she much preferred to talk. They wouldn’t mind coming in and sitting up when she was tired out, and she could take a nap on a neighbor’s bed while its owner took her place. And Marjorie remembered what her father had said about the goodness of the poor to each other.

After that she found her way often to Madame Girard's little room, and very soon poor little Louis learned to watch for her visits. Encouraged by the example of her cousin Marion, she tried to talk to him a little in his own language, and though at first she was sorely perplexed by his French Canadian *patois*, she succeeded by and by in being able to understand him and to make him understand her. She generally took Robin with her on these visits, and the little dog was a great source of amusement to the little fellow after he began to get relief from the prostrating pain and fever. He tried his best to say "Robin," and was much pleased when the dog would answer the call and leap up beside him. By degrees, as Marjorie and he began to be more intelligible to each other, he would tell her about the factory he had been working in, and how hard the children had to work—being sometimes cuffed and beaten if they failed to satisfy their masters, till Marjorie felt shocked to think that such things could be.

Marjorie's French vocabulary was still limited, but she bethought herself of taking with her a French Testament, and reading, very slowly, a few verses at a time. She chose such passages as the story of the daughter of Jairus, the Good Samaritan, and Louis listened earnestly, his black eyes fixed on her while she read. Madame Girard, too, would often stop her interminable ironing, and sit down to listen, exclaiming approvingly, "*C'est très joli ça*," as Marjorie ended. How much Louis understood she could not tell, but there she had to leave it. The little fellow was certainly wonderfully patient, a fact which much impressed Jack and Millie when they came to see him.

Marjorie grew so much interested in him that she never let more than a day or two pass without going to see him, even though it cut a little off her drawing time; for her aunt insisted that she should not abridge her hours of exercise. But the snow-shoeing was practically over now, for there had been a good deal of mild weather, and a "thaw" had rather spoiled it. The tobogganing was getting spoiled, too, though skating was still available. The ice-palace still stood, though breaches here and there began to show the power of a silent besieger; and the ice lion and the *condora* were decidedly the worse for the inroads of the same insidious enemy. The latter, indeed, was already being carted away in blocks, to fill some of the ice houses for the coming summer.

Marjorie tried to interest Ada in her little protégé, but without much success. Ada was willing enough to give a generous donation out of her pocket-money, to buy for the invalid unlimited oranges or candies: but when Marjorie tried to coax her to go to see him, Ada was quite impracticable. She had all her mother's aversion to being made "uncomfortable" by scenes of sickness or suffering, and she didn't see

what good she could do Louis by going to see him. Marjorie was rather vexed. She thought that, by this time, Ada would have profited more by the lessons of Professor Duncan, and she had quite set her heart on starting her on a career of philanthropy through getting interested in poor Louis, who of course would have to be helped for a long time to come. When she could make no impression on Ada she began to feel impatient, and a little bit self-righteous, too.

“Well, Ada,” she said indignantly, “wait till you are sick yourself, and then you’ll have more sympathy for sick people;” words that she was not to forget for weeks to come, as sometimes happens with our most thoughtless remarks.

Having failed with Ada, she tried Gerald, whom she found more open to persuasion, and she had much pleasure in guiding him to Madame Girard’s little room, and securing his promise to visit and befriend Louis as much as was in his power; which was the more satisfactory, as Ada and she had been conscious of their first coolness in regard to the matter; Marjorie not being able to realise that the habits of a life of self-indulgence are not to be broken in a day.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### ANXIOUS DAYS.

“Well, Marjorie, how is your little French friend getting on?” asked Professor Duncan, one Sunday evening towards the end of March, as he took his seat in his accustomed chair.

Marjorie replied that he was doing so well that he would soon be allowed to sit up a little, and that he had already been wondering what he should do for a living, with only one hand.

“Poor little fellow!” he said. “But I don’t doubt that something will be found for him to do. And they are wonderfully adaptive and patient, these French Canadians. I’m sorry to see, Ramsay, that we’re likely to have some trouble with their relations in the Northwest. That rebellion seems to be getting serious, to judge by the last news of the collision between them and the mounted police.”

“Yes,” said Dr. Ramsay; “great pity it occurred. I was hoping the affair might have been settled without bloodshed. But when people get excited, and their blood is up on both sides, some rashness is sure to occur. Alas! ‘how great a matter a little fire kindleth.’”

“Yes,” replied the professor, “and it could all have been so easily avoided. A little ordinary humanity, a little faithful attention to the duties they are sworn to fulfill, on the part of our public men and their agents, would have addressed these grievances long ago. As it is, I am afraid that these poor people will learn the bad lesson that bullets will attract attention when all other appeals have failed. Some of our papers have been pressing the case of these poor half-breeds for months past, but to no purpose. Those whose business it was to right them, have been too busy with their own affairs, or party affairs. And now it’s on the cards that this may be a tedious and bloody struggle. What a comment it is on our boasted progress, to send men out to shoot down these misguided and neglected people, instead of giving them kind care and common justice. Greed, speculation, party politics—that’s some of the darkness that the light has to struggle through now, as best it can.”

Alan, who had come in while the professor was speaking, listened with a very sober face. He and Gerald had been greatly excited by the news of a rebellion of the half-breeds and Indians in the northwest of Canada, and of the calling out of the Volunteers, and both were wishing they had been eligible for such a splendid

adventure. But these observations of Professor Duncan seemed to throw another light upon it, in which it did not seem so splendid.

Presently, however, another recollection occurred to him while Professor Duncan and Dr. Ramsay went on discussing the situation; and he turned to Marjorie, remarking:

“Gerald says Ada is not feeling at all well to-day. She hasn’t been out since the day before yesterday.”

Marjorie felt a little conscience-stricken. She had not gone to pay Ada her usual Saturday visit, feeling a little vexed still, at her refusal to go to see Louis. She thought she would go to ask for her the next afternoon.

But the next day it rained heavily, and as Marjorie had taken a little cold, her aunt would not allow her to go out again after she came home from school, very wet, and looking tired. The mild soft weather they had had for a little time had been causing a good deal of illness, and Dr. Ramsay had a good many patients on his hands. And next day Alan came home from school with the news that Ada was very ill indeed, and that the doctor feared an attack of typhoid fever.

Typhoid fever it did, indeed, turn out to be; and before many days were over, Dr. Ramsay was called in to consult with the Wests’ family physician, as he had once been called in before in Dick’s illness. He looked very grave when he came home, and, in reply to Marjorie’s anxious questioning, he said that it was a very serious case indeed, and that Ada was not a good subject for a fever; her temperament being very excitable, and her constitution by no means strong.

It was a terribly anxious time for poor Marjorie, and indeed all the Ramsay family more or less shared her anxiety, for Ada had become a favorite with them all. No one, indeed, could help being attracted by her sunny face and graceful, winning ways. And so this individual anxiety rather cast into the shade the public one which was exciting the whole Canadian people with martial preparations and tidings of Indian risings and frightful massacres. At another time Marjorie would have been eagerly sharing the general excitement. But just now the question of Ada’s recovery was paramount, and nearly every afternoon she called at the house to ask how the patient was, receiving always the same reply: “Just the same, Miss; a little better if anything.”

But Dr. Ramsay saw no improvement yet, and one afternoon, when Marjorie returned from school, Marion met her with the sad intelligence that her father had come home from a consultation with scarcely any hope of Ada’s recovering from the utter prostration of her present condition. While there was life there was hope, of course, but no one could tell at present how much power of rallying she possessed,

and the end might come at any moment.

Marjorie was almost stunned. She had never realized before the idea of death in connection with Ada, notwithstanding her anxiety. In the rush of feeling that came over her, the predominant thought was that she must see Ada once more, even if she might not speak to her. If she only could tell her how sorry she was for what now seemed to her her unkind speech about illness, which also seemed to her to have been an ill-omened harbinger of evil.

She did not wait to take counsel of any one, but hurried off to Mr. West's house; and instead of her usual query, asked if she could see Mrs. West, or any one. The servant said she did not know. Mrs. West did not see any one, but she would see if Mr. Gerald was in, and she showed Miss Fleming into the library. The room seemed empty, but Marjorie stepped quietly in over the soft carpet, for the house seemed so hushed that she instinctively tried to move silently, not to break the prevailing stillness. Suddenly she perceived that Mr. West was standing with his back to her, leaning on the back of an easy-chair, his head bowed in his hands, while a tempest of grief shook his frame. Marjorie was startled, and almost frightened. She had never before seen a man so overpowered with emotion, and it was difficult to realize that Mr. West, whom she had always associated with riches and prosperity, should be in such a depth of distress, though the cause was surely quite sufficient. Ada was the apple of her father's eye, the center of all his hopes and affections, and her removal from his life would make his prosperity itself seem valueless. Marjorie could not bear to remain there even as an unseen witness to his grief, and she retired as noiselessly as possible to the drawing-room, where the sumptuous luxury of the surroundings, and the glowing bloom of the conservatory seemed in such mocking contrast to the heavy cloud of sorrow that darkened the luxurious home.

In a few minutes Gerald came in, looking pale and haggard. Marjorie eagerly told him her wish. He looked very grave as he said that probably she might see Ada for a minute or two, but that Ada would not see or notice her, as she was apparently unconscious. He would ask the nurse, as his mother was lying down, quite worn out with grief and watching.

He soon returned and asked Marjorie to follow him upstairs to Ada's room. How vividly the recollection flashed upon her of the day when Ada, bright and joyous, had led her into it first. The canary in his gilded cage was banished now to the conservatory and the room was darkened, so that at first Marjorie could hardly see the pale little face on the pillow. But how changed it was since she had last seen it. Wan, colorless, all the bright sunny locks vanished—for they had been cut off in the beginning of her illness—Marjorie could scarcely realize that it could be Ada.

She lay with closed eyes, and one might easily have doubted whether she still lived. Marjorie stood at a little distance, fearful lest she might disturb the patient, by whom the nurse was keeping close watch. The tears soon dimmed her sight, and it was only by a strong effort that she could restrain her sobs. But it was of no use to stay here. Ada seemed further away from her than before. So she turned sadly away, almost wishing that she had not come. She could not bear to think of remembering Ada like this, if—but she would not think of such a possibility just now, or she would break down and distress Gerald. He followed her silently down the stairs, and as she bade him good-by, not venturing on any expression of sympathy, he half-murmured the words: “Pray for her, Marjorie!” and turned away, choking down a sob; for he, too, was fonder of his sister than of any other member of the family.

Marjorie hurried on, too much excited to walk slowly or think calmly. She was possessed by one overpowering thought. If Ada died was she ready to pass to another life? She remembered vividly the words Nettie Lane had used about her father, and though applied to him they seemed absurd, they now appeared to her filled with a terrible meaning about Ada. She could not think that Ada was a Christian, and if she should die in this condition! Why had she not tried harder to lead her to think of the things that now were the only things that could matter to her? She felt as if she had been false to her duty and cruel to her friend, and that she would give any thing in her power for an opportunity of retrieving her neglect. Feeling as if she could not bear the burden of such thoughts alone, she was seized with the impulse to go to Miss Matilda Mostyn with her trouble. She felt that she would sympathize with her trouble, and that she might throw some light on the problem that was perplexing her. Fortunately, she found Miss Matilda alone, with the sweet and peaceful expression that always made her face so attractive, even to those who did not know its secret.

Miss Matilda understood Marjorie’s trouble at once, without much need for explanation. She had, indeed, been thinking a great deal about Ada; had been taking her anxiety about the child where she took all her burdens, and laid them down. And she had a soothing balm ready; even her soft and gentle tones seemed to carry it in advance to the sorrowful heart.

“Yes,” she said, “it’s an anxious thought, I know; many a time I’ve had it myself! But remember, Marjorie, God loves Ada infinitely more than you can. Can’t you leave her in his wise and loving care?”

“Yes; but O, Miss Matilda! if she were to die unprepared! And she has never had any one to make her think of such things.”

“My dear,” said Miss Matilda, “people talk a great deal too much about being

‘prepared’ for death. If they would think a little more about being prepared for life! It’s all a part of the one thing, for time can’t make such a difference in God’s sight. It is a terrible thing, if one realizes it, for any one to be living in any corner of God’s universe and not be friends—be reconciled with the God of infinite love and wisdom; not be the true child of the loving Father. But then he has such infinite patience, as well as infinite love and wisdom. And he has many a way that we know not, to bring his ‘banished’ home; banished, of course, by their own wayward will. So, my dear, just trust poor little Ada in her Father’s hands, and don’t think that you could do more for her than he can.”

Marjorie went home much comforted, though she cried half the night. And Alan looked as if he had not slept much either; in fact, he had been very different from the usual Alan ever since his father had been called in for consultation in Ada’s case. No one took any notice of his depression, knowing that he would shrink from and resent it. Even Millie had sympathy and tact enough to refrain from seeming to observe that he was not in his usual spirits; and the progress of affairs in the northwest, and the mustering of the Volunteers always furnished a timely relief from the topic which was too painful in its interest to permit of discussion.

But, as the April days passed slowly by, and the piles of snow were insensibly melting away from the streets, Ada’s condition seemed to improve a little; and Dr. Ramsay, who visited her daily, began to dare to hope that she had, as he said, “turned the corner.” But he warned them all, when they expressed their delight, that it would require the greatest care and most judicious nursing to bring her back to health and strength, and that any relapse would probably prove fatal. As the orders were that she was to be kept perfectly quiet, Marjorie had no expectation of seeing her for a long time. But one day Gerald came over to say that Ada had taken a fancy to see Marjorie, and that she would fret if it were not gratified; only, if Marjorie came, she must not let Ada waste any of her strength in talking. Marjorie willingly promised to try to keep Ada from getting excited by the interview, and accompanied Gerald at once, her heart beating quickly at the thought of seeing her friend again after this long season of suspense, which had made her feel how strongly she had become attached to her kind-hearted, though thoughtless little friend.

Ada looked a little more like herself than she had done when Marjorie had last seen her, but the absence of the cloud of bright hair and the soft wild-rose color made a very great difference. She tried to smile when she saw Marjorie, who only took her hand quietly, as if she had seen her the day before, having been strictly charged by her uncle to show no feeling in the interview. Ada was not allowed to talk yet, nor indeed was she disposed to do so; but she did summon strength enough

to say to Marjorie, with a rueful attempt at a smile:

“Haven’t they made me a fright? All my poor hair gone!”

Marjorie only smiled, and said that it wouldn’t be long in growing again; but in her heart she felt almost as much regret as Ada. It did seem like a pretty picture spoiled; and yet she wondered how she could think of such things when Ada had been restored, as it seemed, from the very grave.

Mrs. West sat beside Ada this time, though the nurse was still on duty; and Marjorie was shocked by the great change in her, too. She looked ten years older; indeed, it was hard to believe that this worn and faded-looking woman could be the much-admired Mrs. West. For she had a heart, after all, and next to her eldest son, who had been adding recently to her load of anxiety, its idol was her pretty daughter; and when trouble and threatened bereavement came, she found no help or comfort in the things that ordinarily satisfied her selfish heart. After all, as Marjorie’s father had once said to her, people did not always have to lose their riches to find out that they are not “enduring habitations.”

Ada begged Marjorie to come again soon, and Mrs. West indorsed the request; for weakness and inactivity made Ada very fretful, and her mother was glad to catch at anything that seemed likely to entertain her a little. So she came frequently to sit with her in the afternoons, not, however, quite deserting Louis, who was getting on nicely, and now had Millie and Jack for his more frequent visitors; though Jack had to carry on most of his conversation with him in dumb show. Marjorie had to give up all thoughts of drawing the head she had been ambitious to do for her father; but she felt that Ada needed her, and that her father would be much better pleased with her doing the kindness to a friend than he would be with the most successful drawing. And indeed it made no small difference in the rapidity of Ada’s improvement that Marjorie came to sit by her almost daily for two or three hours; talking to her when she was disposed to listen, and sometimes reading to her bits of Mr. Fleming’s letters, containing lively descriptions of the West India Islands, which he was visiting; and occasionally a part of one of his printed articles about the Southern life, which had now begun to appear, much to Marjorie’s delight, for it seemed to her a visible token of his re-established health.

But one afternoon Gerald insisted that Marjorie should go down with him to see the “ice shove”; that is, the curious massing and piling up of the cakes of ice along the shore when the river bursts its icy barriers. It occasionally causes a flood, but at this time it was not so violent, though the jagged masses with which the shore was heaped bore witness to the strength of the current that drove them before it and landed them in picturesque confusion along the river bank.

“You must go to see the Lachine Rapids some day,” Gerald said, “and then you won’t wonder at the effects of such an irresistible force.”

Marjorie described it all to Ada, on her return, but Ada listened without much interest. She had never been taught to enjoy nature much in any form, and did not see anything particularly interesting about an “ice shove.”

Presently she asked Marjorie how the little French boy was getting on. She seemed to have only now recollected him.

Marjorie told her, adding that Millie and Jack went to see him often, now that she could not go so frequently.

“O, dear!” said Ada; “how tiresomely good you all are! Even Jack and Millie, too!”

Marjorie said nothing, only smiled a little. But Ada had got into an unusually thoughtful mood. The two girls were quite alone, and the air of a very balmy spring day came gently through the ventilator, while the spring sunshine, softened by the rose-tinted curtains, flooded the pretty room.

“Marjorie,” began Ada, very seriously, “I suppose I came very near dying?”

“I suppose so,” Marjorie replied. It was the first time that Ada had seemed conscious of having been in such danger.

“Well, if I had died, what do you suppose would have become of me?”

This question completely puzzled Marjorie. She did not know what to answer, even to herself.

“You know ministers always say that people can’t go to Heaven unless they are Christians, and I know very well I’m not a Christian, though I believe you are! So I couldn’t have gone to Heaven, could I?”

Marjorie could only say that her father used to tell her that if people could go to Heaven without loving Christ, they wouldn’t be happy there; and that the Bible didn’t say anything about “going to Heaven,” but about going to be “with Christ.”

But this was unintelligible to Ada, nor indeed did Marjorie understand it yet, herself.

“Well, you know the rich man that was clothed in purple and fine linen was ‘in torments.’ I heard our clergyman preach about that the last Sunday I was in church, and it has often come into my head since. And when he came to see me—you know mamma only let him come once—he prayed that I might be made one of God’s children. Now, how can I, Marjorie? I think I’d like to be if I could.”

Marjorie was delighted to hear Ada say this, but she hardly knew what to reply. Then she remembered what her father had said to her about being “converted,” and she tried to explain to Ada that it meant being willing to follow and obey Christ.

"But how can I be willing, and what must I do to obey Him?" persisted Ada.

"He can make us willing if we ask Him," said Marjorie, "and He will show us just what He wants us to do. But the first thing is to love Him."

"Yes," said Ada; "but how can I love Him, when I've never seen Him? And how can I be sure He will hear me if I ask Him? I know Mr. Hayward didn't believe that He could hear at all. Did you know he was gone away, Marjorie?"

"Yes," said Marjorie, "and I'm very glad."

"Well, I was dreadfully sorry at first," said Ada. "That was one thing that made me fret when I was beginning to get better. But I don't mind so much now, for I know he used to say lots of things he didn't mean. But you know he never went to church, and he didn't believe Christ could hear us at all."

"Yes, I know," said Marjorie; "and once my father didn't, either. But he does now, and so do I. I'm sure Christ was divine when he was on earth, for, as Professor Duncan says, no one else was ever so altogether good; and if he was divine then, he is divine still, and when we try most to be like him, we feel that He does hear and help us. And I think He has helped you, in making you well, just as he did the daughter of Jairus, you remember."

"O, yes! I remember," said Ada eagerly. "Do you know, I once saw such a beautiful picture! It's here in Montreal, and I wish you could see it. Christ is in it, sitting by the little girl, and just putting out his hand to wake her up; he looks so good and kind. I thought then I could love him if he looked like that."

"But He must have looked like that, Ada, if He could die for us because He loved us and wanted to save us! And if He did that, don't you think He will help you to love and obey Him if you ask Him?"

"Well, I will ask Him," said Ada, "if that's all it means to be a Christian! But I used to think it meant going to church very often, and reading sermons, and going to see sick people all the time, and never having any pleasure. And so I didn't want to be a Christian; at any rate, not till I knew you. But I'm glad you like to come to see sick people, any way," she added, with one of her old smiles.

"But it does mean some of these things," said Marjorie, "for you know Christ says we are to love God 'with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves.'"

"But how can we?" said Ada. "Nobody does."

"I don't know," replied Marjorie; "but that is what Christ says, and my father said that he always meant what he said."

"But if people loved their neighbors as themselves, there wouldn't be any poor people in the world, and that poor boy wouldn't have so little, nor his mother to work so hard, when we have so much."



“No,” said Marjorie, “I think a good many things would be different if we all did love our neighbor as ourselves; though I don’t know if there would be no poor people. My father says there always will be, so long as some folks are idle and lazy. But there wouldn’t be so many, and Louis would be better off.”

“Well, Marjorie, I’ve got a surprise for you,” said Ada. “I asked mamma, to-day, to give me all the pocket-money she owed me, and here it is,” she added, taking her little velvet purse from under her pillow. “And you are to take it all for little Louis, to get him anything you like.”

And Marjorie, with great satisfaction, took out a bright gold sovereign, and never even thought that, after all, her own prediction had come true.

She could not forbear going to tell Miss Matilda of this conversation; and the invalid rejoiced with her over the good news, and reminded her that she should not forget to return thanks to Him who had thus answered their prayers. Ada’s recovery seemed to progress more rapidly now that her heart had become more at rest; and before the swelling buds on the trees began to burst, she was able to be moved downstairs to the sofa in the library.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### OPENING BLOSSOMS.

Every day now grew more springlike. The last traces of the snow and ice were fast disappearing under the genial influence of the brightening sunshine, and Jack and Millie were already contemplating an expedition to the "mountain" to look for the first wild flowers.

Now that the roads were growing dry and smooth, Gerald was out every afternoon on his pony or his bicycle, for he had both; and he frequently let Alan have the use of the one he was not using himself, which Alan much enjoyed. Meantime the progress of the struggle in the Northwest was the absorbing topic. The interest grew more intense when the news came of bloody conflicts between the Volunteers and the half-breeds; and the lists of killed and wounded were eagerly scanned, even by those who, like the Ramsays, had no very personal interest in the matter. Alan and Gerald wished again and again that they could have been in one of the engagements; a wish which their mothers and friends certainly did not endorse. But the decisive conflicts at Batoche and Cut Knife Hill "broke the back of the rebellion," as Dr. Ramsay said; and the restoration of quiet and order would only be a question of time.

"I hope the lesson will be taken to heart by all whom it concerns," said Professor Duncan, "and that another time they won't wait to do their duty till battle and massacre and a devastated country have waked them up to it." And when the description came of the conference between the chief Poundmaker and the Canadian commander, they all read it with an interest intensified by the stories which had taken them into the roving life of the Indians of two hundred years before. Indeed, as Professor Duncan said, it seemed like a revival of the old stories, only with the great difference that the Indians felt themselves in the power of the white man; and that, for the first time, they had real reason to complain of their treatment under the British flag; for it was clear that if the agents of the Government had done their duty, the rising would never have occurred; and Dr. Ramsay read with pleasure a letter he had received from a friend in the Northwest, who testified to the fact that but for the influence of the Christian missionaries among the Indians, the rising would have been far more general and far more destructive.

Ada's pony had been brought into town—a pretty little sorrel, gentle, and nicely

trained; and she was counting the weeks that must elapse before she could use it. But a bright thought occurred to her; why might not Marjorie have a ride on him? The riding-master had been giving his education some finishing touches, and Gerald had tried him several times while Alan rode his, and declared him "just the thing for a girl, so easy and gentle; and spirited enough, too, for Ada, at least."

Marjorie thought the proposal of a ride a charming one, and as Mrs. West was willing to carry out any wish of Ada's, and Dr. and Mrs. Ramsay had no objection, she went, one fine May afternoon, to don Ada's habit and start for her ride. The little blue riding-habit was a trifle small for Marjorie, but it had been made large for Ada, who was growing fast, so that it answered the purpose tolerably well. Marjorie was more excited than she was willing to show when Gerald put her up on the saddle, in orthodox fashion, and she gathered the reins in her hand, Gerald showing her what he considered the best way to hold them.

They walked soberly enough along the winding road that led up the mountain, now and then turning to look back at the city, as it lay spread out below. When they were fairly on the pretty mountain road, where the air was full of the fragrance of opening leaves and wild blossoms, they had a brisk canter till they came again to a more sudden rise. Marjorie was so exhilarated by the delightful bounding motion, which was so much better than a toboggan, after all, that she forgot all about the view that lay behind them until, coming out at last on the very brow of the stately hill, Gerald drew rein and told her to look down.

And there, indeed, was a view to enjoy, with the soft spring sunshine flooding the scene, and giving an ethereal coloring to the distant hills. Just below lay the city, its streets and squares mapped out in serried ranks. Beyond it curved the wide blue river, its channel studded here and there with bosky islands, while beyond it soft blue mountain summits rose against the distant horizon. Gerald told her the names of the different hills, showed her St. Helen's Island, the way down to Quebec, and then, when they had gone a little farther on, pointed out the white gleam of the Lachine Rapids in the far distance.

Marjorie remembered what Ada had said about the greater beauty of the view in summer, and wished she were there to see it with them.

"I don't wonder that Jacques Cartier called this 'Mount Royal,'!" she said, thinking of Professor Duncan's stories.

"No," said Gerald. "I wish there were any such great things to do now, as those old discoverers did."

"Are there not always great things to do?" said Marjorie.

"Well, what would you be if you were a boy?" asked Gerald, after a slight

pause.

Marjorie did not know. She thought it would be nicest to be something like her father.

"I used to think I'd like to be a soldier," Gerald said; "but there don't seem to be any very noble wars now, at any rate. I've been thinking that, after all, there must be better things to do than picking off poor savages, and that seems to be the main thing our men have to do nowadays. And then, as Professor Duncan says, war should not be thought of between Christian nations any more. But I do wish there was something to be done that one could put one's heart into! I'm sick of the flat sort of life most people seem to live, and I often think I'd like to cut it all, and go off, like those old Jesuit fellows that Professor Duncan is so fond of."

"Or like those Cambridge graduates?" suggested Marjorie.

"Well, I tell you, it would be a fine thing if one only could believe as hard as they do; to put one's heart and soul into a cause that one thought was the best in all the world. I'm sure I wish I could! It's a fine thing to be a doctor like Dr. Ramsay, but I know I could never make a doctor of myself, and as for law and business, I hate the very thought of them."

"There's the Church, then," said Marjorie.

"Yes," said Gerald with a sigh. "I should like the Church first rate, if I were only good enough! Or rather, what I should like would be to be a missionary, or to go off like Gordon and feel I was doing something that would really tell! But then, you know, one couldn't do that unless one believed with all one's heart."

"Of course not," said Marjorie. "But why shouldn't one?"

"Oh! girls find all that so easy. So did I, once, only I never thought much about it at all! But that Hayward used to say so many things; I know he was no good, any way, but then I couldn't help thinking about the things he said, and I can't believe quite as I did."

"I don't think that sort of believing was worth much," replied Marjorie. "I think my father wouldn't call it believing at all, only 'taking for granted.'"

"And isn't that what everybody has to do?" asked Gerald, surprised.

"My father didn't, at any rate. I can't exactly explain it, but I know that he doesn't call it believing unless things are quite real to you. And he says if one only tries to do what one does believe, and is willing to get more light, one will get it. You know that verse, don't you: 'If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine'?"

"No, I don't know it," said Gerald. "You must show it to me. I should like to hear your father talk about such things."

"Perhaps you may," said Marjorie. "You know he's coming for me, some time this summer. But then there's Professor Duncan. He's almost as good."

Gerald laughed, with a little of his old satirical manner. "Well, if ever I have a daughter," he said, "I hope she will think as much of me as you do of your father!"

"Perhaps she will," Marjorie retorted, "if you deserve it as well."

"Suppose we have another canter now," said Gerald, ignoring this remark.

As they leisurely descended the mountain slope after their canter, they passed children carrying little baskets and bunches of the graceful white trilliums or "May lilies," as they called them; with a few late hepaticas and violets. Here and there a wild plum or cherry spread its white plumes beside their way. It was an exquisite evening, full of fragrance and freshness, and Marjorie long remembered the charm of the ride, with the spring sunshine on the scene and in her heart, too.

But good and ill are apt to be intermingled in life. When Marjorie reached home she found a bit of bad news awaiting her, and Norman and Effie in deep dejection, though they declared that "it wasn't their fault, at any rate." Robin had gone out with them, as he often did now, and had not come home. They did not know just when he had left them or how he had lost them. Alan had been out searching for him ever since, and Jack and Millie had gone in another direction; but no trace had been found of him yet. Marjorie was very uneasy. It was not only that she herself was very fond of the little fellow, but he seemed a charge from her father; and what could she say to him if Robin were lost? However, she would not add to the children's sorrow, and tried to be as hopeful as she could; though she had a very uneasy heart all night, not knowing where poor little Robin might be. Dr. Ramsay had telephoned to the police-station, and sent an advertisement to the paper, so that no precaution might be neglected; for Robin was a dog of some pecuniary value, and if he had been stolen, might not readily be recovered.

But relief came from an unexpected quarter. Next morning, as Marjorie was about to set out on the search herself, little Louis Girard appeared with Robin in his arm—having, poor little fellow, but the one—and with his pale face beaming with delight at being the restorer of the "little dog of Mademoiselle." Robin had run into the house where he lived, having seemingly been chased and frightened. It was too late in the evening to bring him home, so Louis had taken good care of him till morning, and had begged his mother to let him take the dog home himself. It was hard to say which of the three concerned showed most pleasure in the *dénouement*—Marjorie, Robin, or Robin's restorer. When Ada heard the story she was so delighted that she said Louis must be doubly rewarded. For she and Marjorie had been planning how they might get him out to the country air, to make

him grow really well and strong.

Marjorie's birthday came on the twenty-fourth of May, which is a public holiday in Canada, being observed as the birthday of Queen Victoria. There had been a good many projects made as to how it would be best to celebrate the day. It was finally decided that they should have a picnic on St. Helen's Island, which is often called the island park of Montreal. The day turned out a lovely one, and the only regret felt by the party as they went down to the ferry, was that Ada was not able to accompany them; of course Gerald and Professor Duncan were guests. The picnic would not have been complete without the professor. Mrs. Ramsay enjoyed the excursion as much as any of the younger ones, and Dr. Ramsay said if he could manage it he would come in the afternoon to escort them home. And Miss Mostyn, by general consent, was invited, and agreed to take a holiday for once.

Marjorie had had a birthday letter from her father that morning, and it inclosed a little birthday gift, the proof of another "parable," by the author of her favorite Northern Lights. She took it with her to the island, that Professor Duncan might read it at leisure, and gave it to him to look at as he lay down on the grass to luxuriate in the beauty of the day and the newly-fledged trees, of which there were many large and beautiful ones on the island. Marion and Marjorie, with Alan and Gerald, strolled leisurely along the pretty shady walks through the wood or along the shore, picking a few wild flowers here and there; snowy trilliums or purple violets or wild diolytra. They even found in a shady spot, a late specimen of the white cups of the bloodroot, to the delight of Marjorie, who had never seen this earliest spring flower before. Mrs. Ramsay and Miss Mostyn sat near the professor with their knitting, and called them all to headquarters when it was time to spread the luncheon in the sunny glade they had selected for that purpose.

When luncheon was over—Robin having his share as well as the rest—Professor Duncan took up the printed paper, and proposed to read the little parable.

"I like its meaning," he said, "and it is very appropriate to this sweet spring day and these spring flowers that you girls have adorned yourselves with. I suppose you would rather have a story than the botanical lecture I was thinking of giving you?"

There was no dissent from this suggestion, and the professor, waiting till the remains of the luncheon had been removed, began the reading of this spring parable:

"The summer had filled up the measure of its days, and finished its work. Every seed had ripened and fallen, every fruit was garnered, every nut hung ready to be carried by the squirrels to their winter storehouses. The soft, dreamy, golden sunshine seemed to wrap all nature in an exquisite repose, as of satisfied rest after happy and successful effort. The Spirit of the Woods looked with a contented smile

upon the peaceful beauty of the scene, which left nothing further to desire or to hope for; and she, too, seemed to yield to the languorous influence about her, and to rest satisfied with mere existence in the sweet and drowsy stillness.

“Suddenly she became conscious of a strange and subtle change, which seemed silently to pass over the face of this dream-like beauty. The golden glow faded out of the sunshine, a strange chillness pervaded the air, and one by one the delicate blossoms drooped and faded, while cold gray clouds hid the soft blue of the summer sky, and sobbing gusts of wind strewed the grass with sere and withered leaves, that but lately had been waving, fresh and green, in the soft summer breeze. The Spirit of the Woods looked with dismay at the sudden and mournful blight that had touched, with a destroying spell, the perfect beauty in which she had been rejoicing, and she seemed to feel the presence of a great destroyer, of whom she had vaguely heard; before whose coming all the beauty of the earth must perish. She wept bitterly, till the boughs of the great trees drooped heavily towards the earth, and the crystal tears dropped from the feathery sprays of the hemlocks, and sank down into the earth, to refresh the soil that had become parched with the long reign of unbroken sunshine, and to keep the roots of the grass and the tender plants from being dried up for lack of moisture.

“Then there came a day that gave new hope and joy to the drooping heart of the disconsolate Spirit, and made her feel as if, after all, the Destroyer had been overcome. Perhaps her tears had been powerful to drive him away. At all events, it seemed as if the reign of brightness and beauty had returned. The sunshine again broke, bright and golden, through a soft morning mist that seemed to bathe all nature in the freshness of spring. And when it shone on the forest, there gleamed out a thousand hues of amber and gold and crimson and purple, and every twig and shrub seemed to glisten as with ruby and coral in the morning sun, in which many a ‘burning bush’ shone with almost dazzling radiance. The Spirit of the Woods gazed in astonishment and delight at the wondrous transfiguration which had clothed with new and glorious beauty the nature that had seemed ready to droop and die.

“But her joy was short lived; for very soon again the gold faded out of the sunshine, and instead of the soft, brooding, slumberous calm in which all the living creatures had seemed to bask and luxuriate, wild gusts again began to sob and wail through the forest, sweeping away, all too swiftly, the rich colors from the trees that began to stretch their bare dark boughs appealingly to the stormy sky. The bitter north wind breathed over all things its biting, nipping air, and every green thing sank before it in blackened decay. The grieved and disappointed Spirit wept again, more bitterly than before, over the desolation of her kingdom—the dead and dying

herbage, the swift disappearance of the glory of color that had seemed to crown the woodland with an aureole of brightness, just before this mournful shattering of her hopes. This time her tears as they fell were caught and crystallized by the tricky frost spirit into an exquisite, sparkling hoarfrost, which at least beautified the advancing desolation which it could not stay. Day by day, as the winds blew and the rain fell, more and more dying leaves fell from the trees, and dropped sodden on the yellow, withered grass, and as the sad-hearted Spirit looked over her desolated realm, but lately so rich in beauty, she could see nothing to console her. But even as she sat disconsolate amid the brown and sere remains of what had been such luxuriant verdure, behold, there glided up to her a beautiful, clear-eyed spirit called Hope, who whispered to her in sweetest tones that, although the great Destroyer had come, despite her tears and prayers, there would yet arise a great and powerful Restorer, even stronger than the destroying power that had wrought such evil and havoc; and that this Restoring Spirit would bring back to her desolated woods a new and fairer beauty, that would even make her forget the treasures she had lost and was now mourning.

“So the Spirit of the Woods was comforted, and waited patiently, watching always for the promised approach of this wonder-working power. One night there arose the sound of a great and mighty wind, and as it rushed through the forest, bending and swaying the great trunks and branches, driving everything helplessly before its resistless strength, the expectant Spirit wondered whether this might not prove to be the power that was so strong, and of which so much was to be expected. But its strength seemed only for destruction, for it tore up even large trees, that were not very firmly rooted, and snapped asunder, with a loud crash, tall and strong trunks, while it ground and crushed the tender boughs and twigs, and left the forest more bare and desolate than before.

“Again the Spirit watched and waited, sorrowful for the havoc she could not prevent, yet still hoping for the wonderful Restorer who was to do what she could scarcely now think possible. But she had faith in the promiser, Hope, and where she could not see, she trusted. One clear night, when everything was very still, she became aware of the silent presence of a great and terrible Power. The swiftly rushing water, that nothing could hold back, became suddenly cold and lifeless, then solid and dark like a piece of dead matter. The soft brown earth became hard and rugged as iron. No one could ever have imagined her the gentle mother of so many living things. ‘Here is a power mightier even than the wind,’ thought the Spirit. ‘The wind could only lash and toss the water into a rage; this holds it in chains and fetters. But this also is the power of death, not of life!’ And the Spirit sighed, but patiently



watched and waited still.

“By and by, without a sound, or the rustling of a dead leaf, a strange, soft, white, feathery mist descended on all the bare, dark forest and hard, iron-bound soil. Before long they were all enwrapped and shrouded in a soft, unearthly, though beautiful garment, that seemed to be an etherealized semblance of the beauty of its summer verdure. Tenderly the Spirit of the Snow wrapped its light, fleecy drapery about the interlacing gray boughs, till each twig and spray seemed to stand out in a lovely tracery of the purest white, which glittered in the sunlight with a more dazzling luster than that of pearls or diamonds. As the Spirit of the Woods gazed in admiration, she wondered whether, indeed, this could be the new restoration of beauty that had been promised; but she shivered at the thought that, though beautiful, it was cold and inanimate, and that even its beauty was not the beauty of life, but of death. And even while she thought this, she, too, yielded to the benumbing spell that seemed to have overcome all things, and fell asleep.

“When she returned to consciousness, it seemed as if she had been aroused by a kiss so soft and warm, that it sent a thrill through all her being. As she looked up, she forgot even to think about the promised Restorer, so lost was she in an encompassing and penetrating sense of awakening life. The trees still showed their leafless boughs against the sky, but there was about them a magical presentiment of quickened vitality; a faint feathering out of swelling buds, which exhaled the most exquisite fragrance, an air as soft as the down on the swan’s breast. The ground was still brown, and strewn with sodden leaves; but a moist, sweet odor came forth from the ‘unbound earth,’ and myriads of tiny green points and shoots were rising and expanding themselves in every direction. As the delighted Spirit looked towards some moss-grown rocks near at hand, she started in an ecstasy, for in their shelter she saw an exquisite cluster of lovely snow-white cups, gleaming like stars out of their deep, rich green leaves. And she knew it for a parting gift left by the Spirit of the Snow to show how her purity had entered into this fresh and renewed life. And all around the woodland was studded with snow-white plumes, as if the snow wreaths were still clinging to the bare shrubs; only this snow was living and breathing the fragrance and the tenderness of opening life, blended with the dazzling purity of what had been the cold and soulless snow.

“As she looked in silent wonder and delight, a liquid, melodious trill met her ear, like the pure note of returning life, and wherever her eye turned it was gladdened by bursting buds and opening flowers, nearly all of the same dazzling snowy purity, though here and there their fair whiteness was just tinted by some exquisitely delicate coloring; and occasionally a blood-red blossom seemed to be a memorial of the

beautiful, but mournful glory which had preceded the season of sorrow and despair. But now the air was full of fresh hope; the sun shone warmly with a soft, sympathetic power that made its gentle kiss a very touch of life. The music of a thousand streamlets filled the air, and the song birds that had fled before the Destroyer's approach, were caroling joyously from every bough. And the Spirit of the Woods, as she drew in a long breath of the sweet reviving air, exclaimed, 'Now I know that the power of love and life is forever stronger than the fatal force of death and destruction.'"

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"Well, do you like the Spirit of the Woods as well as the Light spirit?" asked the professor.

"No," said Marjorie promptly. "She was very useless, for she could only moan and lament."

"Oh, well! she's only intended to symbolize Nature 'travailing in pain,' as she is now; and she does well enough for that. But on a day like this one can take in the lesson, and it's the very one I've been preaching to you in my stories—that Love is the only power that will ever appeal to the human heart."

"Yes, indeed," said Miss Mostyn; "I know that by experience, if I'm not a professor. Love is the only thing that will work any real reformation, even with the most hardened."

"And therefore," said the professor, "I for one need no other evidence that the Gospel of Love came from Him who made the heart and knows how to touch it."

But Norman and Effie were rather impatient of the quiet talk; and very soon they all went on an expedition to look at the military buildings on the eastern end of the island, where a regular garrison used to be posted, but where now almost absolute solitude reigns.

"So may it be with all our fortifications everywhere," said the professor. "There ought to be no more need for them."

Then they began to talk of Hélène de Champlain, and to wonder how the island looked when she first fancied it.

"I'm sure I think she might have been very contented in Canada," said Millie, "with such a pretty island all for her own."

"I think so too," said Professor Duncan.

When Dr. Ramsay arrived they boiled the kettle with a spirit lamp, and had afternoon tea by the shore. There were several other picnic parties on the island, but it is so large that they did not disturb each other. The children had lovely bunches of wild flowers to carry back, as they stepped aboard the ferry boat to return in the

glowing sunset, the city before them lighted up with the golden flood of radiance, and the distant hills transfigured, too, with its transient glory.

The little ones, with their flowers, were driven back by the doctor, who had left his horse at the nearest convenient place, and the others walked leisurely home in the pleasant spring twilight. To Marjorie, notwithstanding her father's absence, her fourteenth birthday seemed the pleasantest she had ever known.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### EASTWARD, HO!

Mr. Fleming's tour among the West India Islands had been rather more protracted than he had at first intended; and he wished to visit several interesting points in the South before returning northward. It would be, he wrote to Marjorie, July, at any rate, before he could join her in Montreal. Her cousins were delighted at this, for they had been afraid lest he might come for Marjorie before they went to Murray Bay, where they always spent the summer holidays, in one of the country cottages near that pleasant spot. They had told Marjorie a great deal about its manifold beauties and delights, so that the pleasure of looking forward to these counteracted the disappointment of her father's protracted absence; and they were all eagerly anticipating the first week in July.

Ada was getting on very well, but the doctor recommended a change to country air as soon as possible. She had been hearing so much about Murray Bay from the Ramsays and Marjorie, that she fixed her affections on that place at once, and the doctor said that nothing could be better than the bracing air there, though the water, unfortunately, would be too cold to admit of her bathing. Mrs. West had been there occasionally when her children were younger, and as a general thing she preferred to go to the livelier American watering places; but as Ada had taken a fancy to go to Murray Bay, and as she certainly was hardly fit for a long and fatiguing railway journey, the convenience of a place accessible by steamer decided the matter. And Ada soon had the satisfaction of informing Marjorie that her father had secured a furnished house for a few weeks, where she hoped Marjorie would spend part of her time with her, when they were all down there together.

Another little project the two girls discussed with great interest. Louis Girard had some relatives not far from Murray Bay, and if they could take him and his mother down there to their friends in the country, it would be the very thing to recruit them both. It would be, too, Ada said, the nicest sort of reward to give the little fellow for finding Robin, though perhaps it would be more correct to say that Robin found him.

Dr. Ramsay had often told Marjorie of the "Fresh Air Fund" in Montreal, for taking poor children out to the country; so she suggested that they should start a little "Fresh Air Fund" for little Louis. The "Fund" became very popular. Gerald and Ada put into it almost all their pocket-money, the latter limiting her expenditure in candy

to a wonderful degree. Marjorie put in all that she could save from what her father sent her for necessary expenses. Mrs. West dropped in a five dollar bill, and the young Ramsays each contributed their mite; and very soon they had collected quite enough for the purpose. And as Dr. Ramsay wanted to get Louis to the salt water as soon as possible, he and his mother were sent off with the first detachment that went down under the care of the "Fresh Air Society." Both were delighted; the mother crying with pleasure at the prospect of seeing her old home and her relatives again.

Alan had got his surveying appointment, and had started with his party; but Gerald was too much needed at home to allow of his being spared. As Dick could not be much depended on, and was, moreover, needed by his father in the office, Gerald must take care of his mother and sister when they went to Murray Bay, where they were to have with them an aunt and two cousins of Ada's. And as they had several other friends who took summer cottages at Murray Bay, there would be no lack of pleasant society. The Ramsays' usual resort was two or three miles from the hotels and little settlement of summer cottages, on the opposite shore of the bay. But the Wests were to take down a phaeton to drive, and with Gerald's and Ada's ponies, there would be no difficulty in having frequent meetings, even if the charming walk were too much for the invalid.

June passed rapidly and pleasantly by. Marjorie went to school as usual, and had now set diligently to work at her crayon head, though the weather was not very favorable for indoor application. Ada was taken out for a drive every day, and Marjorie was her frequent companion. Their drive was usually the delightful one round the Mountain Park, with its lovely views of city, river and country, on both sides of the noble hill. Sometimes they drove through the beautiful cemetery, where the quiet sleepers rest under such a bowery shade of stately trees; and occasionally Gerald and Marjorie had a ride, sometimes up the "mountain," sometimes along the smooth surface of the Lachine Road, with its green fields and tall elms and glimpses of Dutch canal scenery, and the tall, gray French spire of Lachine rising above the trees.

Everywhere there was the fresh beauty of June; even in the city itself, where the gardens were aglow with flowers and blossoming shrubs, and many of the streets, especially those leading up to the "mountain," were like bosky avenues; and the "mountain" itself had shaken out its luxuriant mantle of green, and rose behind the city, twice as stately in its summer robes as in its cold wintry garb. In fact it seemed scarcely possible to realize that the Montreal of June and the Montreal of the Carnival were one and the same place.



Mount Royal Park drive.

Professor Duncan went away in June to Quebec, where he usually spent most of the summer, and where he promised to take care of Marjorie, and show her much of the historic city, if she would come on a day or two in advance of the family party, who could not conveniently linger on the way. Before he left, however, an early morning expedition was arranged to go down the Lachine Rapids, as Gerald had suggested. He and the professor acted as escorts, and Marion, Marjorie and Millie started about six o'clock on a lovely June morning, after a hasty breakfast, to meet their escorts at the Bonaventure Station.

The train had soon whisked them out to Lachine, where they stepped out on the pier where the steamboat lay on which they were to descend the rapids. Above stretched the wide Lake of St. Louis—the expansion of the river above the rapids, which formerly bore the same name. As they steamed away from the village, with its large stone church and *Presbytère*, and line of houses stretching along the lake shore, Professor Duncan pointed out the Indian village of Caughnawaga, on the opposite bank of the river, just below the lake, and told Marjorie something of the romantic and tragic career of Robert de la Salle, the first feudal lord of Lachine. The very name of the place was, he said, a memorial of this adventurer's ambitious

dream of finding a short way by water across the continent to India and China. It was in a spirit of derision that his jealous enemies gave this name to the seigniory here, given to him by the ecclesiastical body which then owned Montreal, on condition that he should build and maintain a fort there, which might help to keep off the raids of the murderous Iroquois. And he told her that there were still relics there of La Salle's old house and fortification. But La Salle was a born explorer, he said, and soon sold his seigniory here that he might go farther West, and devote his life to his cherished project of finding a water way to the Pacific.

The professor also told briefly how, after a long succession of arduous labors, toilsome journeys and heart-breaking disappointments, he at last realized his dream of finding the Mississippi River, following it to the Gulf of Mexico, and taking possession of this great rich Western and Southern country in the name of his king, the great Louis the Fourteenth. But even in the realization of his dream he was doomed to disappointment. The jealousy of his foes and the forces of nature seemed to be banded against him, and after twenty years of labors and bravely-borne disappointments, he fell in the wilds of Texas by the bullet of a traitorous follower while trying to secure succor for an ill-fated colony he had led to that southern shore.

Marjorie listened to the professor's brief outline with the greater interest, because it seemed to interweave with the history of the place that of her own native land, and established an unexpected link of association between this Canadian village and that tropical Louisiana of which she had been reading so much in her father's letters, and both of which draw their French character and coloring from the same old brave explorers.

But they were nearing the rapids now, and the present excitement crowded out every other thought. These rapids do not look so grand and formidable as some of the other rapids of the St. Lawrence, and just at first Marjorie felt greatly disappointed. But when they got fairly into the strong grasp and swirl of the water that looks so deceitfully quiet, and were carried on at headlong speed past the bare black rocks that almost graze the steamer's side, and saw the strong white breakers that here leap up as if to catch it and drag it to destruction, it was exciting enough; and she almost held her breath till they had stemmed the raging surges below the rocks, and had emerged into the calm, though still swift current near the tranquil beauty of Nun's Island—quite an appropriate name, Marjorie thought, for an island that seemed such an embodiment of repose, contrasted with the angry and troubled waters just above.

The view of the city, with its mountain background, was lovely in the fresh, bright morning light, as they steamed under the huge Victoria Bridge, and swept round to

the quay. And then this little expedition, so unique to Marjorie, was over already. She stepped off the steamboat reluctantly, glad that she could look forward to having soon more enjoyable travel on the same noble river.

The weather was growing very warm in Montreal, even before the end of June. Marjorie felt it difficult to fix her thoughts on her studies, and her energy was growing rather languid. Ada was suffering from prostration caused by the heat, and grew more fretful than she had been since the first days of convalescence. Preparations were hurried on, and one fine evening in the end of June, Marjorie found herself on board the large Quebec steamboat, with her aunt, Jack and Gerald, who were going down in advance of their respective parties, to have all things in readiness. Marjorie was to be left at Quebec with Professor Duncan till the others came on, two days later, when she was to join them on the Saguenay steamer.

They had a beautiful calm evening, with a growing moon, as they sailed down the wide stream of the St. Lawrence, watching the "mountain" till it rose dimly blue in the distance. To Marjorie it was associated with so much enjoyment, that to lose sight of it at last seemed like bidding good-by to an old friend. Her aunt insisted on her going off early to her stateroom, notwithstanding the beauty of the summer night; for there would be far more to see in the morning, and she would have to be up about five, not to miss the fine scenery just above Quebec.

When she came out on deck in the cool, fresh morning, the river scenery was completely different. Instead of the low flat shore near Montreal, the sun shone on high wooded banks, dotted with gleaming white villages and church spires, and away in the distance, beyond a misty bluff which they said was the rock of Quebec, stretched a vista of stately blue hills. Mrs. Ramsay and Gerald were out already. Her aunt, who of course knew the shore well, pointed out the pretty little nook where the Cap Rouge River comes out between its protecting hills, and where an unsuccessful colony was planted, before Champlain founded Quebec.

By and by they drew nearer the regal old city, and Marjorie could discern the outline of the rock and citadel, with the mast-studded river and great Atlantic steamers lying at Point Lévis, on the other side of the channel, which there is only about a mile wide. Mrs. Ramsay pointed out a picturesque little French village, lying in the shelter of the high wooded bank above Quebec, and told her that that was Sillery, the spot where a religious establishment had been founded by an old knight of Malta, and where the devoted hospital nuns had first established themselves when they joined the Canadian mission. And she told her that when Madame de la Peltrie, a noble lady who was one of the first to come out to work for the conversion of the Indians, and two or three of the nuns who accompanied her, first visited this spot



and saw their little Indian pupils, they were so glad, that they seized and kissed every little Indian girl within their reach; “without minding,” so Père Le Jeune said, “whether they were dirty or not. For,” he added, “love and charity triumphed over every human consideration.”

As the steamer stopped at her dock, just under the dark gray rock of Cape Diamond, with Dufferin Terrace and the citadel high above their heads, Marjorie and her friends had no time to stop and enjoy the view of the tall quaint houses or busy harbor. Professor Duncan was waiting for Marjorie, and the Saguenay boat was waiting for the others. Very soon they were separated, and the steamer rapidly receded down the river, while the professor and Marjorie drove up the steep hill in one of the quaint little French *calèches* that are just made for these hilly roads, with their two wheels and strong springs, and the sure-footed ponies that draw them.

As soon as they had breakfasted at the house of Professor Duncan’s hospitable hostess, where Marjorie caught glimpses of charming mountain views in every direction, they set out on their round of sightseeing.

Professor Duncan took her first to the spacious Dufferin Terrace close by, from which she could see the beautiful panorama around her; the river winding down on both sides of the purple woods of the Island of Orleans, the distant hills changing color with the passing of the light fleecy clouds; the wooded heights of Lévis opposite crowned with villages and steeples; and just below the busy harbor and the quaint, grimy old town.

The professor pointed out Champlain market just below them, telling her that thereabouts had stood that first “*Habitation de Champlain*,” which had been one of his “Scenes of Christmas Past.” And Marjorie tried to fancy the busy city gone, and the primitive little settlement under the hill, just as it was when Champlain cultivated his roses in his garden below. On the ground behind the Terrace, the professor said, stood the old Chateau of St. Louis, where Champlain died.

From the Terrace they mounted to the glacis of the citadel and found their way round to the entrance, catching different views all along their way. Marjorie was bewildered by the great walls and ditch of the old fortress, and delighted beyond expression by the magnificent view from the “King’s Bastion,” commanding such a sweep of charming landscape scenery—blue mountains, rich woods, fertile fields, gleaming villages and winding river. From the other bastion, bearing the name and crest of the Prince of Wales, the professor pointed out the rugged stretch of green just below and beyond, and told her that those were the “Plains of Abraham,” where Wolfe had fallen, after fighting the decisive battle which won Canada from the French.

Coming down from the citadel, they strolled round the ramparts, crossed the quiet green esplanade, inspected the new stately gates, and the fine new Parliament buildings outside the walls. And wherever they went, there were such charming views of gray-blue hills receding beyond each other to the horizon, and blue, sail-studded river and woodland, and long fields and white villages, that Marjorie could have gazed all day. Near St. John's Gate the professor stopped and showed her how the St. Charles wound out from among the hills till it met the St. Lawrence at the city; and showing her a green point round which this small river made a silver loop, he told her that that was the site of Père Le Jeune's little convent—*Notre Dame des Anges*; and that in the stream close by Cartier had laid up his ships during that terrible winter.

After dinner, as Marjorie declared that she was not at all fatigued, they drove out by the St. Foy road, past charming villas and gardens, and back by the St. Louis road. They drove down to the pretty little village of Sillery, under the cliff, and there the professor pointed out, under a spreading elm, the French inscription that marks the spot of the "first Convent of the Hospital Nuns." He showed her, too, the old house that still stands, built in those early days for the Mission; and near it the white monument of Enemond Massé—the "*père utile*" who was the first of the pioneer missionaries to go to his rest.

As they returned, the professor dismissed their carriage at the toll gate near Wolfe's Monument. They stopped to look at it and read the simple inscription: "Here died Wolfe Victorious;" with the date, "1759." Then they walked across the green, uneven meadow, and the professor pointed out where Wolfe had scrambled up the height among the rough bushes, leading his men to the unexpected and successful attack which wrested from the French their hardly won and heroically kept colony. And as they walked back, he gave her a few particulars of the battle, and how the brave Wolfe had asked "Who run?" and being told that it was the French, said, "Then I die happy," and quietly expired.

In the evening they went to enjoy the sunset from Dufferin Terrace, where the band plays on fine summer evenings. As they strolled up and down, watching the rich, soft sunset tints fading from the distant hills and the calm river, the professor talked of the old times of Quebec, and the brave deeds and high hopes that were associated with those old rocks and hills. And as they noticed the stately forms of some long-robed ecclesiastics walking by in the gathering dusk, Marjorie could easily have conjured up the shade of Père Le Jeune and his brave comrades, revisiting "the glimpses of the moon."

Next day the professor drove Marjorie down to Montmorency Falls, past the

long line of pretty little French cottages and old-fashioned gardens that line the Beupart Road. They walked across to the brow of the cliff, and down the dizzy flight of steps, getting different views of the great, snowy cataract dashing down the steep amid its showers of spray that bedewed the tall dark pines, which made such an effective setting to the snowy sheet of the foaming cataract. Then they dined at the little inn, and strolled about the lovely grounds close to the Falls—whose proprietor was an acquaintance of the professor—and walked back up the rapid brown stream of the Montmorency till they reached the “Natural Steps”; the succession of brown ledges over which this mountain torrent dashes down to join the St. Lawrence. In the evening they had a charming drive home, with the tin roofs of Quebec before them glittering like a golden palace in the rich sunset light.

Marjorie was enchanted with Quebec, and could have lingered there for days. She would have liked a longer peep at the “Basilica”—as the Cathedral is called—and at the Ursuline Convent Chapel, where the hush seemed as remote from ordinary life as the light still kept burning in memory of a French girl who died a hundred years ago. And she was fascinated by the thought that still where the convent stood was the very same old garden where Madame de la Peltre and her nuns sat and taught the little Indian girls centuries ago.

It would be charming to come back here with her father, she thought, and now she could be his guide, as Professor Duncan had been hers, to the historic associations of this cradle of the life of Canada.

But her friends expected her to join them at the Saguenay boat next morning. And thither accordingly Professor Duncan and she again drove down in a *calèche*. Mrs. West and Ada, with Dick in charge, and her cousins under Marion’s supervision, and an enormous pile of luggage, were being transferred from the one steamboat to the other. All were delighted to greet Marjorie; and saying a hurried and grateful good-by to the professor, they were off, and gliding away from the stately city, and along the populous shore of the Island of Orleans.

## CHAPTER XX.

### AMONG THE HILLS.

Charming, indeed, was the sail down the glorious river, past the grand wooded hills that rose in stately procession, one behind the other, as they steamed rapidly northeastward. These looked more and more lonely as they got farther down, and the white villages and solitary houses that dotted them for a great part of the way, grew farther and farther apart. Occasionally, however, a white cluster of houses would be seen almost at the summit of a high, rugged hill, clothed throughout with fir and birch; though more often, as they proceeded, these were one huge mass of green. The high piers by which the steamer occasionally stopped to disembark freight or passengers, astonished Marjorie, till reminded that they were now in water which was constantly rising or falling with the tide. About three o'clock in the afternoon they came in sight of the long, tall pier of Murray Bay, where, amid the expectant crowd that always awaits the steamer there, they soon discovered Gerald, with Mrs. Ramsay and Jack. The pony phaeton was got out of the boat as soon as possible, and Gerald drove his sister to their temporary home, about a mile from the landing, just under the brow of the hill that runs along the curving shore of the beautiful bay. Opposite was *Cap à L'Aigle*, where the Ramsays' cottage stood, and at the head of the bay a white church spire marked the French village of Murray Bay, which is quite distinct from *Point au Pic*, where the hotels and summer cottages stand.

Marjorie was to stay with Ada for the first day or two, at least; so she bade good-by to her cousins as they stepped merrily into the little French hay cart which was to carry them to their destination. Ada was delighted with the novelty of the simple country house, with little or no furniture, but full of the sweet fresh mountain air, and lovely views of hill and sea; as the expanse of river appeared to be, with its tide-uncovered beach. Then the green partially wooded hill rose just at the back of their little inclosure, and all they had to do was to stroll away up the grassy slope and find a more charming and extensive view at every step. Every hour of the bracing air seemed to bring new strength to Ada, and she was impatiently waiting permission to mount her pony and ride off among those lovely hills with Gerald.

Marjorie set off in the pony phaeton with Gerald, a day or two after, to go to her cousins at *Cap à L'Aigle*. It did not seem very far, looking across the brown sandy

beach and soft blue strip of river, to the bold bluff stretching far out seaward on the other side. But they had to drive round the bay, past the continuous line of little French farmhouses and strips of upland farm, past the queer earthen ovens that stood by the roadside, through the quaint French village that lay on both sides of the bridge that spanned the shallow brown Murray River, and then up along the foot of wooded hills to the brow of the long grassy bluff. The view on both sides was magnificent, whether they looked landward into the vista of hills beyond hills, or across the river to the distant hills on the other side, or eastward to the ocean-like horizon. Dr. Ramsay loved this place so well because, he said, it reminded him strongly of the highland scenery of his native land.

The Ramsays' cottage was a small one, and very plain and bare; but the children rushed to meet her in great spirits, to tell her of all the fun they had had already. And only the day before, they said, Louis Girard and his mother had come in a little country wagon to see them, and had been so disappointed that "Mademoiselle was not there."

It would be pleasant to tell more particularly of all the delights of the next three or four weeks; the rides and drives, the canoeing on the river, the picnics to the pretty waterfalls in the vicinity. But all this must be left to the imagination of the lover of picturesque scenery. Marjorie was delighted, at least, if her cousins were not, when a letter arrived from her father, telling her that he was on his way northward, and would reach her almost as soon as his letter. It need scarcely be said that she was eagerly watching at the pier when the steamer's smoke was seen in the distance, rounding the promontory above; and that when it drew near enough at last to admit of distinguishing the figures on board, her eye soon detected the familiar figure that was as eagerly looking out for her. And when she was once more clasped in his embrace, and his familiar tones were in her ear, she could scarcely believe that he had been so long away.

Mr. Fleming was as delighted as Marjorie had anticipated with the charming scenery of Murray Bay. He and she had many pleasant walks together, in addition to the more extensive family expeditions, during which she unfolded to him the various experiences of the past months, so much more fully than she could do in letters. And he was astonished to find how much she had grown in mind and character, and how much she knew, thanks to Professor Duncan, of the old heroic age of Canada.

Gerald and he had many talks, too, and Mr. Fleming was much interested in the thoughtful, ambitious lad, who reminded him strongly of his own early self. One evening the three were walking up from *Cap à L'Aigle* to Murray Bay, after one of the frequent thunder storms which abound there, followed by an exquisite rainbow.

As they walked, the sun set in a dazzling glory of purple and crimson clouds, that flooded the hills with the most exquisite hues, and bathed the green slope at hand in a mellow light, while the river lay as it were a soft, translucent mingling of opaline tints of rose and pale green and softest purple. It was a picture that would not be soon forgotten.

“Well, Miss Marjorie, isn’t this grand?” said a well-known voice. Marjorie started and turned round.

“Why, Professor Duncan! Where did you come from? Father dear, this is Professor Duncan. I’m so glad!”

And when they had taken breath after the greeting, the professor told them that he was going to take a sail up the Saguenay, and had stopped on the way to see them all and try to secure a traveling companion for his trip.

He and Mr. Fleming very soon renewed their old acquaintance, and it was soon arranged that when the next boat came down, Mrs. Ramsay, Marion and Marjorie, with Mr. Fleming and Gerald, should accompany Professor Duncan on this charming expedition.

The summer dusk was just closing in as they rounded the rocky point of Tadousac, and saw the village nestling among the crags and stunted firs, where, as Professor Duncan reminded them, the very first little settlement had been perched when the fur-traders had their headquarters there for traffic with the Indians, who brought their furs down the gloomy Saguenay.

They went ashore to see the little ancient church which had so long stood like a tiny “light in the surrounding darkness” of savagery and heathenism, and watched the lights of the village as they left it, seeming a type of the part which the little church had played so long.

They remained up till midnight to see Cape Trinity and Eternity by moonlight, looking like great Titanic shadows looming over the blackness of the stream. In the early morning they went ashore at Ha Ha Bay, and went to hear the early mass in the village church, where a devout congregation of the country folk was assembled.

They had a delightful day on the wild river, with its endless ranges of stern cliffs and wooded gorges, the little villages perched on craggy ledges, the weird majesty of Cape Trinity and Cape Eternity, with their dizzy height and weather-scarred precipices. They passed Tadousac again in the “gloaming,” and were almost relieved to get out of the gloomy shadows of the Saguenay and out on the broad St. Lawrence.

It was very late—about three in the August morning, for they had been delayed by the tide—when the steamer approached Murray Bay. They had all been walking

up and down the deck, and Mr. Fleming and Professor Duncan had been talking of the old days, and how truly the “lights” which the brave pioneers had carried into these savage wilds, had been “lights in the darkness”; even like those soft auroral streamers which they had been watching in the northern horizon; for in that north latitude it is often pretty cold even in August.

They talked, too, of the darkness that shrouds so large a portion even of our great cities, and how many a quiet, steady light is needed to shine there, too, as “lights in the darkness.” Marjorie listened to the conversation, feeling that as she must soon be leaving all these pleasant scenes, and be returning to the old life, which now did seem just a little lonely, there would always be this noble ideal and aspiration, worthy of any one’s best efforts. Everywhere, if one tried, one could indeed be a “light in the darkness.”

“And look there!” said Professor Duncan. Away to the eastward there was a pale streak of amber heralding the coming dawn. And now the aurora lights began to fade out of the sky as it grew every moment brighter.

“Yes,” said Mr. Fleming; “it makes me think of the time when ‘the city shall have no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it’—and ‘there shall be no night there.’ The Northern Lights won’t be needed then; but till then may they continue faithfully to shine on as ‘Lights in the Darkness!’”

“Amen!” said the professor.

And if Marjorie did not say “Amen” aloud, she said it in her heart.

# TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Mis-spelled words and printer errors have been fixed.

Inconsistency in hyphenation has been retained.

Inconsistency in accents has been retained.

The numerous letters and words were dropped out of the scan, possibly due to the scanning process or the original book. Most were obvious, but there were a few words which were guessed at.

Inconsistent quoting around the poetry has been repaired when obvious; but mostly left alone.

The images have been computer-enhanced to be more intelligible.

[The end of *Marjorie's Canadian Winter -- A Story of the Northern Lights* by Agnes Maules Machar]