

Westward.

The Starting of The Hope.

FRONTISPIECE.

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WESTWARD:

A TALE OF AMERICAN EMIGRANT LIFE.

BY

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"ALMOST A NUN," "OHIO ARK," "SHOE BINDERS OF NEW YORK," ETC.



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PREFACE.

IN the following story the voyage of the "Hope" may be a matter of astonishment to those who have not studied the varieties of navigation on our Western rivers. We give the Hope as a "*fact*," not "telling the tale as 'twas told to us," but testifying of what we have veritably seen. Indeed, through the following simple story we have dealt in people and deeds and places such as we have met in our own experience, trusting that we may arouse among our readers some new and deep interest in the pioneers of our civilization, and impress those who may meditate such a life with the feeling that they must be pioneers of the Church of Christ, carrying their religion Westward with them and not leaving it behind.

THE AUTHOR.

**“ We cross the prairies as of old
The pilgrims crossed the sea,
To make the West, as they the East,
The homestead of the free.**

**“ We go to plant her common schools
On distant prairie swells,
And give the Sabbath of the wild
The music of her bells.”**



WESTWARD.

CHAPTER I.

THE GENIUS AND HIS WIFE.

HANNAH!" said Ralph Mackey to his wife. Hannah Mackey made no reply. She was rocking with her foot a cradle wherein Lucy, her two-year-old daughter, was going to sleep, and herself, swaying in her little wooden chair, hushed upon her shoulder Norman, her baby boy, who had added to the noise and bustle of this rough-and-ready world only for the months of February and March. So absorbed was Hannah in her twofold labor, and in softly singing a tune which was hardly more than "By, O baby," gently breathed into the ear of the child in her arms, that she had not heard her husband call her name.

Ralph Mackey sat by the window; his chair was tilted back, his feet rested on a chair before him, he had had his supper, combed his close-cut hair, washed his head and hands, and was now luxuriating without coat or boots, taking every advantage of the remaining evening light. Ralph had a slate, a pencil, a knife and some pine wood. One moment he drew carefully on his slate, then he whittled at his bits of pine, and with pins and pegs cunningly fitted some queer model of some queer thing. He had been at this work so many leisure hours that Hannah had ceased to be curious about it. Indeed, she said to herself, there was no use in being curious, for she could never understand any of her husband's contrivances, he being a genius of a high order and she a quiet body possessed only of some small knowledge of the three great R's, Reading, 'Riting and 'Rithmetic. And, as Hannah further thought, had she gone through college, she would not have learned as much as Ralph from the common school, for "Ralph was a genius."

Lucy's eyes closed. Norman breathed softly and regularly on his mother's neck.

"Hannah!" said Ralph.

Hannah ceased to rock the cradle, laid the

babe silently on the bed, and then said, "Yes, Ralph."

"See here! bring over your chair; I want to talk to you. Do you mind what you said to me when Norman was a week old, and old Mrs. Gregg went away?"

"What?" asked Hannah, trying to remember.

"Why, about the city being such a poor place to bring up children, and how much better for us to be on a farm, where we could turn work into their hands as soon as they were able to run about, and have them where they could be healthy and not get bad manners?"

"Oh yes, indeed! I remember," cried Hannah, for this was her favorite day-dream.

"Well, I've made up my mind that this is sound good sense—just what you always show, Hannah—and if you'll help me save and earn every cent we can, we'll lay up two or three hundred dollars and go West, to buy a farm. We can take our goods for our new house."

"Yes, Ralph; but it costs so much money for freight, and for traveling, and to build or buy the new house. I'm sure I'd be willing to live in a log one, but *that* costs money," said the prudent Hannah.

“Ah, yes; but, Hannah, suppose I tell you how we can take ourselves, our goods, and even carry our house with us, for nothing!”

“Oh, Ralph!” exclaimed Hannah, incredulously, feeling sure that even her husband’s genius could hardly compass that.

“Nothing, I mean, but a little money for outfit, and for food on the way, and *that* I might save as we went along,” exclaimed Ralph.

“Get a team and wagon, and go so?” asked Hannah.

“Nothing so tiresome and expensive as that,” said Ralph.

“I’m sure I cannot think what you mean,” said the wife; “you’ll have to explain.”

“Do you see this?” said Ralph, holding up his model. “It is the plan of a boat which I shall make. These bottom bits represent two flat boats, one for each side; on them I lay a floor of inch plank, and over them I build a square room or house; it shall have a door and two little windows. I can build it myself, and will put in hooks, shelves and long lockers, which shall be seats and hold our beds.”

“But how will it go?” asked Hannah; “to be sure, we can float down the Ohio to Cairo easily

enough, but when we begin to go up stream, up the Missouri river for instance, how would you move it?"

"Don't you see this wheel behind, Hannah?"

"Yes, just like the tow-boats, the stern-wheelers; but you can't build or manage a steam engine, Ralph?"

"Boats go by other power than steam; the ferry-boat below."

"*That* goes by horse power; but surely, Ralph, to have a horse shut up with us in such a small boat would be dreadful!"

"Don't be in such a hurry, Hannah!" cried Ralph, taking off the roof of his boat. "Look in here, woman. This institution will run by *man* power. See, I shall sit on this place, work these treadles with my feet, and so turn the wheel; what do you think of that?"

"Why, Ralph!" was all Hannah could say for some ten minutes; then, being a practical body, "But who will steer; must I?"

"No; see this pole from the rudder reaches over the roof; I shall sit so—my head and arms will come through the top of the boat, and I can steer and look out for what is coming, be engine, captain, pilot, everything but cook and passengers;

you may be cook, and the babies shall be passengers. What do you think *now*, Hannah!"

"Why, Ralph, if you ar'n't the very greatest contriver I ever heard of! And we can take our things and set up the house for our first home when we get there."

"Yes; and, Hannah, we must lay up three or four hundred as soon as possible, and be off."

"The boat will cost money," suggested Hannah.

"I can build it all myself."

"But the lumber?"

"I never shall get what Barry owes me unless I take it in standing timber off his place. I can log it myself, and work in Smith's mill, over hours and so on, enough to pay for sawing it. I have my own tools; and nails and screws we must get. I see my way to making a good thing out of this."

"And did you think it all out in these few weeks?"

"No; the plan of such a boat has been forming in my mind for years."

"And where shall we locate?" asked Hannah.

"Out in Kansas. I hear that land is there good and cheap. We will get a little farm on the river."

“We shall be out of the way of schools for our children, I’m afraid,” said Hannah.

“We can teach them ourselves, you know,” replied Ralph.

“And church—think of that!—we may have no church.”

“We must start one; somebody always has to do it for these new places. We can set up a church and Sunday-school if we find none there. Yes, Hannah, and a day-school too, and if we are industrious, we’ll gain property, and bring our children up to be somebody. Why they can be the aristocracy of Mackeyville!” cried Ralph, with a joyous, ringing laugh. It did not wake the babies; they were used to laughter about their cradles.

“Aristocracy or not,” said Hannah, “I hope they will be good and useful citizens; yes, Christians.”

“Well, Hannah,” said Ralph, soberly, “you know what we read, ‘Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.’ If we teach our children honesty and religion at home when they’re little and easily moulded, they’ll be pretty sure to cleave to it when they grow up. I know well I’ve to

thank my good old mother for the way she brought me up, and kept me off the streets, and out of bad company, and you can say the same for yours. The first thing made me set my eye on you, Hannah, was seeing your mother take you to church and prayer-meeting regular. 'There's a good woman,' says I to myself, 'and a hundred to one she's got a good daughter!'"

"I wish I was as good as my mother," said Hannah, a tear in her eye for the pious old lady, who had not long before been taken out of the world.

"That is just what Lucy will say some time," said Ralph, kindly. "I shall tell the children when they grow up that it was your notion to get them out of the temptations of the city, and set them to dropping corn and pulling weeds."

"It is more than wanting to be rich that sets me longing for a farm," said Hannah. "I read on Sunday, 'Labor not to be rich; cease from thine own wisdom. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? Riches certainly make themselves wings and fly away as an eagle toward heaven.'"

"That means," said Ralph, who was Hannah's oracle, "that we must not keep our eyes on per-

ishing things of this world, and neglect salvation. Don't you remember the man with the muck rake in 'Pilgrim's Progress'? He was scraping up dirt, and couldn't see a crown held over his head. We must not get like that, Hannah. Come, now, it's time we had prayers and went to bed."

And so this humble couple, who lived in the fear of the Lord, knelt at the family altar they had erected on their marriage day. God had given those two babies, Norman and Lucy, a goodly heritage in their parents' piety.

It was natural that Hannah should meditate much next day about her evening's talk with Ralph, and while indeed bright visions would rise of prairies covered with yellow wheat and corn, of acres of white buckwheat, and seas of rosy clover, transcendent pictures of fruit-laden orchards and hives of working humming-bees, these did not hinder practical thoughts. A little faithfully earned and judiciously laid out money would be the key to her Utopia, and how should she help Ralph to get that money?

One would think that Hannah had enough to do minding her babies, performing all the house-work and doing all her sewing. Ralph had always said it was enough and more, but Hannah had

health, a boon denied many of her sisters—buoyant, vigorous, elastic health, which made work a pleasure; she had a cheerful courage too, and told herself, “never mind; if she worked hard now, and grew weary, she could sit idle and rest by and by when they owned a farm and the children were grown.”

As Hannah worked the next few days, she resolved herself into a committee of ways and means, and being eminently practical, she first considered wherein she might save. Not in giving? Oh no! they gave very little, but to give that was a luxury and a blessing not to be denied; “and besides, I think it a good investment,” quoth Hannah to herself.

Not in food? No, they worked hard and must have enough of wholesome, relishing food to keep that complex machine, the body, in good running order.

In dress? Here Hannah paused. Little Lucy, having reached the mature age of two, was entitled to a new bonnet, a straw with a blue ribband her mother had mentally chosen; but now Hannah reversed her decision, and concluded that instead of a hat from the milliner’s she would make Lucy a white sunbonnet.

"It would cost but a dollar and a half," said Hannah to herself, leaning to the first idea; but she recalled a maxim of her mother's, "a penny saved is a penny gained," and was firm to the resolution about the sunbonnet. Meanwhile, Lucy built a house of clothespins, all careless of the discussion over her head gear.

Norman's present wardrobe was a slender inheritance from Lucy; some new frocks for the young man must be speedily forthcoming. "I can do with one less summer dress," said Hannah, "and I will make up my pink calico into little slips for him."

Hannah had laid by money to purchase a chally dress for Sunday for herself. It was to have been bought that week. "A Scotch gingham will do as well," she determined, "and that will not need trimming, and will look nicely enough. That will spare me two dollars to lay by for our farm."

If Hannah Mackey were not like the wise woman in Proverbs, in being clothed "with silk and purple," and though she had no "maidens," and could not "clothe her household with scarlet," yet she was like that notable personage in "eating not the bread of idleness," "opening her

mouth with wisdom," and was expecting one day to "consider a field and buy it, and plant a vineyard with the fruit of her hands."

As these few items were the only ones wherein the prudent Hannah thought she could retrench, her next subject for meditation was how she could earn some money that the price of a tract of Western land might sooner be obtained. She was handy at dressmaking, and thought she would suggest to some of her humble neighbors that she would be quite happy to make their Sunday gowns. She could also knit and make several varieties of trimmings; for this sort of work she might find a sale at some of the stores. Devising these ways of making lighter Ralph's task, and winning for their little ones a refuge from the temptations of the city, a place where in out-door sports their physical beings might be fully developed, Hannah grew even happier than her wont, and sang blithely as she kneaded her bread and prepared her dinner. In her sewing her hand moved more nimbly than ever, for she hoped her shining, sharp little needle would have its part in building up her future home.

It is not needful to follow closely the succeeding months in the lives of Ralph and Hannah

Mackey; health was given to them and to their children; the usual blessings followed honest industry; little by little their hoard increased. Ralph had perfected his plans for his boat; he had worked enough in the saw mill to pay for whatever lumber sawing he should want; he had bargained for and felled the trees on Barry's wood lot, had two hundred dollars laid up; and, moreover, had changed his business. About this latter step, Hannah had demurred. "There have been two or three accidents lately in making varnish, Ralph."

"Yes, but folks ought to be careful. Griffin knows *I* am, and that is why he offers me big wages. I can make half as much again a month, and by June I can begin to build my boat, and we'll start next October—a year from now," for it was eighteen months since Ralph's first conference about his boat.

"Don't make haste to be rich," said Hannah; "stick to your old trade. Carpentry is safe if it is slow."

"Dear me, Hannah!" cried Ralph; "one would think I talked of keeping hotel-bar, and selling poison by the 'drink,' or of getting a place on one of these Sunday running boats."

“No indeed; those things are wicked, and you would not do them, Ralph; I only thought of the danger of accident in this business.”

“It is better to worry a little and get done with it than to dally along laying up money as we have. I’ll go to work for Griffin at the varnish. You’ll see it was for the best, Hannah, when it’s over. Why, the baby will be three years old before we start now!”

“Well,” said Hannah, reluctantly; and Ralph began to count out his wages. So much of what he had that day received he gave Hannah to use for the household needs; so much he put by to pay a little bill; so much more to save with their fund for the farm. One dollar lay by itself, and Hannah put it under the edge of the clock. They both understood what it was for—it would go to the missionary collection at church next Sunday.

Thus it was that Ralph’s tools lay idle for a while, and he began to work for Mr. Griffin. He had told Hannah that “nobody could die before their time came; that there was danger in all trades; that many a craftsman had broken his neck by falling from a scaffolding while he built a house.” Hannah could not but think of several men who had been burned while making varnish.

Still we cannot say that she had a presentiment—we do not believe in presentiments—and she was *not* prepared for what happened.

It was in the latter part of November, the day before Thanksgiving in fact, and Hannah was very busy. She had washed and ironed the children's best dresses, that they might go to church on the morrow. She had made Lucy a little red hood, and knit Norman a brown and blue cap; she was preparing a chicken and a pie for the feast day's dinner, and baking a loaf of cake for tea. As she did all this she thought of the future they were toiling for—of days when their own fat turkeys and chickens should gobble and cluck about the door; when spare-ribs from their own pigs should brown in her oven; when pies from pumpkins that had rounded and goldened in their own fields should fill the lower shelf of some nice pantry; and she imagined Lucy and Norman beside their father in the fields husking the yellow corn, and herself milking sleek cows that gathered behind their barn. The voices of Norman and Lucy building a block fort in the corner did not interrupt her dream. The door was pushed open, a man put his head in, and said roughly, "Mis' Mackey!"

“Yes,” said Hannah, turning quickly; then getting frightened—she knew not why—said sharply, “What’s the matter?”

“Well, well, there! to cut it short, there’s been an accident, Mis’ Mackey.”

Hannah’s eyes stared wildly, her face grew very white; she spread out her hands, and seemed turned to stone where she stood. It rushed into her mind that she was a widow and the two prattling babies in the corner were orphans.

“Is Ralph killed?” she demanded, her voice sounding harsh and far away.

“Well, no; don’t go to over-frighting yourself; he ain’t *killed*. He’s burned though; they are gwine to bring him in right soon. I thought as you ought to know and get things ready for him.”

The man’s slowness was unendurable torture, but it broke the spell that held Hannah. Ralph was living; there was something she might do for him yet.

“Have they got a doctor?” she cried, springing toward the bed to lay it open and put on fresh pillow cases.

“Yes, they’ve got a doctor, and they’ll bring him in about five or ten minutes. He’s burnt mighty bad, but *mebby* we can bring him round

yet. Hadn't I better call some of your neighbors, Mis' Mackey?"

"Call the woman from down stairs," said Hannah, and while she set the room in order, took the pie and cake from the oven and put them away, and opened the window to get the smell of baking from the room, the slow messenger gave the neighbor below stairs the news, and brought her up.

"Law me, Mis' Mackey," cried Mrs. Jones, rushing in, "don't take on; keep calm—that's right; half the folks as is burnt gets over it. What can I do for you?"

"Take away the children, please, and if you've any oil and old linen, bring them up."

"If it's old linen you want," said slow Louis Schepberg, "I know where I can get a bunch."

He leisurely departed, and Mrs. Jones, with her quick movements, swept the children's blocks into her apron, took Norman on her arm, Lucy by the hand and hurried to her own room. Hannah at once laid on the table by the bed scissors, thread, and all the old linen and cotton she had, which, with her usual method, was kept in a bundle by itself in the corner of her trunk. As Mrs. Jones got inside her room with the chil-

dren, four men passed up stairs, carrying Ralph Mackey covered with a sheet, Mr. Giffin and Ralph's own doctor following behind.

That was a fearful sight for Hannah when they uncovered Ralph and laid him on the bed. His hair was burnt from his head, the flames had blistered his face, devoured his clothes and eaten deep into his neck, arms and shoulders. Hannah caught her breath in a hard, quick gasp, and felt deadly sick; but Ralph was alive and needed her care, so she made a fierce effort, and recovered herself. The four men hurried off as if knowing just what to do, and indeed they had received orders from the doctor as they came. Mr. Giffin and the doctor went to work briskly; Mrs. Jones was on hand with oil and linen, and the doctor, nodding encouragement at Hannah as he saw her careful preparations on the table, gave his orders clearly and quickly.

"Oh, doctor, *will* he get over it?" whispered Hannah as she helped him prepare bandages.

"It's a bad job, but worse have been cured," said the doctor.

"How dreadfully he suffers!" cried Hannah as Ralph groaned, tears of sympathy running over her cheeks.

“Keep a good heart; we’ll put him to sleep as soon as they fetch me an opiate,” said the old physician. “Darken that window a little, set the door open, and cool off that stove carefully now; we don’t want to strike a chill to him.”

That was a dreary Thanksgiving day, after all Hannah’s preparations. Still, there is no dark that might not have been darker, and the good Lord mixes drops of comfort in every cup of sorrow.

Mrs. Jones was very kind in taking care of the children; and though it was hard enough for Hannah to sit at the foot of her husband’s bed waiting upon him, and see him, in the subdued light, lying there in a stupor from opiates, so terribly burned, so much danger about him, so much suffering before him, and to think of their broken plans, the heavy expenses coming on them when the strong worker lay helpless on his bed,—still had she not much to be thankful for when Ralph was living and *might* recover, and when friends came so kindly and helpfully about them? Mr. Giffin had come in the day after Ralph’s accident and paid a month’s wages due that day; he had also added a month’s wages extra, saying, “I persuaded him into this work.”

Hannah felt very grateful of course, but how little was two months' pay to supply the wants created by this long illness lying before them! The minister had come in also, bringing some gifts from his wife in a basket, and before he left he told Hannah that she must not distress herself about the doctor's bills, for some friends in the church had already arranged for that.

"They are very kind," said Hannah, "but we have a little money laid up, quite enough to pay all expenses, I hope."

"And you have two little ones to need all the money you have put by. We must always be ready to receive friendly acts in a friendly way."

"Well, then I will, and be very thankful," said Hannah. And while she thanked these friends who were thus ready to help her, Hannah did not fail to thank Him who had raised them up, who is the Fountain of every beneficent thought and gracious act of man.

Slowly, in mingled hope and fear, the days passed by, and at last Ralph was out of danger, but the doctor said it would be months before he could recover his former strength, and indeed he could never expect to be the vigorous man he had been.

When Hannah heard this she began to consider that the farm was now more necessary than ever, and then she thought what she might do now toward securing it. She resolved not to break upon the money they had saved. While in all expenditures for poor Ralph she was even lavish, for herself and the children she practiced the closest economy. There was nothing new bought that winter, the food was the plainest and cheapest procurable, but then there was enough, and it was clean and well cooked. Hannah took in sewing and made trimming for the stores faster and better than ever. And so, by one way and another, friends being kind, and many a present unasked and unexpected finding its way to Hannah, the winter passed. February made Norman two years old, and the two hundred and twenty odd dollars of Ralph's savings had not been diminished. As Ralph began to recover and was able to sit up, Hannah saw that he was much depressed; she suspected that he was troubling himself about the expenses of his illness and the heavy burden of his enforced idleness, and was not surprised when one day he said, sighing, "Well, Hannah, I suppose it is good-bye to the farm after this business. If I'd kept out of the

varnish, as you wanted, it would have been far better."

"What's done can't be helped, Ralph, and you have had all the hard part of it to bear; but as to the farm, we need it more than ever now, for you to get strong on."

"But where's the money coming from?" said Ralph, gloomily.

"We have all that has been laid by—over two hundred, you know; that won't buy much land, but it will get a little; we can make a living and earn more," replied Hannah, cheerfully.

"I don't know how you've managed to live and not use that. Are there any debts?"

"Not a debt! The doctor and apothecary were paid for us. I've earned something, we have had many small presents sent in, and all helped along."

"But once we are out there we must get some live stock—a cow, a horse, a couple of pigs and half a dozen fowls."

"I shall sell the watch," said Hannah, "and we can sell the bedsteads and feather beds, and the bureau and the big table; we can't carry them conveniently, and you are a good carpenter; you can make what furniture we need at first."

“But what shall we do if you sell the feather beds?”

“Sleep on straw beds; they are more healthful,” answered Hannah, energetically; “and if we have no straw at first, we can dry grass until we raise the straw. There are plenty of ways to get on in the world, Ralph, and if we *are* at the bottom of the ladder, never mind; the Lord helping, we can climb to the top, or as near it as he sees fit. Too much of this world’s goods might make us careless of the world to come, and from our troubles we can learn faith and patience, and those are good things in God’s eyes. I’m sure, for my part, since you are alive when I thought I’d lost you, I cannot complain. The children are well and good-natured, and I never was stronger in my life. I’m like some plants or weeds which grow better the more they’re hacked and tramped down; hard work and worry seem to agree with me;” and Hannah laughed, a fresh, clear, whole-hearted laugh.

Ralph’s face brightened; his wife’s words had lifted a great weight of poverty and discouragement from his heart. “But I don’t like you to sell the watch, Hannah,” he said. It was an old-fashioned gold watch, with a big seal hanging to

a broad ribbon, and Hannah had got it from an uncle.

"We are too poor to keep gold watches, and you have the sun and I have the little clock; the price of the watch would get us a cow, and there would be milk, butter and cottage cheese—half our living nearly," said Hannah.

"But nobody will give you a decent price for it."

"Yes, Louis Schepberg would. I told him I meant to sell it, and he said he'd give thirty-five dollars for it as it is in the box."

"He surely never said that at once," said Ralph.

"Oh no; it took him about two weeks to get his mind made up, but now he wants the watch."

"Did you ever see such an odd, honest, slow, true-hearted fellow as that Swede is?" said Ralph.

"He is very kind and true. He sat up here many nights with you; did the errands; brought fuel and water up stairs for me; took the children to walk, and helped me so much I don't know what I should have done without him, and now he will buy the watch."

"Better let him have it then, if your mind is

made up to part with it. What a woman you are, Hannah! A body can't fail utterly in this world with such a woman as you are to look after things."

"There ought to be something, you know, to make me even with you, you are such a genius, Ralph. Just think of that boat!" and as Hannah went to get tea, she set the wooden model on the bed near Ralph's hand. She had succeeded in interesting him, and drawing his thoughts from brooding over present trials back to the plans and favorite channels of the past.

He held up his model with one weak hand—the other was helpless—examined it, and considered how it might be improved, and what should be the dimensions of the boat he would make; it must be smaller than he had first intended, to save time, lumber and strength; and if, as Hannah said, they must sell their best furniture, a small boat would do very well. Thinking of smallness made him think he could not get more than ten acres of land, but he had heard of men making a fortune off that much. Then he remembered that those choice bits of land were near great cities, were tilled as market gardens, and were devoted to fruits, flowers and vegetables.

“We must dig and fret all our days over just bread and meat!” cried Ralph to himself.

Just then Hannah called from the next room: “Oh, Ralph! when we get out there we will keep some sheep, and I will learn to spin and weave. You can build me a wheel and a loom, and then you shall have a suit all of my making.”

“We sha’n’t have room to keep sheep, or much else,” said Ralph, fretfully, for he was sick and peevish. “What little money we have won’t buy space enough to swing a cat round in.”

“We don’t want to swing one round,” said Hannah, laughing; “we will have better work to do, and as for cats, I cannot bear them, and we won’t have one on the place.”

All this cheerfulness and courage of Hannah tended to make Ralph of like spirit. He found true what Solomon says: “A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance; he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast; pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul.”

As Ralph got better, so that he could sit up in bed, or on a chair for the greater part of the day, he began to want something to do. His first attempt was at looking over some accounts and copying some papers for Mr. Giffin; and then,

as he had considerable taste for drawing, a lady who had become acquainted with Hannah at church offered to teach him drawing with crayons and India ink, and painting in water colors. In these he made rapid progress, also in an absurd and gaudy style of picture called Oriental painting, which is admired by people who like to have something hung on their walls without much caring what it is, provided it is cheap and makes a good deal of show. Added to all this, Ralph got some free lessons in leather work, and his exploits in that line looked very well indeed. Ralph being, as we have said, a genius, he could turn his hand to almost anything.

These employments occupied his time, promised to be a means of bringing him a little money, and cost nothing, as by one consent friends who had become interested in him brought the material which he used.

When April came, six months after his hurt, Ralph was able to work a little at his boat. The house where he lived was near the river, and half a mile from his home he found a good place in which to go to work. He obtained some light work for part of the time, and his lumber having been sawn and nails procured, he began to build.



CHAPTER II.

ADVENTURES BY THE WAY.

DURING Ralph's illness, Hannah had made two friends who were to be great comforts to her; one was slow, honest, blundering Louis Schepberg, the Swede, the other Miss Esther Gordon, the daughter of the pastor; this lady it was who had taught Ralph drawing and leather-work. She entered heartily into Hannah's plans for the future, and assisted her greatly by judicious and well-timed advice, and by getting for her light and well-paid work. Miss Gordon would frequently come to see Hannah and chat with her as she worked. Hannah's room was very quiet now. Ralph had made a seat and a shelter near his place of work, and generally took the two children with him and kept them all day, gaining thus threefold advantage—healthful play for the little ones, merry companionship for himself, and a saving of time and care to their mother.

“Hannah,” said Miss Gordon, “among the settlers about your new home you may find few who have had advantages equal to your own or who are blessed with refined tastes. Be especially careful of sinking to their level; if you do, you cannot benefit them. Strive to elevate them; instead of relaxing into their ways, try diligently and unobtrusively to teach them your own. As for your children, you know that all the softening and exalting influences of their future must come from you, and endeavor in every little event of life to mould and improve them. In the midst of hard work find time for other things; flowers, pictures, little articles of taste, though very simple and made by yourself, will have their influence. Even well-made, neat and well-fitted clothes have a great effect on children in making them tidy, orderly and self-respecting. What a burden it must be to remember a squalid and disorderly home!”

Other and not less important counsels did Miss Gordon give. “In new countries, yet more than in old settled places, no man should live for himself, but every one should consider the duty of benefiting his neighborhood, especially spiritually and intellectually. You and Ralph, Hannah, should feel yourselves in fact to be *home mission-*

aries; you will have a mission to your neighbors in their homes, you can quietly be pioneers of education, of religion and of comfort in domestic life. I am glad you are going, for of such people as you and Ralph will be made the sinews of Western civilization."

"How I wish I could hope to see you out near our home some time, Miss Gordon, when we get it improved and fit for you to live in!" said Hannah.

"Who can tell what may happen?" said Miss Gordon. "You must write to me, Hannah, and some day you may see me in the far West. There is so much Christian work needed there that I feel ready and even anxious to do my share in it.

The Spring, fair young mother, lived her day. She led out her bands of infant violets and dew-bathed primroses, saw, sweet and smiling still, her daffodils and cowslips, her pink arbutus and perfumed narcissus die to live again in years to come; and then Spring found her own grave under the grass, and Summer, tender of her memory, covered it deep with all her royal flowers. The spring was gone, the summer passed by, like charity giving food to the poor and health to the sick, and before the September moon was full its

light fell on Ralph's finished boat lying on the water in a little cove, ready to receive the family and all that was theirs. As the day for the departure of Ralph Mackey and his family drew near, the good will of their neighbors increased, or grew more demonstrative; they came bringing their farewell gifts and wishes. Mr. Giffin brought Ralph some new tools and practical books on farming. The doctor followed suit with a box of simple family medicines, and a book full of plain talk on preserving health and taking care of the sick. Old Mr. Gordon, their pastor, gave, as a last token of his love and care, a year's subscription to a religious paper, and also for a children's magazine, and three choice volumes of religious reading. He also gave them his blessing and a promise of his prayers for their prosperity and happiness. A memory of this blessing and these prayers came often to Hannah soothingly in troublous hours as an assurance of ultimate success.

As to the reading-matter, I do not know what could have pleased these two adventurers more, for though they were not highly educated, they had sound common sense (especially Hannah), and were fond of reading. Miss Gordon, looking

forward to future needs, gave Hannah a number of books which she would use for the instruction of her children as they increased in years, and some others which would be useful in starting a Sunday-school. It seemed odd to Hannah that little Norman and Lucy would ever be conning Webster's spelling-book, the primary arithmetic and geography, and first, second and third readers, yet she knew the time would come almost before she was aware, and that in Miss Gordon's gift much useful matter was packed in small compass.

The girls of Hannah's neighborhood brought blocks for an album quilt; the lads provided seeds of vegetables and flowers; a merchant, through whose store much of Hannah's work had found a way to the public, sent her a full piece each of calico, flannel and white cotton goods, making her feel very rich, as she had never had so much material in her possession at one time before.

Thus gifts, tokens of friendship and interest, came in, making Ralph and Hannah both glad and sorry—glad that they were so well esteemed, sorry to leave so much kindness, to try their fortunes among strangers—and giving them substantial help for coming needs.

The departure of the Mackeys gained import-

ance among their townspeople from the facts of Ralph's accident, sheer perseverance and the unheard-of method of locomotion of their boat. It was before the days of velocipedes in this country, and Ralph unaided had conceived and worked out his problem, some people saying he would succeed in making his craft go, others that he would egregiously fail. At last the day for starting came; Ralph had prepared the inside of the boat to make it warmer, and had made the roof and floor tight; along the sides were lockers for storing bedding and clothing, and so arranged that the lids could be turned down and beds formed at night. Hannah had exchanged her large cooking stove for a small one, which was fastened into its place, and hooks, nails and shelves were judiciously distributed, that various articles of use might be safely carried. Indeed, the united planning of Ralph and Hannah had made the boat that was so long to be their home convenient and comfortable. One ingenious contrivance was a trap door which opened a way to one of the flat boats upon which the superstructure of the house was built, and this boat-place, being always dark and cold, was Hannah's cellar for keeping meat, milk and butter. Any cook-

ing which Hannah might have done for the first part of her journey was forestalled by baskets of eatables which arrived as a last token of good will from her acquaintances. The boat was to start from the cove where it had been built. Everything had been sent on board, good-byes were said, hands shaken for the last time, and Ralph was just ready to be off, when Dr. Gordon's buggy came in sight, and the venerable man with his daughter approached the low bank. Ralph pushed out his gang-plank, and the old pastor and Miss Esther entered the boat.

"I've come to say good-bye and to wish you God-speed before you go," said the minister; "and now we are here, if you please, we will hear a portion of God's word and have a prayer before you start. It may be our last prayer together, but I look to meeting you in our Father's house, and the little ones also, for the promise is unto you and to your children."

Louis Schepberg was on the boat, wishing to be the last to leave; his present of hoe, rake, spade and scythe had been securely fastened in one corner; the good fellow looked quite down-cast, and said he should not know what to do without his friends. Ralph had taught him to

read and write English, Hannah had mended his clothes and the children had been his playmates. Loth to go, he at last departed with the Gordons, with many a backward look. A crowd of spectators stood on the bank to watch the departure of the novel craft. Hannah felt nervous, and wished herself away from the inspection of so many curious eyes; Ralph climbed to his place, planted his feet firmly in the broad leather straps, which were made fast to a strong bar, by treading upon which the wheels of his boat were moved exactly upon the plan of the wheels of a velocipede. Hannah drew the gang-plank to its place, and coiled up the rope that had held them to the shore; Ralph's head and shoulders came out above the roof of his boat, where he could grasp his tiller and guide his course. He touched his hat to the crowd of lookers on; the wheel began its revolutions; the boat yielded to the rudder and glided out into the stream. To show what he could do, Ralph turned his wheel faster and faster, and between its motion and the force of the current, the boat went rapidly down the stream, and amid a prolonged and enthusiastic cheer it disappeared from sight about a long bend in the river, a complete success.

Happy Ralph! Below him his two children danced and shouted at the motion of his feet, his boat was all that heart could wish, and he was delightfully unconscious that Hannah was crying in a corner of the cabin. Her tears were love's tribute to the home she was leaving, relief of mind at finding the boat no failure, and a sudden dread of heart for the strange future lying before her in the West. Hannah dried her tears before they were discovered, and began to conclude arranging the inside of their floating home. At the front of the boat was a small pointed platform on deck, about which Ralph had prudently put a railing for security for the children. Ralph had also constructed six camp chairs, and their former chairs had been sold with their heavier furniture. Hannah took one of these chairs to the platform, and seated herself to knit and enjoy the river scenery. The wooded banks and occasional islands were in full beauty and greenness, the air on the river was cool, Ralph's thoughtfulness had provided an awning to stretch out over her head, and with Norman and Lucy on either side of her on their little stools, laughing and calling out at the rippling water, the receding bank, the flitting birds, the purple asters and tasseled golden rod

swaying over the stream, Hannah began to be very happy.

One part of Ralph's outfit we had almost forgotten. On top of the nearly level roof of the boat was fastened a kennel, the home of a valiant young dog, who was developing wonderful capabilities as a watch-dog. This animal's name was Royal, and he was the chief delight of Norman and Lucy, who liked nothing better than to have a play with him, though Hannah would but seldom permit him to enter their living-room. Royal was a very important member of the household; he slept in the sun on the roof all day, eating his meals with unfailing appetite, and at dusk, when Ralph steered to the shore and tied up for the night, Royal came down from his high eminence, and paced up and down beside the boat, a faithful sentinel, desiring no sleep, unallured by the society of canine tempters, guileless of midnight prowls and depredations, keeping his constant watch while the family slept in peace. In the morning the children and their parents generally took exercise on the banks; there would be milk or butter to get, or some other errand to do, and the walk after such things was a great treat. On Sabbath days you would not see the boat on

its way, but resting by the bank. Ralph always managed to get by a village on Saturday evening, that he might go to church with his family, and while they were thus absent, Royal, the faithful, defended the property.

One day on the boat was very much like another; sometimes it rained, rained so hard that Ralph had to quit steering and paddling, and draw his head in from the aperture in the roof, like a snail finding refuge in his shell. On other days it was very hot, too hot for long exposure to the sun; hence he put up an umbrella-shaped awning, which protected him in some measure from the elements. But nothing would prevent fatigue, and as he was frequently obliged to rest his feet and let the boat be carried forward only by the progress of the stream, their advance was but slow. The trifling incidents of the journey were amusing at first, watching boats go by them, passing rafts, and gazing at all the queer craft of the Ohio—peddlers' boats, pottery boats, old rag and iron boats, shore boats—but after a time these things ceased to be entertaining.

Hannah, never idle, concluded this voyage to be a fitting time to teach her children to read. She thought she would never again have so much

leisure, and I do not think she ever did; accordingly, she gave them lessons every day, and Lucy learned quickly, while Norman was too young to profit much. Hannah also quilted her album quilt, and did a great deal of sewing, which she deferred until this time that she might at home improve the opportunity of doing more paid work. When the boat was tied up, Ralph was busy drawing and making Oriental paintings, which he and Hannah framed in leather-work and rustic frames, and were able to sell at the larger towns. Finding himself so easily fatigued, Ralph would sometimes get gloomy, and say he would "never be fit for anything but making pictures and frames, and when they got where there is no market for these, for all he could see, they must starve."

Hannah would always have ready a cheerful answer.

"The doctor said out-door work and change of climate would be the very thing for you, Ralph, and if you give out, I can help you."

"You can't plough a field, Hannah, nor build a rail fence, however willing you are."

"I dare say I can learn even that, and where there is a will there is always a way. Come,

don't get discouraged, Ralph; the Lord never sends a burden greater than we can bear. He would not even to Cain, and there shall no temptations befall us but such as are common to men, and you know we are willing to take our share with the rest. People have gone West and prospered with not half our chance."

Ralph often said he wondered how dark would be that trouble to which Hannah could not find a bright side. There would accidents befall the boat, for Ralph was not much of a riverman, and he would cry out, despairingly, "What do you say to that?" Hannah's answer was ever ready; she had a saying that "she never saw a flower so bitter that bees could not get honey out of it."

Quiet consciences and industrious hands make sound sleep, we know. Ralph declared that after a day's boating he slept like a log; the children never thought of opening their eyes between dark and daylight, and Hannah mercifully slept well—mercifully, we say, for if she had lain awake at night, there were things to think of which might have burdened even her buoyant spirit. Sleeping so, an accident befell them against which the sharp-eyed and strong-jawed Royal was no protection. It did not even cause him to lift up his

voice in a howl. Ralph saw it as he woke, and sprang up with a cry. The Ohio has a rise and fall almost incomprehensible to those who live near the unalterable rivers of the East. It was now, from long droughts, getting low rapidly, and as Ralph, in moving his craft the night before, had not taken this into consideration, and had fastened it close to the bank, the retreating river had left one end of the boat high and dry, so that the floor presented a steep inclined plane. Everything within the cabin had been made fast, so that there was nothing to slip about, and the two little ones were crowded together as they had rolled into the end of their bed, quite unconscious of their uncomfortable position. Hannah awoke at Ralph's exclamation, and the first thing for them to do was to snatch some garments and hurry out to view the extent of the disaster.

"How much worse it might have been!" cried Hannah; "see what a blessing that rock has been to us. Only look at that coal barge, Ralph!" She pointed to a long, narrow coal barge, which having been left in a position much like their own, the weight from the side from which the water had retreated had wrenched it in two, leaving it a total wreck, besides the loss of all the

coal with which it had been loaded. Such a fate had been saved this modern ark in which our friends had embarked their fates, by a rock which had stood stanch friend of the deserted end of the boat, and upheld its falling fortunes when the river like a traitor had run away.

Hannah's cheerful looking at the better side, even at that critical juncture, made Ralph laugh—a good omen, for at first he seemed to have drifted far off into the region of the doldrums, with small chance of ever getting back.

It is to be feared that Ralph trusted too much to Hannah to make his sunshine for him; he seemed to think she could obtain all the light that was reasonably to be expected from their circumstances, and allowed himself to be gloomy when, if she had taken to his own tactics, she might have driven him to do something better.

Without arguing on mental characteristics, however, it is evident that this boat must be gotten off the rocks and sent on its way rejoicing, for certainly no eligible spot could be found for the pioneers to locate in that section of country.

Leaving Hannah to dress the children and bring them out upon the rocks, Ralph climbed the bank in search of help and advice. He found

a farmer near by to whom he told his story, and who called his son and a hired man and went to the scene of the disaster. Hannah had brought out some chairs for herself and children, and Royal, discovering that something was wrong, became highly excited, and leaped about, barking first at the poor boat, which was certainly more sinned against than sinning, and then at the river, which had truly played the voyagers a very unfair trick. The strangers were much interested in the boat, examined it curiously, and the hired man oracularly remarked that "it beat all that ever he see," which was doubtless true.

"But how are we to get off?" asked Hannah of the men.

"My good woman, you must wait for a rise in the river; whenever we have a big rain it will set you afloat again," said the farmer.

"That is the only hope, I suppose," said Ralph.

Hannah looked up at the cloudless sky, at the dusty trees, about at the parched earth. The heavens above seemed brass. When could they hope to go on their journey?

"I'd advise you to prop that boat up more carefully with wood and stone, so that it won't shift and crack with its weight, and then you'd

better get out your goods to make it lighter," said the farmer's son.

"Yes, that is what you must do," said the farmer.

"We'll lend you a hand at the job," said the hired man.

"But where shall we put the things when we get them out?" said Ralph; "we must have a shelter, and I do not see what better we can do than stay in the boat."

"I've got a sort of tool-house, not much of a place, but it has two rooms and is a shelter. I can lend you that until a rain comes. You can clear it out to-day, and we'll tote the things up there for you to-night," said the farmer.

"Don't be down-hearted," remarked the son to Hannah; "it is uncommon dry for the time of year, and will have to rain hard this month. It always does along in September, you know. A good pour one day will lift you off those rocks, and then you can put your goods aboard. You'd better take the tool-house; you can make it do. Mother lived in it when our house burned down ten years ago."

What could Ralph and Hannah do but accept this offer with thanks? and glad were they to

have fallen in with so pleasant a family. The farmer's wife sent her little daughter to bring them all up to get breakfast with her, and before night Ralph and Hannah had cleaned the shop and established themselves in it. By this time also, between the farmer's wife being very inquisitive and Hannah grateful and frank, their past history and their destination were well known, and friendly relations established.

The good woman of the house was a church-member, and when she found that Ralph and Hannah belonged to the same denomination as herself, she overflowed with delight and had to shake hands all around. She pronounced Ralph's frames, drawings and paintings "quite perfick," and declared that Polly, her only daughter, must at once receive instructions in the wonderful Oriental art. She also confided to Hannah that she had "just lost her servant girl, and here was house-cleaning to do, and it was a terrible year for fruit, and she didn't know how ever she could take care of all her peaches and apples, and she had two quilts to quilt besides." At this Hannah declared herself ready to assist—she wanted to earn all she could—and the children could play about their little home in the tool-house, and be

in nobody's way. After this Hannah quilted the good woman's patchwork wonders in her best style; seconded her in house-cleaning, until all the windows shone, and the paint was nearly as bright as a looking-glass; she also assisted ably in preserving and drying fruit, until the farmer's wife declared she wished "they were going to live in the tool-house until the end of time"—a Methuselaic existence which Hannah did not at all covet.

Ralph became no less popular than Hannah. He had several pupils; sold a number of artistic miracles; mended the pump; made an apple-parer, a peach-parer and a corn-sheller; and found himself so busy and so well liked that he was quite happy in spite of the unreasonable delay.

This delay continued nearly three weeks, but at last "the windows of heaven were opened," and for thirty-six hours the long-desired rain came down. Before it was over, the boat was floating in triumph, and Royal expressed his satisfaction by uproarious barking.

Many hands made light work of transferring Ralph's property from the tool-house to the boat, and the farmer's son, declaring so ingeniously constructed a craft must have a name, brought a pot

of red paint and named her the "Hope," setting the word in a frame of flourishes and curlicues wonderful to behold. The farmer's wife hugged and kissed the children, wept over parting with Hannah, and gave them liberal quantities of jelly, dried fruit and canned peaches. She also placed a mysterious bundle in Hannah's hands with fifteen nods and sixteen winks.

Amid waving of hats and kerchiefs, and shouts of "good-by" and "good luck to you," the "Hope" started, the river having risen high and a tawny, roaring flood carrying them furiously on their way.

During the morning Hannah opened a little tin box and counted its contents. When Ralph came to dinner, she said: "See, Ralph! we earned twenty dollars while we stopped here! Now we must always remember that God makes 'all things work together for good to them that fear him.'"

"That is true," said Ralph, "and I am very thankful; but, Hannah, if we have many more such stops as this, we must lie by somewhere all winter, on account of the cold and the ice in the water."

"Well, then, I guess we shall not have any

more such stops," said Hannah; "certainly not unless it is good for us."

Stops must have been good for them, for in three days occurred a more troublesome delay. Ralph, not being a pilot learned in Ohio navigation, went too near the bank, and the tide of water pouring from a suddenly filled "run," as it is called in that part of the country, otherwise a creek, whirled him upon a snag, and so injured the apparatus of the "Hope" that he was obliged to stop for repairs. He was near a town, and gaining a quiet cove, where some of the citizens who came out to gaze told him he would find a safe harbor, he tied up there. On examining his boat, Ralph found the wheel damaged and some mending required by one of the flat boats, upon two of which we must remember he had laid his flooring. The poor man was nearly in despair. Here was time lost, money needed for repairing, though he would do most of the work himself; and while he was working, he could not get pupils or make pictures.

"Trust in the Lord and do good," said Hannah, cheerfully. "You know the verse, Ralph, and 'so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.'"

“Ah, yes!” said Ralph, “but whatever may be my fate on land, I am particularly unlucky on water!” and then he and Hannah laughed, but Ralph sank quickly into the dumps again. “Some evil fate pursues us, Hannah; next thing one or both of us will die, and what will Lucy and Norman do?”

“Come, now,” replied Hannah, “don’t forget: ‘Leave thy fatherless children with me, and I will preserve them alive,’ and, ‘I have been young and now am old, and I have never seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread.’”

“Well,” said Ralph, “if you wouldn’t worry about that, what would you worry about?”

“Nothing!” answered Hannah, bravely. “‘Be careful for nothing!’ says the apostle, and again, ‘I would have you without carefulness.’” So we see that, though Hannah was not a genius like Ralph, she had what stood her in as good stead as genius, practical piety and cheerfulness.

It was Saturday afternoon when the “Hope” came to grief the second time, and on Sunday Ralph tried to put away earthly cares and go to the house of God with a mind only intent on the Lord’s service. Going thus, he found himself rewarded. Anxiety and strife died out of his

heart, as wrathful billows die on seas which storms have ceased to vex; the sunlight of faith scattered all his doubts and fears, and for at least that little peaceful day he felt himself to be indeed a pilgrim seeking a better and a heavenly country, and the Sabbath hours became to him

“The steps by which we climb toward heaven.”

The “Hope” lay under the bank close by the church whither Ralph directed his steps, and the minister, noticing the little family giving devout attention, and seeing them go down to the river after service, instituted a search next morning, and was rewarded by finding the “Hope” and its owners. Ralph was fastening up his awnings and preparing to remove his stove and chairs from the cabin, so that Hannah and the children might remain on land during the day-time, and give him more room to prosecute his work of repairing. The minister, like every one who examined the “Hope,” at once reached the conclusion that Ralph was a genius, and a few minutes’ conversation showed him also that the Mackeys were industrious, worthy and energetic people.

“I wonder you don’t get this invention patented,” he said.

"We talked it over, but we concluded that it was not best to worry about it. If it takes my family to a new home, it will be all I want from it. I have no money to spend over patents, and there is no telling what difficulties might come up about it."

"How long will it take you to get it mended?"

"A week at least, I should think," said Ralph.

"I shall bring my wife down to see you," said the clergyman to Hannah. This he did, and in speaking of their plans and prospects, Hannah mentioned to the lady how much she disliked being idle.

"I could sew," she said, "but I suppose no one would like to give sewing to such a stranger."

"I will," said the lady; "I have been looking for some one to do mine, and I dare say I can find you work for as long as you stay. It is hard here to find a good hand at fine sewing."

Contrary to all expectations, the "Hope" lay a whole month at this place. Ralph repaired the boat in a week, but while doing so, he became acquainted with a master carpenter, who, finding him a skillful workman, offered him unusually high wages if he would stay and help him finish a job for which he had contracted, and upon

which he found it exceedingly difficult to get good hands. As it was getting late in the season, and there was already little hope of concluding their journey before winter, Ralph accepted the carpenter's offer, and strove to show himself deserving of its liberality.

Meanwhile, Hannah found her hands full of fine sewing, and as she took it from well-to-do and reasonable people, who believed that the rule, "The laborer is worthy of his hire," embraces even women and seamstresses, her purse began to get full, and visions of two cows and butter-making and selling danced before her mind. Hannah had the happy faculty of generally thinking of pleasant things. Norman and Lucy shared in the good will felt toward their parents. Their father was obliged to build them a little cupboard to keep their toys in, so many gifts were showered upon them.

From the minister Ralph received two large packages of tracts and several sheets of text cards, with injunctions to consider himself a missionary wherever he settled, and to do a missionary's work. "If every person who goes West would remember this, we should find the country prepared for the building and sustaining of churches

much sooner than is the case now. Too many church-members who emigrate seem to leave their religion behind them, and either are stolidly indifferent to gospel claims after the lapse of a few years, or fall into open vice and become perfectly reckless. Take your religion with you, Mr. Mackey, and use it every day. Religion is made for every-day life."

"That is true," said Ralph; "I cannot afford to leave mine behind me. I have none too much as it is; and having but a small portion of this world's goods, I must hold on to my faith, and not be bankrupt in the life to come."

"Well," said the minister, "that is right. Witness a good profession, and I trust you will meet in heaven many saved by your means."

Loosing at last from this little harbor, where their sojourn had not been unpleasant, the "Hope" dropped down the river, pausing always on the Sabbath, stopping here and there as occasion demanded, meeting no further accidents, and at last reached Cairo, where Ralph found a secure place a little above the crowded port, and prepared to remain some time to conclude his plans and obtain information which should direct his future course.

Waking up here one morning, Lucy and Norman found themselves the happy possessors of a little brother, and Lucy, wisely opining that, as the Egyptian princess had found Moses floating in his cradle on the seedy Nile, so this new treasure had been won from the turbid Ohio, proposed that he should be named after the famous law-giver of old, "and maybe he would turn out just like him."

With mother partiality, Hannah may not have deemed it unlikely that her babe should become the Moses of the nineteenth century, yet, in spite of Lucy's solicitations, the new-comer was named Robert, after a dear brother of Hannah's, whom, as he had been adopted by an uncle, the family had left in Scotland when they came to this country years before. The faithful sister's heart had never forgotten Robert. Letters had kept alive their love, his eldest girl bore the name of Hannah, and now this little son was given the uncle's pretty cognomen.

At Cairo, Ralph had again proved the free masonry of religion. He had gone to church and to prayer-meeting, and a pastor and church officers and members had welcomed him, acknowledged him as a brother in the family of the

greatest Father, and their wives had not failed to visit Hannah, while the advent of the little Robert was greeted by many acts of kindness, good words and gifts of little luxuries, and many good wishes for both mother and child.

Nor was Hannah uncomfortably situated with the "Hope" for her home. Ralph, having occasional aid from a woman living near, devoted himself to keeping his habitation and family in order, and being more handy than most men, all was nice and tidy. A chintz curtain was drawn across the cabin to hide the wheel works and tools; white fringe-trimmed curtains fell before the two windows; the stove was polished; the wood work was clean; the camp chairs looked well with their red carpet seats. Ralph hung some of his pictures on the wall; covered the bed with the famous album quilt; laid on the floor a rag carpet of Hannah's making; and it was no wonder that the visitors said in their calls, "How cosy you are here! I did not know so much could be made of so little room!"



CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST HOME.

THE winter was unusually mild; there was but little ice in the river, and by the middle of January the Mackeys prepared for a second start. Ralph had concluded to go up the Mississippi to the Missouri river, up to Kansas City, and then, voyaging still up the Kansas river, to find some good location on its bank. His boat was of so light draft that he could navigate almost wherever there was water.

“That will be our best plan, won’t it, Hannah?” he said.

“I don’t know,” said Hannah, poring over the map he had spread before her; “you must be the judge of that, Ralph. I have not read newspapers and reports as much as you have, and you have talked with many people who have seen that country. We want a healthy locality the first thing.”

"Very true," said Ralph. "I will look out for that."

"And a place where we will have good water."

"That is indispensable."

"And wood for building and fuel."

"Certainly."

"And a market for whatever we can raise. And if you could get where you could take your produce to market in your boat, it would be better than a wagon; and then we have no wagon."

"But the boat, Hannah, we are going to set up on land for our house."

"I know it, but I thought you could reduce the size of the wheel and use it for one or both of the flat boats."

"Why, so I could! You are a genius, Hannah!" cried Ralph.

"No indeed, very far from it. You are the genius, and we cannot ask for more than one in the family."

"If we locate near Lawrence, that would be our market. I suppose it is something of a place."

"I hope there is a mill there to grind our corn and wheat," said Hannah the practical.

"And having all these things we will have to

make our neighborhood as well as we can. The school, the prayer-meeting, church and Sunday-school will all come in their time."

"I hope so," said Hannah.

They were at Cairo over Christmas, and had got a little tree and ornamented it with candles, candies and trinkets for the children. On opening their door in the morning they found a basket directed to them, with "Merry Christmas" on the card fastened to the handle. Within were a pair of china vases, a scarlet table-cover, a plain but well-finished writing-desk, a box of all manner of requisites for sewing, as shears, scissors, needles, tape, buttons and thread, and several books. The basket stood on a small but excellent grindstone—an article Ralph had not thought of getting, yet one which was indispensable.

This was the last token of Cairo friendship. Before the middle of January, the "Hope" was pursuing her journey, the hardest part of it being yet to come, as hitherto they had traveled down stream and with the current. Ralph found it harder and slower work to move his boat than before, yet he was gaining strength with exercise, and the "Hope" quite met his expectation of her capacities. He was anxious to reach the new

home as early in the spring as possible, that he might get his first crop in the ground. Aware of the dangers of the banks, he went along them with all due caution, yet keeping near the shore so as to be out of the current and to have the help of the eddy. He made his landings with great care, after having hailed some one on the shore and asked as to the safety of selecting that place to tie up. All day the "Hope" was kept moving; sometimes Ralph did not even leave his place to eat, but had his dinner handed up to him, using the roof for a table, and moving the wheel enough at least to keep in his place and resist the downward action of the current. Breakfast was eaten before starting for the day, and supper after they had tied up at dusk. The queer craft was often hailed by passers-by with jests, surprise or commendation, and frequently the side of a passing steamer would be crowded with passengers and crew gazing at the great Yankee kyack. Sometimes Royal would resent this scrutiny by terrific barking; again he would ignore human curiosity, lying on the roof with his eyes shut and his tail contemptuously flapping up and down. All the steam vessels had whistles to warn of their approach, but as the "Hope" had none, Royal

would lift up his voice in short yelps if any larger craft came near their course.

The prominent topic of conversation between Hannah and Ralph was of course their settlement.

"How shall we get the house off the boat?" Hannah asked one day.

"I shall have to hunt up my neighbors far and near and get them to help; they always do in new countries, and you must give them a good dinner."

"I am afraid they will expect whisky—they always do—and of course they cannot have it."

"Surely not, but we will have a good dinner and hot coffee, and they will see that a meal of your cooking is not to be despised."

"I do not see how I can get on without a cellar," said Hannah.

"We cannot wait for that this year. I will try to dig a cave when the first hurry is over, and you can keep the milk in that."

Thus they made their arrangements, and as no accidents befell them, the health of the whole family remained perfect. The weather was unusually fine, with a promise of an early and open spring, so that their hopes increased daily.

Turning from the Mississippi to the Missouri made one great way mark in their lives. They

entered on the third of the mighty streams, the everlasting highways and pledges of the greatness of the land. At St. Louis they delayed a day to lay in some stores, and the top of the "Hope" thereafter presented an odd appearance, as Ralph made fast there one after another of his new properties. The first trophy thus fastened aloft was a plough, and over it Ralph nailed for its protection a painted canvas.

Slowly and steadily they followed the curves of the Missouri, the country rapidly changing from the thickly-populated and finished appearance to which they had been accustomed. On the Ohio they had left the ascending steam of salt furnaces; the low thunders of rolling mills; the rushing of coal cars from the mouths of mines down to the waiting boats; and the sight of miners, with lamps in their caps and picks in hand, winding to their labors among the tree-crowned hills. The whirr and rattle of manufactories died away behind them; less frequently handsome and spacious homes under the glorifying light of morning, or the soft shadows of the twilight. The roar of constant and heavy toil toned down to the hum of quieter industries; and these they were to lose at intervals in the hush of

the woodlands, the sunny silence of reaches of unbroken meadow land, the repose of river country, where the settlers had gone inland, or congregated by the mills and shops, marking the germs of the future towns.

At Kansas City they left the great Missouri, and entered the smaller Kansas river. After this Hannah became in still more of a hurry to reach their destination, as she was incommoded by the upper lading of the boat.

Soon after starting for a day's voyage, they saw, seated upon a stump near the bank, an emigrant from the Emerald Isle, who had become disgusted with agriculture, and concluded to go and work on the railroad. The man had gathered his few tools and his domestic animals from the hut in which he had not been too enterprising to live, and intended to sell them at Topeka. His household furniture was packed in a two-wheeled cart, drawn by a lean, rough-coated pony, and this he meant to place in some shanty on the line of railroad that his wife might hang out some such sign as

“HotL Bi Mis O'Connor.”

This wanderer, having expended the small amount of admiration of which he was capable on the

"Hope," called out to Ralph to know if he were going to "squat," that being his elegant term.

"Aye, aye," said Ralph.

"Poor business! Better come along with me and git work on the road; 'tain't fur off."

"I don't want that kind of work," said Ralph, and Royal, having decided that this was an ineligible acquaintance, fairly outdid himself in barking. When, at Ralph's order, Royal had resigned the floor to the first speaker, the man wanted to know if Ralph would not purchase some live stock. "He had three hens, a rooster and six young chicks, which he was prepared to sell for a bottle of the 'good crayther,' three plugs of bacey, and ten cints for the ould woman's share."

Ralph, who was keeping his boat quiet for the colloquy, responded that whisky and tobacco were not among his possessions, but, if the man had a coop to put the fowls in, he was prepared to pay a fair price for them.

"And won't yes take the pigs too?" cried the woman. "Two as purty pigs as iver squeaked, indeed!"

Ralph concluded that he had better buy the pigs, and when the birds were cackling, peeping and crowing in their coop over head, and the pigs

had also been fastened there in a sort of cage, Hannah began to think it time to make a permanent landing.

The landing came not long after. Wood, water, level ground, river front and a clear field or two were obtainable at a low rate from a man smitten with the gold fever. There was no house, for the man was unmarried and had boarded three miles from his clearing; but there was a log barn and a pig pen, and three miles off was a settlement about a mill and a smithy. The pigs were soon transferred to their appropriate locality, the chickens were accommodated with a house in the grass, and Ralph, leaving Royal to guard the family, went to see his neighbors, ask their help in getting up his house, and to buy a horse and cow.

Hannah, carrying the baby Robert in her arms, and with Norman and Lucy running before her, took a walk on the bank, where the early violets, spring beauties and liverwort blossoms were smiling through the last March days. The grass was already growing green and the buds were swelling on the trees. She felt something of the pride of possession. She had never before been able to say of a foot of ground, "this is ours."

Now, here was her home ; she had a claim on the soil beneath her feet, and looking past the roughness and desolation of the present, she saw, in imagination, the woods leveled, stately shade trees dotting the landscape here and there, the fields covered with waving harvests, and her own comfortable, roomy home set in the midst of them, like the jewel in the ring.

Filled with these pleasant fancies, she prepared supper for Ralph, who came home just as the stars were rising, riding his pony and driving his cow ; and amid much laughter, Hannah, who had not touched a cow since she left her childhood's home beyond the sea, milked the pretty dun-colored brute, and then Ralph tethered her to a tree, and Royal, feeling the increased importance of guarding so much additional property, gave gruff barks as he walked up and down through the night.

During the early part of this day Hannah had not been idle ; she had baked bread, pies and gingercake for the dinner that must be given to the men who came to aid them in getting up their house.

Ralph meant in the fall to put up a log house sixteen feet square on a good foundation ; the

cabin of the "Hope" would do for the present. He was in haste to get his family safely housed, as storms are frequent in early spring. He must get a yard fenced with saplings for the fowls, to keep them out of the newly-sown fields, and must get ground ready for planting corn, wheat and potatoes. Hannah was ready to take care of the garden, and help plant the crops in the field. Even Lucy was pronounced quite big enough to drop corn, and Norman to act as baby-nurse to baby-brother.

The following day was spent by our friends in removing their goods from the boat. Ralph formed a foundation on which to lay the floor of the "Hope's" cabin; he also drove stakes into the ground, and fixed on them cross pieces, on which to lay the lids of the lockers to afford a table for next day's dinner. The stove was set up on the bank under the united awnings of the boat, and near it a light framework was erected, over which Hannah could hang some of her quilts as a shelter for the baby's cradle.

Early the next morning, when the Mackeys had just finished their breakfast, the men of the neighborhood appeared coming through the woods to aid in the labors of the day. The most of

them were rough specimens of backwoodsmen, dressed in homespun, but looking strong and good-natured. They shook hands with Ralph and Hannah, expressed themselves glad to have new neighbors, and hoped they would find it well to remain. They were a dozen in all—at least that became the number when the last one arrived, a young man who came an hour after the rest, accompanied by his wife, whom he introduced to Hannah as “my Sarah Ann, who reckoned like as not she’d want some help in the cooking.”

Hannah cordially welcomed “my Sarah Ann,” and thanked her for coming. The first thing to be done of course was to present the three children for Sarah Ann’s inspection, and that young woman praised them warmly. Next, Hannah exhibited her preparations for the day, and asked her advice as to how the affair of the dinner should be conducted.

“See here!” whispered Sarah Ann, presently; “how much whisky have you got?”

“Not a drop,” said Hannah, quickly. •

“You ain’t?”

“No; we don’t believe in it, and never touch it.”

Sarah Ann stared a moment, and then sud-

denly flung her strong arms around Hannah's shoulders, and gave her an embrace as violent, as the squeeze of a bear, but much better intentioned.

"Oh, ain't I glad! then there won't be any row, not unless they get up a fuss because they don't have any!"

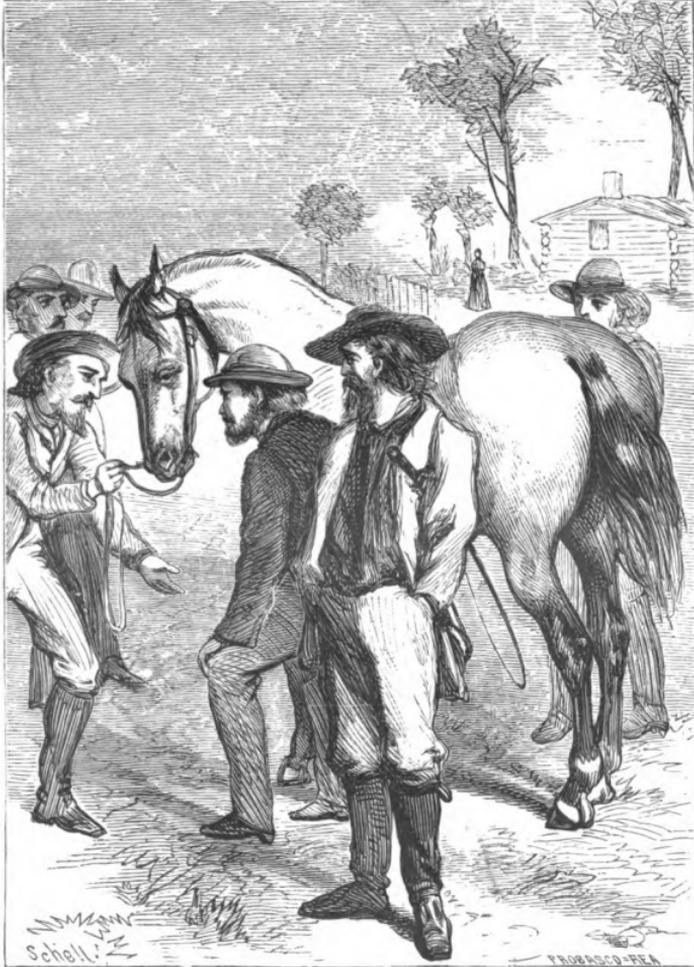
"They won't. Ralph will manage it. See here;" and Hannah uncovered a box containing about two pounds of Rio coffee.

"Coffee! real store coffee! And can you make it?"

"Yes, indeed, and I have an egg to clear it; I brought a dozen packed in salt all the way from Kansas City."

"Why, you're a real out-and-out housekeeper, ain't you?" said Sarah Ann, and the two proceeded to wash the dishes.

One of the men who came brought a horse to sell, hearing that Ralph wished to purchase another. The first business of the day was to negotiate this sale, and Hannah, looking up from her dish-washing, could not but admire the picturesque group the men and the beast formed on the bank of the river. All had brought tools of one kind or another; two of them had shot-guns.



The Horse Sale.

Westward.

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They formed a circle, in the centre of which stood Ralph, the horse, a strong, unhandsome beast, and its owner. The tall figures; the red and gray flannel shirts, liberally displayed; the coarse butternut-colored clothes; the low-crowned felt hats pushed back on their heads, the swarthy faces and long beards; the two men, one exhibiting all the good points of his animal, the other examining its feet, peering into its mouth, feeling its joints, and both appealing to the bystanders,—formed indeed a scene worthy of some painter who shall yet arise, an artist worthy of the grand and varied West.

Ralph finally bought the horse, and everybody being satisfied, the foundation of the house was completed, and attention turned to the boat. A close inspection made it an object of great interest, and nothing would do but Ralph must make an excursion of a few rods on the river, with some of his visitors on the boat and some watching from the bank. When fully assured of the "Hope's" qualities, and that Ralph was her sole architect and inventor, he rose rapidly in their esteem. One burly individual shook him by the hand, slapped him on the back, and cried, "Glad to see you, stranger, glad you settled here. When our

place grows, like as not we'll form a company, and have you build and run just such a craft to carry our trade." Carrying on a town's trade in such a boat as the little "Hope" seemed ridiculous, but when we reflect that the "town" was now a mill, a store, a smith's shop and three houses, it begins to look more reasonable.

Eleven o'clock was the dinner-hour, and by the time it came the "Hope" was dismantled and the house ready to set up. Hannah and Sarah Ann seated the sturdy workers at the table, on which was placed a bountiful repast, and prepared to wait upon them.

The salt pork, dried beef and white flour which the Mackeys had brought from down the river were great luxuries—additionally so cooked in Hannah's best style—and an expression of satisfaction dawned on all faces. To set her table for so many had needed all Hannah's crockery, and before one or two of her guests she had been forced to put yellow pie-dishes and tin cups; spoons also had fallen short.

She ventured to say, as they sat down, "I hope you will excuse the way I have set the table; my dishes came short."

"All right, Mis' Mackey," said one; "these are

better nor we're uset to; 'tain't often as we sees such fine chaney as this here;" and he gazed admiringly at a blue and white plate, cup and saucer.

"Never mind the spoons," said another. "I'll use Bill's; it's all the same."

"Oh, Mr. Jackson, you hav'n't a knife!" cried Hannah in dismay.

"Here's my jackknife; it's just the thing," said Mr. Jackson, pulling the formidable weapon from his pocket.

Thus everything being quietly settled, Ralph said, quite loud enough to be distinctly heard down all the table: "Hold on a minute, my friends! it's our way to thank the Lord for our food before we eat it;" and he at once said a short, simple and earnest grace. An expression of blank astonishment was on each countenance; some looked down, some away, some at Ralph, some at their neighbors.

"Be you a parson?" asked Mr. Jackson, fearfully embarrassed at this unlooked-for circumstance.

"No, sir; I'm a carpenter by trade, and, as you see, I'm setting out for a farmer."

"Give us your fist!" said the husband of "my

Sarah Ann," reaching across the corner of the table; "I don't say as I'm a Methodist, but that *does* sound civilized and like white folks."

"That's so," observed the miller, Mr. Crane, beneath his breath.

A fearful suspicion now filled the breast of one Thomas Potter, the worst-looking specimen of humanity among those convened. It gathered strength as Ralph dealt out plentiful supplies of meat, and Sarah Ann and Hannah handed about bread, pickles and potatoes. Rising from his seat, his brow scowled ominously; his hand thrust into the raw hide belt which fastened his deer-skin jerkin, and which held his revolver, he demanded, "I say, Mackey, if that's your name, where's your whisky?"

"My friends," cried Ralph, rising and looking calmly in the many eyes turned toward his, "I come among you as a temperance man. I have no whisky to offer you, for I believe it to be a deadly poison, but I offer you a meal, food and drink of the best I have."

"You've foolished yourself if you think we're going to work for you and drink water, and I'm going back where I came from, and so will the

rest if they've got the spirit of men!" cried Thomas Potter.

"I shall not offer you water," replied Ralph; "if you'll take your seat, friend Potter, you shall have a cup of as good coffee as ever you tasted. Bring on the coffee, Hannah!"

Sarah and Hannah were already pouring it out, seasoning it with cream and sugar, and now hastened forward, bringing brimming cups.

"Dandelion roots! Come on, boys! Don't let him bamboozle you," shouted Thomas, contemptuously.

"Try it first," said Ralph, laughing. None of the men had moved, and Hannah, with her best smile, offered a cup of coffee to the irate Thomas. A woman in linsey-woolsey, with frizzled hair and unwashed skin, Thomas Potter might have surlily withstood; but Hannah, with her fresh, pleasant face, shining braids and magnificence of brown calico and white apron, so abashed him that he took the proffered beverage and dropped awkwardly into his seat. One taste of the clear, cream-enriched coffee demolished him. Hannah refilled his cup without being asked, and when "my Sarah Ann" supplied him a third time, Thomas Potter's mouth was effectually stopped.

Mr. Jackson, being relieved of his fears that the new settler was a parson, remarked that "there was no use talkin'; the coffee tasted powerful good."

"No dried peas in this," said Mr. Crane.

"I'm sure if I took a vote among your wives, they'd all rather you had this than the whisky," said Ralph.

"That's so," observed the husband of "my Sarah Ann;" "the women are powerfully sot again whisky, all except—" he stopped, looked up, flushed, filled his mouth with bread, and left his sentence unfinished; with a pair of sorrowful, indignant, remonstrating eyes fixed on his face, he could not say, "except Job Hopkins' wife."

Hannah, with a woman's quick intuitions, read the miserable story; she could only show her sympathy with Job by giving him the best piece of pie and the largest slice of cake, but she did that, and Sarah Ann more than confirmed her suspicions by whispering,

"Job Hopkins' old woman drinks like fury sometimes, but she's a right-down good old soul, too, when she's a mind to be."

The dinner was over and the men returned to their work.

"S'pose you h'ain't no 'bacco?" said Thomas Potter to Ralph.

"No, I haven't, really."

"Well, it's a stingy way to live; that's all I kin say about it," said Potter.

"I hope if anything is proposed for the benefit of the community, you will not find me stingy," said Ralph.

"You needn't go to benefiting the community, as you call it, by trying on any of your temperance societies out here; if you do, you and I can't live in one section, that's all," retorted Potter, angrily.

"I shall not force my opinions on any one, but being in a free country, I ask leave to exercise them for myself," replied Ralph, quietly.

"That's fair," said Mr. Crane, the umpire in all disputes.

Well sheltered in his cradle, little Robert had slept soundly, but with over-red cheeks, all the morning. He now woke up so troublesome and crying that Hannah had to sit down to take care of him, and leave to Sarah Ann the whole task of clearing the table and washing dishes, which Sarah said "she didn't mind a crumb."

Contrary to his usual tactics, little Robert

moaned and wailed, needing all his mother's attention, and Sarah Ann had to get supper also. By supper-time the house was up, the furniture and stove placed within, and Hannah carried her babe into her own dwelling, the supper being served out doors on account of the smallness of the house. As the men lounged about, talking of clearing land, of crops, of game, the railroad, and so on, one or two drew near Hannah and her babe.

"'Pears to me the little feller don't look over and above pert. Bean't he sick?" said Job Hopkins.

"I'm afraid so. He rolls his head as if it hurt him," said Hannah, nervously. "My children have always been so well I don't know what to do about sickness. I hope it isn't his brain."

"My old woman ought to be here; she's the greatest nuss about these parts," said Job. He would certainly have brought her had he known there was to be no whisky.

"The little 'un's eyes are heavy," said Mr. Jackson, looking at the child on Hannah's knee; then going out of doors, he returned with a handful of strong-smelling weeds, saying, "The folks here-

about make great account of hot baths with these greens in 'em; mebby you'd better try it."

Hannah was quite willing to try anything so simple. She was oppressed with fears for her child, and when everybody had gone to the table—Lucy and Norman, who ate their bread and milk on the door-sill, excepted—she undressed Robert, gave him a hot bath and a potion of medicine to which she was accustomed, and then wrapped him in a blanket. Tears filled her eyes—how precious seemed the tiny boy! She prayed God to bless the means she was using, and tried to close heartily her petitions with "Thy will be done."

After supper, when Ralph and some of the elder men came in to ask after the child, Hannah said she wished she had some onions to put draughts on his feet.

"We ha'n't none of them," said Mr. Jackson, "but there's a root growin' round which we uses in place of 'em; I'll fetch you a few."

When Mr. Jackson had gone for the roots, Mr. Crane observed: "He's the only one as knows anything about doctorin' in these parts; you might as well take his advisement."

Mr. Jackson's advisement being merely to

pound and warm the roots, and tie them on the baby's feet, Hannah did not scruple to take it.

The neighbors now departed, even Thomas Potter putting his head in the door to say a gruff "good-bye" to Hannah, and Jackson and Hopkins saying their wives would "step round in the morning to see if all was right."

Royal followed Potter's retreating steps with suspicious sniffs, and took leave of him with a yelp of satisfaction. Ralph put the children to bed, attended to his horses, pigs and chickens, and milked the cow, though less handily than Hannah. He then held Robert while Hannah put the house in order, and the worthy pair sat down in their dwelling, not cheerful and hopeful as they had thought to be, but burdened with anxiety. Truly, God leads his children by ways they know not of! His thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways.

Morning brought little change for the better. Ralph went about his work with a heavy heart, and Hannah, forced to lay the child for a few moments at a time in his cradle, to set her house in order and prepare food, constantly returned to him with tear-dimmed eyes, and sighed to see how unconscious he was of her presence.

It was yet early in the day when two sturdy women, in short, scant linsey frocks, big sun-bonnets and heavy cowhide shoes, came through the woodpath toward the house. They were Mrs. Hopkins and Mrs. Jackson, who had walked respectively two and four miles to see their new neighbor in her trouble.

Mrs. Hopkins unceremoniously walked to the cradle side, dropped herself on a seat, took the infant from its pillow, laid it across her knees, felt its head, its hands, its feet, looked earnestly in its face, and tried gently to rouse it; her motions being far softer and her face fuller of kind concern, than her unpromising appearance would have led one to expect.

"That's a sick child, Mis' Mackey," she said, tersely.

"I know it," said Hannah, tears glittering on her cheeks.

"What you done for him?" demanded Mrs. Jackson.

Hannah explained, and Mrs. Hopkins handed her the babe, took Mrs. Jackson by the elbow, and the self-appointed physicians went out of doors to hold a consultation. Coming in, said Mrs. Hopkins, "Do you smoke, Mis' Mackey?"

"Oh no," said Hannah.

"You won't mind if we take a whiff on the door sill? We've had a goodish tramp, you know."

"Certainly. Do as you like. I should be glad to give you a cup of coffee; there is a good deal in the pot if it were heated."

"I wouldn't mind having a drawing of what my old man was telling about," said Mrs. Jackson. "Don't you stir; I'll set on the pot and tend to it."

Using every means at their disposal to benefit the sick child, the three women saw him still grow worse. "I'm afraid he's going to die," said Hannah, looking piteously at her new friends, longing that they should deny her fears. Mrs. Hopkins, however, nodded, and Mrs. Jackson took snuff, to have an excuse for using her calico pocket-handkerchief.

"Isn't there any doctor within reach?" asked Hannah.

"None nigher nor thirty miles, and *he* ain't no 'count," said Mrs. Jackson.

"Nor any minister? Oh," cried Hannah, with a burst of tears as she remembered the good words and prayers of Doctor Gordon and the

gentle kindness of his daughter, "what a comfort it would be to see a minister!"

"Ain't none of them 'round these parts," said Mrs. Hopkins.

"He won't last long," said Mrs. Jackson, taking little Robert's small, cold hand in hers. "Reckon I'd better call your man in. You know he'll have to make the coffin hisself; we hev to do such things in these parts."

Hannah bent over her child, hiding her face on its bosom, and sobbed bitterly. "Don't take on so," said Mrs. Jackson, kindly; "little 'uns has lots of trouble when they grows up. I've often wisht I'd died when I was little."

"Yes, yes, the Lord knows best," said Hannah, striving to repress her grief. "God is good to little children. He shall gather the lambs in his arms and carry them in his bosom. Call Ralph, won't you?"

Ralph came in, kissed his dying child, and then his wife, and brought the wondering Norman and Lucy to press their lips to their little brother's face.

"I wish you'd pray, Ralph," said Hannah, and this man, the priest of his own household, read a few words of Scripture, and bowed in prayer, his

voice trembling and sometimes inarticulate from grief, but faith gaining the victory and flying in the midst of sorrow to the peaceful shelter of God's love. Borne on the wings of that prayer of love and woe, little Robert's spirit, "untasked, untried," took its way toward heaven.

This was to the visitors a new way of meeting death, and they were subdued to tears. When Ralph went out of hearing of the house to fashion the plain pine coffin of his youngest born, Mrs. Hopkins aided Hannah in preparing the child for its burial, and Mrs. Jackson went off to the village to notify some of the families of the funeral, to take place the next day.

On the succeeding afternoon a few men and women came to help the Mackeys bury their dead out of their sight. The grave was dug where a pretty evergreen stood at its head. Sarah Ann, with unexpected delicacy of feeling, brought a bunch of wild flowers to put in the little waxen hands and around the pretty, peaceful face. The Scripture read, the prayer, the words of faith and hope stirred a long slumbering fountain of feeling in the hearts of these people so long shut out from all the offices of religion; rude men looked solemn and brushed away stray tears; and the

little babe so early lost may not have been without its mission in that first home. Even Thomas Potter, leaning on his gun, felt the scene, and shook Ralph's hand with rough words of sympathy, and thus our friends consecrated their new home mourning at the baby's grave.

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CHAPTER IV.

HE GIVETH HELP TO THE WEARY.

HERE was no time for Ralph and Hannah to sit down and mourn in idleness; there was more than enough work to keep them both busy. When Hannah was planting her garden, she sowed the seeds of the choicest flowers over little Robert's grave, and during the first rainy days, Ralph made a head-board and a neat paling fence to mark the spot. Lucy and Norman called it "Robbie's house," and would sit by it at their play, softly calling to him now and then, and imagining answers for him; it did not seem a terrible thing to be lying asleep under a covering of violets and primroses.

About her house, Hannah made flower-borders; she planted morning-glories which clambered over the roof, bearing troops of blue, pink and purple blossoms. Rough stumps, which would

have marred the surroundings of the dwelling, were draped in sweet pea and scarlet runners, and Hannah's beets, beans and cabbages thrived none the less that she spent stray half hours over her flowers. Whatever she touched prospered. The little white pigs grew into ugly monsters, with a good promise of winter provisions on their fat sides; the chickens increased apace, each brood of downy yellow balls welcomed and petted, and growing big enough to take care of themselves.

The cave for a cellar had been dug, but Hannah looked somewhat eagerly forward to having a real cellar and a log house of larger dimensions than her present abode. For this, in the intervals of other labors, Ralph was cutting and hauling logs, and as with the advancing season corn, pumpkins and potatoes gave token of good yield, the Mackeys considered themselves doing well, and permanently settled in their new home. They often wrote to their friends in the East, and heard frequently from Louis Schepberg and from Miss Gordon.

On the second Sunday after they had settled in their new home, they were seated in their house engaged in singing. They had been reading and teaching their children, and now

joined in their favorite hymns, and as they had both good voices the melody swelled pleasingly upon the air. They were interrupted by the sound of talking and laughter, and a push at the door was followed by the entrance of four grown people and five children—some of their neighbors come to make a visit. This was a proceeding which had never been provided for; strict Sabbath-keepers, they forgot that they were now among a people who took Sunday for a day of general recreation, and while they were receiving kindly a visit evidently intended in friendly part, they both were wondering what they should do and say upon this occasion. As the room was too small for so many inmates, and as the men were smoking, Ralph adjourned with them to a rude seat he had constructed out of doors, leaving the house to Hannah, the women and the children. One of the visitors was Mrs. Hopkins, who had with her her three girls, from ten to fourteen years old, and the other woman was Mrs. Crane, who was accompanied by two boys of seven and nine.

“Do you ever have any church or preaching near here?” asked Hannah.

“None as ever I hear tell of,” replied Mrs. Crane.

"Nor any schools for the children?"

"Well, no, there ain't any school yet, but my man Crane says there must be one. He's a mighty peart reader, but I've nigh forgot all I ever knowed, being out here so long. There's my boys. Crane's taught the biggest his letters, but, land sakes! what *can* they learn without schools?"

"My Semanthy can read," said Mrs. Hopkins, pointing to her eldest girl. "She learned when we lived in Kansas City."

Hannah took from her bag of books the illustrated primer of the Tract Society and gave it to Semantha to read.

"If I had books like all them, I could learn well enough," said the girl; "but to home I never see nothing but a piece of a newspaper or a 'vertisement."

"I will give you something to take home," said Hannah, selecting a copy of the "Child's Paper," and two tracts containing stories in easy reading.

"Mind, mom, these are *mine*," said the girl, "and you ain't to let t'other 'uns tear 'em up."

Her younger sisters, designated thus as "t'other 'uns," began to whimper, and the younger said,

"I'd a knowed as much as you if I'd had a

chance. Sarah Ann Morgan said she'd teach me to read if she had a spellin'-book."

"Would she really teach you?" said Hannah.

"'Course she would. She knows how. She's got a song-book all 'bout Captain Kidd, and Bay o' Biscay, and all that, and she reads it like lightnin'!"

"I'll give you a primer to learn from, and if you take care of it, and do not tear it, so you can bring it back to me when you have learned it through, I'll give you a larger one to keep," said Hannah. By this time she had got from her box a set of alphabet cards in colors, with Scripture pictures, and called Nathan Crane to come and say his letters. She found that he knew them, and as he gave their names, she read what was written on the card.

"What a fine thing it is to be a schollard!" said Mrs. Crane. "I mind I went to school and meetin' a bit when I was young; but father was a born rover. He said as how he was allus the first man behind the bees,* and I reckon he was."

"I should love to teach the children on Sun-

* Travelers have observed that the wild bees keep just in advance of civilization.

day, if it was not too far for them to walk," said Hannah.

"'Tain't too fur; they're running all the time, any how. But how much would you charge?" said Mrs. Crane, cautiously.

"Nothing," said Hannah; "I would do it to help them and to serve the Lord; our Father in heaven calls children his lambs, and bids us teach them, 'feed them' he calls it."

"I ain't no lamb," said Nathan Crane, "and I'll feed my ownself; but if you 'un will teach me to read, I'll come learn."

Thus Hannah's first attempt at religious conversation was rather a failure, and she smiled at it in spite of herself.

"Be you one of the pious kind?" asked Mrs. Crane.

"I hope I am," said Hannah.

"You won't find none of your sort out here," said Mrs. Crane.

"More's the pity," said Mrs. Hopkins. "Now, neighbor Crane, I ain't going to make no stranger of Mis' Mackey, and you know all 'bout me, any how. When we lived in Kansas City, I throwed away my privileges all along of liking a drop of liquor now and then."

"Now, mom, I do wish you'd hush up that!" interrupted Semantha, uneasily.

"Semanthy, I won't hush up. I'm going to make a fair story of what I've got to say. I took up that liking as I mentioned when Semanthy was a baby, some of my acquaintance telling me it would do me good, which I wish they hadn't done. And I kept it up to strengthen me like when I was raising the children."

"If that was all," broke out Semantha, "you might as well quit it now, seeing there ain't none but what's raised."

"Oh, Semanthy, you hush! guess I feel as bad about it as you do," said the mother.

"You ought to see, Mis' Mackey," said the irrepressible Semantha. "When mom's behaving, our place looks as good as anybody's—not like yours, but decent as most—and our garden sass ain't to be beat; but let mom get going on, it looks like Sako. There!"

"Well, Semanthy, if you're done, I'll go on," said Mrs. Hopkins, with a sigh. "As I was telling you, folks, I threw away my privileges, but after we moved here there was a stranger rode by our house one day to ask for a drink of butter-milk; he wouldn't 'light, but he give me a little

book like, and it says atop of it, 'Be you a Christian?' I read a few lines and it struck me all of a heap. It made me feel powerful bad; the more I read it the wuss I felt; and a'ter about two weeks I pitched it in the fire."

"I declare, mom, if that wan't mean of you!" cried Semantha, "when you know how set I am after readin'."

"I tell you, Semanthy, I couldn't abide the sight of that book. It riled me right up, but I've wished I'd kept it ever since."

Hannah rose, went to the package of tracts, turned over the ends a few moments, and quietly held out a four-paged tract to Mrs. Hopkins.

"Ef that don't beat all! it's the very thing!" cried the woman. "I don't burn this up, Semanthy."

"No, you've got to let me read it, and pop too," said the girl; and, more dutiful in heart than in speech, she turned to Hannah, saying, "You needn't think mom's worse nor she is, Mis' Mackey, cause she ain't."

Here Mrs. Crane turned back the conversation to Hannah's offer: "What's that about teaching the children?"

"I said I would be glad to teach them, and

will furnish the books, if they will come Sunday. They can get here about noon, and bring their lunch, and as soon as it is eaten I will teach them until it is time for them to start home; and if they choose to come up Thursday afternoon for a couple of hours, I will teach them then too. I say for them to bring their lunch Sunday, for if I undertook to provide one for them, it would make Sunday a day of toil and worry."

"I reckon that's a pretty fair offer, Mrs. Hopkins," said Mrs. Crane; "and it's good luck for us to have come first to get it."

"I mean it for all the children of the neighborhood," said Hannah; "the more that come, the better I shall like it. I wish, Nathan and Semantha, you would let all the children that are old enough to walk here know, and have them come."

"Well, if that ain't tip top!" said Mrs. Hopkins. "I bet my man will open his eyes at that!"

Meanwhile, out of doors Ralph had been talking to his acquaintances about the feasibility of having a meeting of some kind at the village, as the spot about the mill was called, for improvement. The prospect was not encouraging, but the greatest objection was that wherever a few

men met together, the whisky-bottle must circulate. Job Hopkins said "he didn't like whisky nohow," and Mr. Crane said "it was bad stuff, but he couldn't make a fuss by setting himself ag'in it; he took a glass now and then, like the rest of people."

The visitors did not remain to supper, to Hannah's great relief, but she hospitably pressed upon each a sandwich before starting on their homeward walk, and on the whole was glad they had come, and hoped some good would grow out of it. For Mrs. Hopkins, with her steady husband and family of girls, she was much interested, and resolved to secure her friendship, and try to help her conquer at least her foe of drunkenness. Job Hopkins had told Ralph that "his girls were as good as they got a chance to be; the two younger ones helped him in the field like boys, planting, ploughing and picking stone, while Semantha was the mainstay in the house, aiding her mother when that mother was in her right mind, and taking her place when she forsook it."

On Thursday afternoon, Hannah had just finished her work in house and garden, when she heard herself called, and, going to the door, found some ten children, headed by Semantha Hopkins.

Ruth Hopkins ran forward with her primer in her hand, crying out, "Sarah Ann learnt me three letters, she did!"

The day was pleasant, and, not caring to have the afternoon neatness of her house disturbed by the young visitors, Hannah brought some chairs, which, with Ralph's seat, accommodated them out of doors. She had a large card with the alphabet upon it, and giving Semantha and another girl who could read each a book to learn a lesson for themselves, and Nathan a card where he could, under Semantha's instruction, learn the words of two letters to spell to her, she proceeded to teach the rest of the children the letters.

After an exercise of fifteen minutes she proposed to have a singing-class, and having repeated several times over the first verse of "Happy Land," she taught them the melody. They all liked this, even better than the other lesson, and it was continued for half an hour. She then hung the alphabet card on a twig of a tree in sight of all, and left her junior class to aid each other in recalling what she had taught them, while she heard Nathan his spelling and a reading lesson, and the two elder girls read, with some blunders, a few

verses from the second chapter of Matthew and recite a lesson from Webster's spelling-book.

"I can spend ten minutes with you before you go home," said Hannah; "after that it will be time for me to get my husband's supper. Now, I want to teach you a few questions, and if you try and remember them, and learn more each time, you will soon know a great deal. Who can answer my first question? Who made you?"

"Wa'n't made; I comed," said the younger Master Crane.

"Now, don't talk like that," said Semantha. "God made us. I allus knowed that."

"What else did God make?" asked Hannah.

"'Reckon he made me too, if he made Semantha. I'm just as good as she is," said Nathan.

A few more simple questions followed, and Hannah managed to get their answers fully impressed on the minds of the wild little crew, and interested them besides. They all volunteered to return next Sunday, and Semantha, lingering behind the rest, pulled Hannah's sleeve, saying,

"Mis' Mackey, I've got a piece of store goods for a new gownd; if I'll bring it up here, won't you show me how to make it look like yours?"

Folks 'round here don't make things fit, no how."

"Certainly, I will help you. Bring it any time," said Hannah.

"I say, I'll pay you droppin' corn or weedin' or hoein' your garden," said Semantha, following Hannah into the house, "and I'll bring you some yarbs for tea. Mis' Mackey, did you make them squares round them picters? I wisht you'd show me how, and if I could make some of them fixins like's on your shelf, I'd make pop put up a shelf fur me to home. I hate being jest like Injins. Wisht we'd stayed down in Kansas City, only mom took on so sometimes we couldn't do it. Pop's got a hard row to hoe, Mis' Mackey, and so have I. Now, Mis' Mackey, can't you make mom more like you?"

Here were free demands on Hannah, but she did not wish to repulse the poor girl, so she said she would gladly do whatever she could to help Semantha, and asked her to come and see her frequently.

"I never saw until to-day," said Hannah to Ralph as they sat down to their frugal supper, "how little I know about teaching. I seem always asking the wrong question in the wrong way."

“I dare say you do very well, and then you’ll improve by practice. There is an advantage you women have in trying to do good—you know how to take hold of the children, and you can reach the parents through them quicker than any other way. I guess all the work that is done here will be by you.”

“I don’t think so,” said Hannah; “you will find some.”

Before long, Ralph found one way of benefiting his neighbors. Once a month they got a mail sent up by a lad on horseback from a point farther down the river. The miller was the postmaster, and when the time for the mail came the men for a circuit of ten miles would gather at the mill to hear the news. Ralph, going in the evening with the rest, and getting more mail than all the others put together, would establish himself on a box or barrel, and read aloud to them from his papers and the children’s magazine. Good Dr. Gordon’s present proved very useful; the backwoodsmen would cluster about the reader, listening and commenting, and the little magazine passed from hand to hand, that all might look at its wood-cuts. Possession of the sources of so much interest gave Ralph influence; he was looked

upon as a learned man, and his opinion deferred to. Ralph on the other hand did not set himself above the others, but asked their advice about his building and farming, and obtained from them instruction about hunting and fishing. The mechanical genius of our friend was frequently put in requisition. If any misfortune happened to the mill, if a difficult piece of work were to be done anywhere, Ralph was called for, and being thus able to oblige he gained friends, and his *whims* of "temperance," Sabbath-keeping and Bible-reading were tolerated.

"Hannah," said Ralph to his wife—it was a sunshiny morning, and Hannah was helping her husband out of doors—"what do you think of a Fourth of July celebration?"

"I think I'd like to hear what kind of a celebration you mean," replied Hannah.

"I want to show these people that they can have a meeting and a good time without whisky, and I propose to get up a meeting, a sort of picnic as far as possible from the store; and we'll have a flag and some firing. It would be no Fourth of July without that, you know," he added, laughing, "and we'll have the Declaration of Independence read in due form, and a speech."

"They'll make you deliver the speech," said Hannah.

"That is just what I'd like. I want a free chance to give my views, and you can have the children ready with some singing, and I'll teach them 'Star-Spangled Banner' down at the village, and you women can get up a dinner, and have bouquets, and every one dressed in their best. It would be a first rate thing for every one, and I shall make them promise to banish the whisky if I have anything to do with it."

"The plan is very good, and we must carry it out," said Hannah. And in due course they did, though at some sacrifice of time, and time was precious where there was so much to do. The celebration, projected and carried through with as much labor as is expended on far more magnificent displays, was a time of general happiness. Even Thomas Potter kept sober, remembering Hannah's coffee; Ralph's speech was loudly cheered; Semantha wore her new and well-made frock; the children sung several hymns and songs; and the notes of "the Star-Spangled Banner" rang through the woods.

During this summer, Hannah assisted her husband in most of his out-door work; she hoed corn

and raked hay; when the potatoes were dug she helped pick them from the hills; and though Ralph sometimes repined at seeing her engaged in these unaccustomed tasks, they both saw the necessity of them, for Ralph had no machines to hasten on his work, and was unable to hire a man to help him even if a laborer were to be had. While thus busy, Hannah found her health continually improving, and was able, while doing so much at home, to keep up her little school, and to return occasionally the visits of her neighbors.

Mrs. Hopkins having begun by freely mentioning to Hannah her besetting sin, Hannah made thereafter no scruple about plain speaking on that subject, and often urged her to give it up, representing to her the increased happiness to her family and respectability to herself which would ensue, and assuring her that intemperance was a certain bar to a religious life. To all this Mrs. Hopkins would listen with meek assent, and pitifully deplore her failings; and Hannah both had great hopes of her and wondered much that she made no decided improvement.

“I know all you say is true, Mis’ Mackey. I’m very unfurtnit and unhappy, and so’s Job Hopkins,” said Job’s wife, growing lachrymose

over the blackberries she was spreading to dry in the sun. Hannah, who had been sitting on a stump talking to her, passed by her as she spoke, going to get a drink from the spring. The woman's breath came to her strong of whisky. She stopped, saying, "Mrs. Hopkins, do you truly want to get rid of this bad habit?"

"Dear knows I *do*, Mis' Mackey!"

"Then come with me into the house, and get out what liquor you are keeping there."

"Now, Mis' Mackey?"

"Yes; you have it there, and have used it to-day. The temptation has been too strong for you, and it always will be unless you make up your mind to 'touch not, taste not, handle not.'" Hannah moved toward the house, and Mrs. Hopkins slowly followed her.

"What do you want me to do with it, Mis' Mackey?" questioned Mrs. Hopkins, stopping irresolutely on the threshold.

"Let me see it first," said Hannah.

Mrs. Hopkins hesitated. "You've been very good to me, and now I want you to be good to yourself," said Hannah. Mrs. Hopkins finally took her bottle of whisky from its hiding-place.

"Now," said Hannah, "if you wish to be free

from this habit, to be a respectable woman, a good wife, a good mother, break that bottle on yonder stone heap, and resolve that so you must destroy all the whisky you buy."

"Waste all that good liquor?" queried Mrs. Hopkins.

"It will be the best use you can make of it. You can never be a Christian woman while you are a drunkard, and if you hold on to liquor, you will lose your soul."

Mrs. Hopkins held out the fatal bottle to Hannah, saying, "You do it, Mis' Mackey. *I can't.*"

But Hannah felt this would be a victory but half achieved. "Do it yourself," she said, earnestly.

The woman clasped her in her arms with a wild light in her eyes for one moment, then—Hannah always thought it was in answer to her earnest prayer for help from on high—then she rushed from the cabin and dashed the bottle upon the stones, and for a few minutes the fumes of the whisky filled the air.

The excitement was so great that she sat down on the door-sill and began to cry.

"I ain't cried a tear for years afore," she said to Hannah.

"And now can you promise to drink no more?"

“Yes; I *will*,” she said, decidedly. “There’s Semantha and Ruth, I’ll tell them;” and as the girls came near, carrying a pail of berries, she called, “Go look on that stun pile. There’s my whisky bottle, and I’ll never keep another long as I live!”

At this news, Ruth relinquished their burden to Semantha, and rushed off, leaping like a young deer along the ground, shouting:

“Pop, pop! mom’s quit! She’s broke the bottle and quit drinkin’!”

“Mean what you say, mom?” demanded Semantha.

“Yes; I do, Semantha.”

“Always going to keep to it?”

“Yes; Semantha, I am.”

“It’s all along of her, ha’n’t it?” questioned the girl, pointing at Hannah, ignorant that etiquette forbids thus indicating people.

“It’s all along of her,” responded Mrs. Hopkins.

Poor Semantha’s face twitched convulsively; she winked violently to keep back the tears, then finding her efforts vain, shouted “Happy land! Happy land!” and rushed behind the house.

Meanwhile, Job Hopkins, in the field, heard

Ruth's news; he dropped his reaping-hook and turned with long strides toward the house.

"Old woman," he cried, pausing before his wife, "have you stopped for good and all?"

"Yes, Job," replied the wife, much subdued by the effects the news had upon her family.

Job grasped Hannah's hand and shook it violently up and down.

"May a blessing follow you for ever!" he exclaimed; "this will make a new man of me. I'll have heart now to live and work; old woman, old woman, our good days will come back after this."

As Hannah walked home through the woods, glints of sunshine dropping on her path through the wind-stirred leaves, did she repent that she was living in the wilds of the West and was one of the pioneers alike of empire and of truth?

Hannah's scholars had always seemed grateful to her and had made wonderful progress under her instructions; now, with Semantha's leadership, they began to evince their gratitude in such ways as lay in their power. They brought Hannah quantities of blackberries, which she dried, or used for filling her empty fruit cans; they also brought her dandelion-roots to dry for coffee,

and fragrant herbs to save for tea—store tea, as they called it, being a luxury seldom indulged in.

When the corn was cut, all the children brought their dinners and spent a day in husking. This was a special help to Hannah, for all the husking fell to her share. Ralph had made a corn-sheller, and was now busy at his boat. Some of his neighbors came to help him on it, it was evident they shared his interest, and the facts were these: Ralph's money was nearly gone, money was very scarce in the settlement, there was no market for produce near by, and everybody had more food than they wanted. Ralph had proposed to fasten his wheel and a wheel-house upon the two flat boats firmly braced together, and carry his spare corn, potatoes, beans, cabbages and one of his pigs to the point nearest the railroad, knowing he could obtain a market among the workmen. Some of the neighbors were to send with him what produce he had room to carry in return for their aid in getting his boat in order, and Job Hopkins was to accompany him. Samantha insisted upon staying with Hannah during Ralph's absence, and Hannah was glad to have her, as she was lonely, and also thought the visit might do Samantha

good, in giving her some new ideas about house-keeping and some additional light on religious subjects.

Semantha had come with a determination to learn to write, and by diligent practice on a slate she began to be able to make readable letters. She was much interested in the morning and evening worship which Hannah, taking Ralph's place in his absence, had with her little family.

"Do you do that every morning, Mis' Mackey?" asked Semantha.

"Yes; we never begin a day without reading the Bible and prayer."

"Well, I couldn't do much about the prayer," said Semantha, "but as sure as you're alive, Mis' Mackey, after breakfast and supper every day, I'll make pop and mom and t'other 'uns sit down and listen while I read a piece out of the Bible."

"That would be a good plan, certainly; but, Semantha, I should call Ruth and Betty by their names, or *sisters*, and not *t'other 'uns*."

"Why, I will if you say so, Mis' Mackey. Like as not I say piles of things that don't sound good. I wisht you'd tell me, so I can make my talk like yourn."

“Very well. Say *many* things, instead of ‘piles of things,’ wish instead of ‘wisht,’ and *yours* and not ‘yourn.’”

And as Semantha was really anxious to improve and took correction thankfully, Hannah watched her expressions, and soon weeded her speech of many improprieties and mispronunciations. After several days’ absence, Ralph and Job Hopkins returned. Coming up the river, Ralph looked with fond pride at his home. It was small, to be sure, but it was a picture of neatness, and Hannah’s garden lay in the light of the setting sun, displaying a fine variety of fall flowers. At the door of the shed, which Ralph had put up for the stove during warm weather, stood Hannah and the children, and they hastened down to the river to welcome the returned travelers.

They had much to say about the railroad, and glowing reports of the sudden fortunes made in the mining countries were on their tongues.

“The best mining and the safest and surest returns,” said Hannah, uneasily, “are in the gold and silver of our corn and wheat-fields.”

“I’m satisfied here,” said Ralph, “or I would be if I had some machinery and a good market for my produce.”

"Those things will come in due time," said Hannah; "waiting is the hardest, and generally the first, lesson we have to learn."

"There's another family moving to the village," said Mr. Hopkins—"your sort of folks, too; for Rogers told me the man had been a school-teacher."

This was good news, and, unlike some gossip, it was true, and more was true:—the Porters were church-members, and when, by the help of their neighbors, their log house was raised, they resolved to use their lower room on Sunday morning for a sort of prayer-meeting and sermon-reading, and, besides themselves and the Mackeys, the Rogers, Crane and Hopkins families usually came in, so Sunday seemed more like a holy day. The children of the neighborhood still continued to walk out to Hannah's for instruction, but in the winter Mr. Porter intended to open a school in the mill. The new settler had some knowledge of surgery and medicine, and was altogether a valuable acquisition to the place.

Amid these hopeful circumstances, Ralph completed his preparations for his new house, and early in November a group of willing workers rolled log after log to its place, and when Ralph

had set door and window frames, they roofed the building and left its owner to finish it off. The interstices of the logs were what is called "mud chinked," but Ralph had brought some lime down from his boating expedition, and he whitewashed the lines of chinking and the door and window frames, so the house presented an unusually fine appearance. When Hannah's taste had arranged the inside of the dwelling, it was as pleasant an abode as is often found in new countries. The little place in which they had been living was set close beside the log house, that it might form part of the same establishment. A winter of comfort and quiet seemed before them, when, the last day of November, Ralph, in repairing some parts of the mill for Mr. Crane, fractured his own leg in two places instead of mending the defective beam. Mr. Porter acted as surgeon, though not as skillfully as if the injury were more simple and himself better instructed; and again a messenger hastened to prepare Hannah for the spectacle of Ralph carried home on a stretcher. Ralph was one of those unfortunate men who are constantly getting nearly killed. The future looked darker than ever before to Hannah when she saw her husband helpless on his bed in that new poor

country, and could not conceal from herself that there was every likelihood of his being lame for life; and when their farm afforded more than enough employment for a vigorous man, what was a cripple to do? However, as heretofore, this good woman was enabled to cast all her care on the Lord, knowing that he cared for her.

Neighborly kindness was not wanting, for the Mackeys had shown themselves too friendly to lack friends, and in the West there is in all settlements a family feeling and oneness among the settlers unknown to the more independent dwellers at the East. Common trials make common ties. But when nearest neighbors are three miles away, and all have their hands full of work, and winter, cold and stormy, is coming on, it must be admitted that there are drawbacks to polite attentions. Mrs. Hopkins conferred one of the greatest favors on Hannah by sending Semantha to stay with her for the winter. With this arrangement Semantha was perfectly delighted; we doubt whether she had grace to be duly grieved over Ralph's heavy affliction.

"Won't you want Semantha yourself?" asked Hannah.

"It will do her a world of good to be with

you," said the father; "and even if we did need her, it would not be a straw in the way of her coming, for words can't tell what we owe you, Mis' Mackey."

So Hannah arranged the "Hope" part of her habitation as a sleeping-room for Semantha and the children, and thus, with the shed to use for a washing-house, she had plenty of space for domestic labor and the accommodation of her family. The men near made what they called a "frolie," and cut Hannah wood enough to last all winter, and put it under shelter close by her house; Hannah had a fire-place in the log dwelling; her stove in the shed; fuel and food enough. Mr. Crane volunteered to see that she had enough of wheat and corn ground, her winter vegetables were housed for her in the new cellar, Mrs. Hopkins came and aided in salting the meat for winter, and Mr. Porter came every other day to visit Ralph, making up in attention and care what he may have lacked in knowledge.



CHAPTER V.

HE INCREASETH STRENGTH.

AMID all her trials and vicissitudes how clearly did Hannah see the Lord remembering mercy in the midst of judgment! How much might have been worse than it was, and yet, especially to the mind of an eastern woman used to the comforts of life, how severe were her daily labors and troubles! Semantha was more used to hardships than Hannah, and did not shrink from any toil; and early in the gray dawn of the winter mornings these two would rise while Ralph and the children were asleep, stir up the fires, go out to feed the chickens, the cow and the horses, axe in hand go down to the spring and break a place in the ice for the beasts to drink (for the bank was too steep to water them at the river), milk the cow, clear the drifted snow from about the house, and then return to perform the

more feminine yet undeniably laborious occupations of getting breakfast, cleaning up the house, dressing the children and waiting on the invalid. Ralph was very desponding, and Hannah bravely put the best side of matters out in her conversations with him ; but he could not fail to see that the overworked woman grew thin and haggard, that her step was slow and her eyes were heavy, and, as he lay helpless on his bed, he tortured himself with imaginations of what would be his fate, and the fate of his children, if the faithful wife and mother should in some midnight silence suddenly slip from them to the land that lies beyond the grave.

After all the other labors of the day, at night the animals were to be fed and watered again, the milking to be repeated, the wood, kindling and water for the morrow to be brought in.

What a comfort it was to Hannah after these toils were all ended, when Semantha had cleared away the supper and washed the dishes, and she herself had undressed the children and placed them in the little chairs their father had made for them, on each side the hearth, to warm their feet, that she could take her Bible and read a comforting chapter and hold the evening worship of the

family! When all had gone to bed but herself, she would read still farther, finding ever new consolation, and on some evenings she relieved her burdened mind by writing letters to the friends in her old home, whose love she knew was yet warm to her and whose sympathy would go out to her in her troubles. Not that Hannah wrote complaining letters, but while she wrote both of the sorrows and blessings of her present lot, her friends could not but see that her burden was a heavy one, and sometimes to Miss Gordon she spoke the fear which came to her, as to Ralph, if while he was helpless she should die in that rude, lonely spot, what would become of Norman and Lucy? In her very heart she held the faith and trust of other days, but sometimes fears prevailed over faith.

By February, Ralph was able to hobble about on a crutch, and venturing outside the house, trusting too much to the mildness of a thawing, sunny day, he took cold, and the next misfortune was the inflammatory rheumatism. When writing to Miss Gordon of this new trouble, we must admit that Hannah wept, and her tears marked all the written pages. Added to all other difficulties, Ralph now gave way completely, and declared it was no use to try to get better, or to

succeed in anything; he was a doomed man, and had better die as soon as possible. He groaned and moped and could not eat, and as between fever and pain he wasted away, Hannah felt sure that unless a speedy change came he must die.

Help, being thus desperately needed, came in an unexpected time and way. Hannah, exhausted by a night of wakefulness and a day of heavy labor, had gone to lie down for a while on Semantha's bed, and was just dropping into a doze, when in that uncertain state between wakefulness and sleep she thought she heard the sound of wheels, of voices and the tread of horses.

"Oh, Mis' Mackey!" cried Semantha, putting her head in at the door, "you'd better get up; here's company. *I never see 'em before.*"

Hannah rose, pulled straight her dress and passed her hands over her hair; then she went to the door and looked out, and there was Louis Schepberg coolly unharnessing a pair of bay mules from a covered wagon.

Louis fastened his mules by their halters, put the harness in the wagon, threw down before the beasts a bundle of fodder, and then walked leisurely toward the house. Seeing Hannah, speechless from astonishment, standing in the

doorway, a broad smile dawned upon his face; he held out his hand, saying in his usual slow tone,

"How are you, Mrs. Mackey? how's the family? I've been meaning to come this good while, and now I'm here."

"I never was so glad to see any one in my life!" cried Hannah. "Have you really come to stay?"

"'Twouldn't be worth while to come so far just for a visit," said Louis. "It is so lonesome home without all of you that I couldn't stand it. I concluded to emigrate too."

"Did you know Ralph was sick?"

"Well, yes. I went to see if Miss Gordon had heard from you, and she gave me your last letter, and that hurried me up a bit."

"And how did you come?"

"Well, I took the cars to Kansas City, and there I found the roads was hard and open, and I got the mules and the wagon and came on."

"I must get you some dinner the first thing," said Hannah, so rejoiced at this accession to their forces as to forget that she was tired. Ralph had eaten nothing all day, but Louis' arrival so comforted him that he told Hannah that she could bring him some food when Louis was eating.

To have Louis with them was a great relief to Hannah; he took up all Ralph's out-of-door labor, and prevented the Mackeys from further depending on their neighbors for assistance. It was not long before Hannah saw that, in his stay at Kansas City, Louis had caught the contagion of the region, gold fever. He sat hours telling Ralph the wonderful tales he had heard of cities springing up as with the magic of Aladdin's lamp; of men who went out in the morning poor and returned at night rich; of fortunes rolled up in a few months; of lucky hits with spade or pickaxe, which flung up the price of a homestead or a carriage and horses. Such stories had moved his slow nature far beyond its wont, and though he had come out to find his friends and live with them, Hannah discerned that he would fain urge them to another remove.

"He that maketh haste to be rich falleth into a snare," quoth Hannah.

"Hastens in an unlawful way," said Ralph, quickly; "the gold is there, and for the good and use of the human race, and why may not we as well as others dig it out?"

Ralph did not look much like digging or doing anything; he was emaciated and feeble, and only

the most hopeful could look for restoration for his shrunken and shortened limb.

“Yes,” said Louis, slowly, “the gold is there; everybody says so. The gold is getting taken out; men are getting rich twice as fast as one can on a farm in the woods.”

Louis seemed to think that every one who went to this new El Dorado returned home laden with precious spoils; he forgot the white corpses lying stark under the chilly moon—corpses of those who had died on the way. He forgot the unburied skeletons of those who had fallen in secret places by accident or fraud. He forgot the pitiful hosts who had languished away in illness and homesickness, neglected in their fellows’ greed for gain. Hannah thought of these things, magnified them most likely; she repeated Scripture about being content with such things as we have, and olden proverbs about “rolling stones that are fated to gather no moss,” but as spring came, when the anniversary of their settlement was approaching, there were facts more potent to silence her than any of Louis’ arguments.

Louis had worked faithfully as one of themselves; he had put into the household stock the stores he brought; he made no mention of present

gain; he had expended considerable money on his wagon and the mules, and to what end? When Ralph was able to get about, no one could dispute that he was hopelessly crippled; a man who could only hobble on a cane could do but little farm work, and the place was not large or productive enough to make it possible to hire Louis to take charge at decent wages, and besides the Swede had evidently no genius for farming. As all these dismal thoughts pressed upon Ralph he yielded again to despair, wringing his hands and gnashing his teeth in his misery sometimes when Louis was not by, and groaning through the dreary nights. As before, Hannah's courage rose with the emergency, and she came to the rescue with a well-defended plan.

"Ralph, we'll sell out here and go on with Louis to Corral City; he wants to go, and it is wrong to keep him here, and if we stay he is determined to stay with us. Indeed, I don't know what we would do without him. You cannot farm any more."

"And I cannot dig for gold," cried Ralph.

"That is true, but we are well fitted up for housekeeping, and we can take our goods and I will keep boarders. You will soon be well

enough, only your lameness ; high prices are paid for board out there, and between us we can make a good living, I dare say. You can teach school if there are any out there who want to learn, and you are so handy there will be plenty of things you can do to earn something. Let us talk to Louis about it."

Louis was glad enough to be talked to on this subject ; it was just what he wanted ; he said they could take most of the household goods in his wagon. Hannah could drive the mules in the wagon, and he and Ralph could ride the horses. Louis was sure they should all be rich in a very little time, able to live where they pleased and teach the children all there was worth learning. These were bright visions, but while Hannah did not discourage them openly, she was secretly anxious and unhappy. She felt that they would be dependent on Louis for much aid, and she could not forget that until recently he had been a stranger, and that they had no claim on him ; he was a lonesome old fellow, and seemed to have a brotherly love for Ralph, yet she did not like that Ralph should be always the one to receive favors. They were going to a wild, rude, far-distant place, and if Ralph should die, how pain-

ful would be her portion, far from her relatives and dearest friends! These anxieties, which were too bitter for Hannah to carry, she took to the Lord, whose care had never failed her, and cried to him for help and the guiding of his hand in all the weary way. She had often said that her life seemed one long train of special providences—perhaps it was because with the eyes of gratitude and faith she was ever watching for special providences. Never did any come to her with a fuller sense of God's listening ear and granting heart than these which hung about their second removal westward. She had already advertised their little "farm, with its improvements, its crop of wheat in the ground, seed and fowls on hand," and all that could fairly be said about it, in the "Topeka Herald," and had begun to make some of their preparations for moving, when Ralph and Louis, who were making a fence about the garden behind the house, called to her that a stranger was coming up the wood-path, most likely a purchaser for the place. She glanced out the door; the stranger was a tall, pleasant-looking man. Old recollections stirred at sight of him, thoughts of her father, her uncles; she hurried to the threshold; two little girls followed

the new-comer; their eyes met; there could be no mistake; the old affection cherished about one hearth in their childhood was a faithful diviner. Hannah rushed forward, crying, "Robert, Robert, brother Robert!"

"See there!" said Louis, in slow amazement, pointing to Hannah, who, stooping in the path, clasped the little girls in her arms.

"It is my brother-in-law!" said Ralph, letting go the post he was holding, and seizing his cane to go round to welcome his guests.

Robert Gray had a sad story to tell. Six months before he had lost his wife, and after that he could not content himself in his old home; everything reminded him of his bereavement. Moreover, he knew of no one but his sister Hannah to whom he could entrust his motherless girls, and he resolved to sell out in Scotland and go make a home in the far West, near the Mackeys. Just as he was leaving Scotland he received Hannah's letter telling of Ralph's fractured limb, and at Kansas City he saw in a paper the advertisement of their place. He hurried on, fearing to find them already gone.

In a little time he was informed of all their plans, and they agreed very well with his own

wishes ; in the course of his travels, and while he delayed at Kansas to buy a wagon and team to bring him to his sister's home, he had inquired carefully of the resources, fertility and prospects of that part of the country to which he was traveling, and had made up his mind that the best investment for what capital he had would be the lumber business, and he had partly concluded an arrangement with a business man in Kansas City, who could furnish about as much capital as himself, to erect a saw mill near Corral City, and prepare to furnish wagons, houses and furniture.

"And what sort of a person is this stranger?" asked Hannah, anxiously.

"I made inquiries among leading people at Kansas to whom he referred me, and found him well recommended," replied her brother.

"I hope he is a Christian man," said Hannah ; "an irreligious partner would be a great temptation, especially in that part of the country where Sabbath-breaking, profanity and unfair speculating and bargaining are rife."

"Mother all over again," said her brother, smiling. "I am glad to tell you, Hannah, that he is a good man. We got acquainted returning from church ; we were at the same hotel, and next

day began to talk over the prospects of the West, and so approached our bargain."

"And do you think Corral City will be a good place for the little girls?" asked Hannah.

"I shall not fear for them under your care, and they with your two children can form a beginning of a school for Ralph. Besides, if we have the mill and the furniture making, there will be plenty of nice work about it for him."

"We shall be a very respectable force of what the people about here call 'Methodists'—that is, religious, church-going people. Five of us," said Ralph, "besides the children."

Louis Schepberg, with a thoughtful kindness, had left the long-severed relations to talk by themselves, and had busied himself bringing up, unharnessing and unpacking Mr. Gray's wagon, while Lucy and Norman had shown the newly-found cousins all there was to be seen about their home. Hannah had worked while she talked, and now had ready a bountiful meal, to which all sat down.

It was arranged that Mr. Gray should return to Kansas City, starting next day, using Louis' fresh mules instead of his own tired horses, and should try and bring with him a purchaser for Ralph's

farm ; and if he could conclude his bargain with the lumbermen, they would all start at the earliest possible moment for Corral City. Hannah could no longer consider her place lonely, for her nieces, girls of nine and eleven years, were bright, hopeful, talkative creatures, and as they went about the house, aiding in the work with womanly ways that showed how careful had been their lost mother's training, they told their aunt much that she had longed to hear of Scotland, the friends and relatives there, their past lives and the changes that had lately come to them. To see these children, to talk with them, to unpack their boxes, handling the books, the clothes, the hundred little treasures and mementoes that had just come from the never-forgotten native land, was almost like a visit there ; it brought a fresh life to Hannah, and for a few days she was so full of joyful excitement that she could not sleep.

Acquaintanceship with Helen and Alice Gray provoked Hannah's scholars to renewed effort ; when they saw how far beyond them in studies the little Scotch girls were, the Western pride was aroused, and lessons were learned with unwonted zeal. Most of Hannah's pupils had been attending the day and Sabbath schools opened by

the Porters, and had only returned to Hannah for a few times as the spring was appearing. The little school was different indeed from what it had been a year before. All the children could read well, two or three could write legibly if not elegantly, three had made acquaintance with the first four rules of arithmetic, several could add or subtract. Semantha and one other were studying geography, and, best of all, Hannah could ask questions for half an hour on Scripture topics, receiving ready and intelligent answers.

Among the older people there was an improvement. Hannah hoped that Job Hopkins and his wife had become Christians. They appeared penitent for sin, anxious to do right, were punctual at any religious meeting that was held, had family prayer and kept the Sabbath. Job had sent to the city for Bibles, hymn books and a copy of "Pilgrim's Progress," and the tracts which Hannah gave the family were carefully sewed together and often studied. "My Sarah Ann" and her husband had accepted a Testament and one or two other books from Hannah, read them, and attended the Sunday meetings at the Porters' house. Several families had Bibles, the miller took a newspaper, and the men and women were renewing

their knowledge of reading. Truly the neighborhood had improved beyond Hannah's hopes, and she and Ralph felt sorry to leave it.

Semantha looked with envious eyes at the patchwork of the little Grays, at the quilts they had made, and their beautiful sewing generally; and when they offered to give her calico, help her make a quilt and teach her in needle-work, she almost entirely abandoned her home and her mother to spend her time with her new teachers.

Semantha was much quieter in her manners and more correct in speech since her long stay with Hannah. The desire of her heart had been accomplished—her father had made a mantel-piece for the chimney, and she had ornamented it with articles made under Hannah's instructions; she had been given two pictures, and framed them neatly with her own hands. Job Hopkins, much encouraged by his wife's reformation and his daughter's improvement, was working with a hearty good will, improving and clearing his land, and talking of enlarging his house. The three girls had been liberally furnished with flower seeds by Hannah, and, as soon as spring weather was settled, meant to have a flower garden after the pattern of hers.

It was a pleasant sight to Hannah, looking from her window, to see Semantha, Helen, Alice and her own little Lucy on the rustic seat out of doors, in the mild spring sunlight, sewing and chattering; Semantha receiving directions with all humility, and doing credit to her young instructors by her rapid improvement. At night she was forced to go home, as there was no place for her to sleep at Mrs. Mackey's; but early in the morning she was back, saying, after Hannah moved "there was no telling when she would see anybody or learn anything again."

Robert Gray was no loiterer; he made as quick a journey as regard for the beasts he drove allowed, and returned, his preparations completed, his partner with him, and also a man to buy Ralph's place.

Meanwhile, the din of preparation had been heard in the forest home; boxes had been packed, cooking done, the household goods prepared for moving. Our travelers had now quite a train—three covered wagons, each with its strong team, Ralph's two horses for riding, and the cow, which Hannah insisted upon taking. They would move slowly, and if the cow gave signs of exhaustion, she could be sold to some settler on the way.

As long as it was possible to keep her, Hannah thought they could not be deprived of milk.

Good-byes were said once more. Life is to some, more than others, a series of long partings, of farewells said and hands clasped for the last time; some, more than others, are pilgrims on the earth, and to them the rest that *remaineth*, the home on *eternal* foundations, the land where none are strangers and wayfarers stopping for a night, may be sweeter than to most.

Along the Western prairies, through the mountain defiles and by the lonely rivers, where art and human life have not yet broken the primal stillness, move daily trains which would in cities call forth crowds of gazers. The canvas-covered wagons, the strong ungroomed teams, the household furnishings piled high, with soft places made of beds and bedding to furnish seats or napping-places for women and children; pots, pails and kettles swinging under the wagons; beasts led behind, and sturdy, dusty toilers on foot going beside,—these make up the more striking points of an emigrant train. Many of these have I seen creeping westward, hopeful, if weary, going to plant the seeds of empire, and with dauntless courage watch their growth, until they can sit

down under the shadow of the tree. Many who go out thus, a small band, with property nothing in comparison with the rich man's hoard, shall grow to numerous families, their wealthy dwellings shall dot the broad acres they till and own, they shall be the millionaires of great cities younger than themselves, and some, wise and happy, shall be the founders and nourishers of strong churches and noble *Bible-reading* common schools.

Others, alas! are doomed to die like Israel in the wilderness. Poverty, and loss, and pain, like strong armies, conquer them, their few possessions scattered to the winds, their hopes frustrated, their hearts broken, their graves unknown,—this their unwritten history. Yet this must ever be; through these vicissitudes dominion is extended, and thus are rocked the cradles of mighty States. Ever must there be bold hearts who lead the forlorn hope, who cast themselves into the deadly breach, and who make their bodies the foothold by which others shall scale the lofty heights.

We have seen trains going out, bound for the lands of the sunset, pressing toward the golden gates of the West; we have seen them also turning toward the East, men wan with fever, shaken with chills, terrified by Indian atrocities, unable

to bear the unexpected burden and heat of the day, reduced in numbers by relentless death; we have seen them toiling through the twilight shadows, their visions of the new Arcadia perished like the purple mists of morning, asking now only a refuge in the country from whence they came out.

In the strife where some achieve victory and some yield defeated, hope animates the entering athlete; and these friends of ours went out full of hope, expecting to labor hard and under much that was discouraging and depressing, but ultimately to hold their own and obtain the end of their desires. To the four children of the party the prospect was cloudless. Before them lay only unlimited picnic, riding and walking, and they scrambled to their places with shouts of glee, waving their hands again and again to Samantha and her sisters, who stood crying over the parting under trees just unfolding their spring-time green.

It was with mingled emotions that Ralph and Hannah looked their last at the ingenious mechanism which had brought them to their first Western home. The cabin of the "Hope" had long been their dwelling; the flat boats which

Ralph had put in working-order lay on the river below the house. Long labor had been spent upon the "Hope," great plans embarked in her; she had served them well, but here they parted. There was another tie closer by far; there, surrounded by its little fence, marked by the white head-board and covered already with early flowers, was the grave of little Robbie. Hannah looked about and wondered what on the resurrection morning should meet Robbie's awakening eyes; then she remembered that his would be an upward gaze toward Him who called the little children, so she checked her tears, and turning away left the grave of little Robbie to be watched by the angels.

Of all the long progress of these modern pilgrims from the log home to Corral City, it would be idle to tell. There were Sabbath-halts, when the nine people, great and small, who composed the party, had meetings for prayer, reading, singing and religious conversation, which they greatly enjoyed. Their camp on these occasions was a pleasant sight; booths for shelter were made, the wagons placed in a semi-circle, the fire built at a convenient distance, the horses tethered and turned out to graze, and the cow feeding near by,

with a social feeling peculiar to cows who are kindly treated, her bell tinkling as she moved, and as ever and anon she lifted her mild eyes to look for her mistress or the children.

France proved years ago that the Sabbath was a necessity to the human race. Emigrants prove it also. Those who press toward their destination with no resting day in seven wear out themselves, mind and body, and destroy their teams; while those who observe a day of holy rest and religious services pursue the weekly journey comforted and strengthened.

On bright days the slow traveling was not unpleasant; everybody rode and walked by turns as they chose, the children gathered bunches of flowers, and the noonday rest was by some running brook. It was a charming experience to lie down at night where one could gaze at the circling stars, or enjoy the beauty of the moonlight until sweet sleep came, and the continued and vigorous health of the whole party proved that this return to primitive habits was far from injurious. There were rainy days, it is true, when every one was damp and uncomfortable, but those who live out of doors do not take cold easily, and no harm was done, but, on the contrary, the rain

proved a blessing in laying the dust and keeping full the brooks. The last day's journey was a long one. They had rested over Sunday as usual, though many teams passed them pressing into Corral City, and refusing to delay for sacred time when their destination was so nearly reached. Our friends made an early start, but the moon was high and they had traveled several hours by its clear light when at last they halted and lit their camp-fire within the limits of Corral City. The high-sounding name of the place had led Helen and Alice at least to expect a town of some importance of appearance and architectural pretensions, and when next morning they walked a little way from their encampment with Louis, they could not conceal their disgust at sheds, tents, shanties and straggling, rickety, clap-boarded structures which elsewhere would hardly be called houses at all. Dogs, horses, mules, rough-looking people of almost every nationality, filled the irregular streets; shot-guns and bowie-knives were plenty, oaths plentier, and bad whisky the plentiest of all. Ralph's band of pioneers was not more motley than others, comprising, as it did, in its nine members, Scotch, English, Swedish and Yankee.

Helen and Alice gladly returned to their aunt's side, having found numbers of men scattered on walks and boxes, both drunk and sleeping; having seen a fight, heard of a murder, and even at that early hour found preparations going on for a cock-fight and for a trial at a building of the composite order of architecture, consisting of logs, planks and canvas, and dignified by the name of a court-house, where questions such as the present, concerning the right to some mining tools and the opening of a new vein, were in dispute from sunrise to sunset.

We shall not say how many "longing, loving, lingering looks behind" Hannah cast toward the East that day, but she kept her troubles and her longings to herself, and by night affairs were more settled and prospects brightened. Mr. Randall, Robert Gray's partner, found that their machinery had already arrived in charge of his two nephews, the site for the mill was selected, there was plenty of work to be done, and it needed only the presence of the owners to begin operations. The house was to be near the mill, and one poorly-constructed building was immediately secured, with the prospect of adding to it a larger one just as poorly made, for at Corral

City nobody has time to do anything well, and four walls and a roof, even if all are in imminent danger of falling together, are quite good enough to live in.

A much larger and better dwelling, under the hands of some benighted masculine, ignorant of the amenities of domestic life, would not have looked nearly as well as did Hannah's new home the first evening of their settlement in Corral City. It had been a hard day's work for Hannah and the little girls, but they had worked faithfully and cheerfully. The men of the family had all been fully occupied securing lumber, workmen, title-deeds, and making bargains. The indoor work had all to be accomplished by three pairs of industrious feminine hands. Three pairs of hands can do a great deal, however, between nine in the morning and nine at night; and windows were cleaned, curtains put up, doors and floors scrubbed, beds made, and a packing-box was converted to a cupboard. Hannah developed a genius for putting up shelves, and her nieces for manufacturing footstools and toilette stands. The great event of the day was Helen's performance of upsetting and discharging a loaded rifle; but though everybody was frightened, nobody was

hurt, and the neighborhood was duly made aware that the new-comers possessed the powder and shot without which existence in Corral City is supposed to be impossible.

In the course of a few weeks an awkward addition to Ralph's house was built, consisting of a dining room, with a long table and benches of unplanned plank, a kitchen without a chimney, the stove-pipe boldly thrusting itself into the street through the wall, and two bedrooms guiltless of lath and plaster. One might almost defy any woman to make such an establishment look comfortable or respectable; but Hannah Mackey achieved the mighty task, and by the six day-boarders whom she entertained in addition to her own family, her residence was supposed to be something nearly palatial—not that these people had never seen anything better, but they had been condemned to the roughness of Corral City for many months, and by comparison Hannah's neatness and refinement were perfectly wonderful.

The evening was the time for the instruction of the children, and while Hannah sewed Ralph taught his four pupils. The room where they thus gathered was garnished with all the family treasures, contained the swinging bookshelves

which Ralph made, and the barrel chair and hour-glass work-table he prepared for Hannah. The scene was pleasant there in the evenings—the four little students, their teacher, the matron at her needle, Robert Gray reading, and Louis, of a more sluggish disposition, invariably dozing in his chair. But the hour came when lessons were ended, and then followed family prayer. This was conducted in turn by Ralph and Robert, and was never delayed by the presence of guests. A few words of introduction were spoken, the visitor invited to unite with them in worship, the Bible was read, and all their wants, hopes, fears and thanksgivings were made known to God in prayer. This, with the constant practice of a blessing at the table, made them a marked family. An account of the “pious doings” at the Mackeys’ spread from mouth to mouth, and we are sorry to have to tell that instead of their religion being welcomed, as a general thing they were denominated, in the third person, as “a set of canting, whining, preaching, hypocritical Methodists.”



CHAPTER VI.

ENEMIES MADE TO BE AT PEACE.

BEFORE the advance of the white man mile by mile the bee flies to build its cells in hollow trees, and the buffalo in sullen pride retreats to more distant feeding-grounds. Pressing close on the progressive bee and the retiring bison, wherever man goes go the emissaries of the evil one. The cask of liquid fire, the pack of cards, the poisonous volume of infidelity, profanity and obscenity reach the westward station long before the Sabbath service, the Bible and the avowed Christian. Why is this? The religious world seems woefully ignorant that hundreds and thousands of men, especially the young and ardent, are yearly going where the restraints of civilized and Christian life are thrown aside, where vice is untrammelled, where piety is unknown. Do these hundreds and thousands think they are neglected, forgotten and unprayed

for by the great assemblies that worship in the more favored East? They have reason for such thought.

It should be the instant and tireless effort of the Church to hold step with the westward advance of the nation. The banner of the cross should go forward with the first ranks of those who go to fell the forests, to break the soil for gold or for seed, who hasten to the hunter's camp, or to lay across the countless acres of mountain and prairie the iron path, the bond of States. At every sacrifice religion should keep pace with emigration; the Church should not dare to be one hour behind; she should sift her numbers for men, and pour out her treasures of money to station far away teachers and preachers, Bibles and tracts, to welcome the coming wanderer from the East. Is this done? Is there a tithe of the needful effort in this direction expended? No! cry mighty stretches of the country where the gospel has never come, and the name of God is heard only in oaths. No! cry rude towns teeming with people, where Sabbath call and preached truth have never been heard. No! echoes from thousands of graves where the dead are buried without prayer or psalm; and No! cry young hearts

grown hard away from the home hearth—hearts astray for ever from the early faith—hearts which should have been harvested for heaven, and whose eternal loss the Lord lays at the door of his recreant Church.

In the city where the Mackeys established themselves were drinking-saloons and gambling-hells, were the false prophets of atheism, of Universalism, of every doctrine that emanates from the pit of destruction; but there the word of God had never been scattered, the glad news of salvation had never been proclaimed, no church, no school, no missionary. How shall these exiles hear without a preacher? and, O Church sitting at ease, how shall they preach except they be sent? Ah, how beautiful upon those far-off spurs of the Rocky Mountains would be their feet who bring good tidings of great joy!

Our band of Christian emigrants, few in number but strong in faith, felt that they had a mission to their neighbors; they desired to spread the glad news themselves had heard and accepted. Their plan was not to thrust religion down any one's throat, to push it ostentatiously into notice, but to make themselves and their belief acceptable.

In the East, Hannah had been accustomed to see strangers visited and welcomed to a new place, but this was not the fashion at Corral City. What women were out there were shy of the new-comers, and to get acquainted and to be in a position to do good, Hannah saw that she must make the first advances. She was anxious to get together a Sunday-school, and expected to do something toward this by means of Helen, Alice and Lucy, who were to invite what children they met to come in and see them and look at some pictures on Sunday.

Robert Gray began his efforts at humanizing and Christianizing his fellow-townsmen, by having a notice printed on a board and hung upon his mill, to the effect that a reading-room would be open from eight to eight on Sundays, and everybody was welcome to come in. In the window he hung some newspapers, both in English and German.

In the course of a month or two there were ten or a dozen pretty constant visitors at the reading-room, and twice each Sabbath Hannah's dining-room accommodated fifteen or more children, whom she and Ralph instructed. She had read of the use of the blackboard in Sunday-

schools, and Ralph prepared one, on which each Sabbath he chalked a lesson in his best style. And now, when Ralph and Robert went to the post-office or the stores, they usually found somebody ready to dispute on religious subjects, and uphold some "ism," and about them would gather a crowd, interested in the argument. This love of disputation gave Robert a bright idea; he offered to have at his mill a debating-club, where questions could be proposed and discussed in an orderly manner. He opened this plan politely and with many compliments to the most eager arguers, and it was well received; those who liked disputing, thought themselves skilled in logic or had any theories to put forward pronounced themselves ready to join the club, and Robert craftily had the man most likely to be contumacious in the society appointed president, thus putting him upon his good behavior. A secretary was also elected, and short accounts of the debates and speakers were sometimes published in a poor little newspaper, the literary and political organ of Corral City.

Ralph and Robert sometimes found themselves ludicrously misunderstood, as when, one day, a tall, gruff miner addressed them at the post-office,

saying, "You 'uns had better keep down at your own place; we don't want any of your sort out at Corral City."

"And what sort are we that we must be denied the freedom of Corral City?" said Ralph.

"Why, you're saints, and we won't have saints out here; it makes too much of a mix. You'll be bringing your elders and your prophet out here next, and we won't put up with it."

"What kind of saints do you take us for?" asked Ralph.

"Why, Mormon saints; there ain't but one kind, be there? You are Joe Smith men, and preach up bigamy and all that."

"You are very much mistaken, my friend; we are no more Mormons than you are. We do not come from Salt Lake City, and never expect to go there. Moreover, we believe the Mormon doctrine false and bigamy a great crime, and if we are saints at all, it is of a kind who desire to live decent and honest lives, and get to heaven when we die."

"Well, that looks pooty fair; sure that's what you mean?"

"Yes; our opinions and practices are open to everybody's inspection."

“Well, being as you ain’t Mormons, and only a fair, square kind of saints, after all, I ain’t ag’in your being here, and if you come along by my diggings, you may turn in and stop a while, for all I care.”

“If you’ll walk round and see my mill, I’ll give you a Chicago paper,” said Ralph.

A paper from the East was a temptation to a man who did not see one once a year, and having looked at the mill, he received the paper and a little Testament, which Ralph handed him, saying, carelessly, “If you’ll look through that, you will see what we believe; and if there’s anything in it that does not suit you, you can mention it the next time you come.”

“That’s fair and above board,” said the flattered miner; “I’ll look it over sure enough.”

Other opposers were not so easily silenced. The reading-room and debating-club created a panic among the liquor-dealers. They called a meeting of their craft at the court house, to discuss the proceedings of the mill men. “If we allow them to stay here, we’re hurting our trade,” said a burly rumseller, who constituted himself chairman of the meeting. “Wherever religion comes in, the price of whisky goes down. There’ll

be ten per cent. off our sales in the course of a year, and I move that we order 'em to vamose."

"No man has any right to come here and set himself ag'in a fair, honest business," said another dealer in the "ardent." "They expect us to support them, and so they ought to support us. If we buy their lumber, or their wagons and furniture, they ought to buy our brandy and gin, and I move that we give 'em a choice, to do as other people do, and support the institutions of Corral City, or take 'emselves off where there ain't nobody to be interfered with."

"They're the stingiest critters ever I see," said a third; "they hav'n't bought a pint of ale nor a glass of whisky since they set foot here. They ought to be put down, and I move we do it."

"See here!" roared a fourth speaker. "They've taken away custom from me already by their club and their reading-room. Debating-clubs and reading-rooms are dead ag'in us. It is all a piece of robbery; they might just as well break open my shop, or pick my pocket, and I move we sue 'em."

This fourth motion met general approval, and there was a chorus of "Sue 'em, sue 'em!"

"Yes, let's sue 'em. That's the thing; but the

next question is, *What shall we sue 'em for?* Business is business. I'm for suing, but I want to have it put plain what we shall sue 'em about!"

The man looked about triumphantly; he was a broken-down, whisky-ruined lawyer, half intoxicated at that moment, and the blaze of his legal acumen quite dazzled himself.

"Why, sue 'em for getting up clubs and reading-rooms, things we don't allow in Corral City!"

"Sue 'em for spoiling trade!"

"Sue 'em for being everlastin' mean and stingy!"

"Sue 'em for bringing in temperance notions!"

"Yes, yes, it's unfair of 'em, and much ag'in the prospects of Corral City," said the lawyer, steadying himself by holding to a neighbor's shoulder; "but, my friends, there ain't anything in the Constitution of the United States ag'in any of these things. We must sue 'em for something ag'in law, and what have they done ag'in *that?* Won't somebody mention something?"

But nobody had anything to mention, and after a noisy dispute over what they could and what they could not do, they followed the example of the Jewish Sanhedrim of eighteen centuries past, and concluded to straightway threaten them, and

let them go; and if there is any force in precedents and ancient usages, they certainly had them. To render their future course plainer they concluded to go and take a drink.

Robert Gray did not fail to hear of these proceedings, and when the affair was discussed by the hangers-on at the post-office, he pulled a little book from his pocket, saying, "This reminds me of something I read of as having happened nearly two thousand years ago;" and amid profound attention, he read the account of Demetrius and his companion craftsmen.

"Well, that comes pretty pat," said the president of the debating-club. "I'll admit that there are *some* things to the point in the New Testament, but as to its being all you claim for it, that I *don't* admit. Now, the very name of *Bible* shows its style, *Bi-bil*, that is, bills laid by, old trash got together and bound up for reading for them that likes it; that's what *Bibil* means."

"Aye, aye, that's the talk," said some bystanders; others laughed; one man cried, "You're out there, old chap. Bible means 'the book;' it's foreign language; know enough for that."

"No *foreign* for me," said another; "I belong to the old Know-nothing party, I do."

“As for me,” said Ralph, aptly, “I am ready, like the apostle, to know nothing but Christ Jesus crucified for sinners.”

“And for my part,” added Robert, “whatever our excellent president may say about *Bi-bils*, I’m ready to risk my course on that same old book, sure that I’ll come out right if I follow what it teaches.”

“There’s one thing that can’t be got over,” said a man lately from the East; “those people and nations who live by it are always brave and trustworthy.”

In this last remark the people of Corral City practically agreed; the mill firm had the confidence of the whole community, and prospered in spite of the liquor-selling faction. Not that people generally can live on confidence, and the firm of Gray & Mackey proved that neither can men live on lumber; they had at first such an experience with lumber as Midas had with gold; in lumber they worked, and lumber they got in pay; they were forced to take that or nothing; they got more on hand than they could use or dispose of, and while lumber was plenty, money was scarce, and if it had not been for Hannah’s venture in the boarding-house line, they would

have been at loss to purchase provisions. There came a time at last when lumber began to pay in better fashion; money came in, the business was extended, the mill and machinery made better, a finer kind of work done, and the improvement of affairs was indicated by repairs and improvements on the dwelling-house, and houses were then the last thing to be taken care of by Corral citizens generally.

Soon after they reached this home, Ralph wrote to Dr. Gordon, asking that his church would furnish them a box of books, tracts and papers for their missionary work. These duly came, prepaid, and with them several maps, a Bible dictionary and some charts for object-lessons. The church at home, having thus given, became interested in the welfare of Corral City, and all that the Mackeys had to write was read with interest, and their work was aided by advice and instruction from the pastor and his daughter.

In the fall Hannah received the first wedding-cards that had ever been sent her—Miss Gordon had married a young minister, Mr. Allen. Almost the next mail after the arrival of the wedding-cards brought the following production from Samantha Hopkins, evidently written at

Mr. Crane's mill, on a leaf of his ledger, in red ink, liberally sanded; the missive being sealed with four prodigious wafers. We give it entire, with the remark that Hannah was not a little proud of her old pupil's proficiency as thus exhibited:

DEAR MIS' MACKAY: I nevr fel so bad in my life like I did that mornin' you went off for I've bin meaning to rite you ever sin and I nevr dun it for mom she's bin behavin good as pie and its all along ov you and I'll nevr forgit it as long as I liv cause Pop he has prayers and we all goes to the Porters fur meetins and that man wot bot your plaice has fixen it up gay and cums to meetin only I wont let 'em tech the graive an I keeps it weden fur hes got the biggest tater paitch round here an so I cant rite no mor only Beck an Ruth is well and Sairy Ann went an naimed her baby atter you cause taint a boy sos she could naim it atter Mister Mackey and I hope to see you again fur if you luv me as I love you no nife kan cutt our luv intoo

SEMANTHY MARTHY HOPKINS.

This document reminded Hannah that she had forgotten to teach her correspondent anything

about punctuation and capital letters, and moreover made it evident that Semantha was much more affectionate than logical. She thought with a sigh that she had in Corral no such eager, loving, obedient pupil as Semantha, and she smiled to think that as Semantha grew up, and her village grew also, that she might become a person of property and importance; she deserved promotion certainly for her diligent use of opportunities. Hannah sat by her window, holding this letter in her hand, when a child near the fence with which Ralph had surrounded their door-yard called out, "Mayn't I have a posy?"

This was so much better than the usual juvenile custom of Corral, of making a sudden raid and retreating, carrying off the spoil, that Hannah rose with alacrity and gathered two of her best flowers for the small petitioner. "What will you do with them?" she asked.

"Take 'em to 'Riah; she's sick," said the child.

Hannah at once asked where they lived, and said she would herself carry "'Riah" a bouquet.

Hannah's was the only flower garden then in Corral City, and she tended it diligently, making the best possible display of its beauties, for she

wished to tempt some of her neighbors to cultivate flowers for themselves another year.

Having tied up a few flowers in her best style, Hannah followed the directions the child had given, and soon found herself confronting a not distant neighbor, Mrs. Perkins.

"I hear your daughter is sick, and I have brought her a few flowers," said Hannah.

"Yes, 'Riah's sick, and 'tain't likely she'll ever be any better," said Mrs. Perkins, slowly falling back like a defeated party of skirmishers, and allowing Mrs. Mackey, the enemy of the occasion, to enter her fortress.

"I am very sorry she is sick ; what is the matter?" asked Hannah, following up the advantage she had gained, until she was half way across the Perkins castle.

"If she knows, it's more than I do. Speak up, 'Riah, and let 'em know what's ailing."

Here Hannah saw that 'Riah was lying in a bed nearly opposite the door ; her hair was tumbled, her eyes glittered, her cheeks were hollow.

"I've had a fever, and I can't get well," said 'Riah, plaintively. She had a soft, girlish voice, and Hannah's tender compassion went out to her at once.

“That’s it,” said Mrs. Perkins; “she can’t get well, and I can’t get her well. I’ve spent a good many years bringing ’Riah up to what she is, and I take it very hard of her not getting well. It don’t leave me any courage for bringing up Katy.”

Katy, who had evidently loitered in the street, here came in with the two flowers she had begged of Hannah, and bidding her mother put them in water, rushed out again.

“No use trying to bring Katy up; she’ll go and not get well, like ’Riah,” said Mrs. Perkins, despondently.

Hannah gave the invalid her flowers, and took a chair near the bed. “Have you had a doctor?” she asked.

“We had one a time or two, but he’s a real old quack, and we let him quit. He was bound to kill her if he came, and I didn’t know but she might just as well die without none of his worrying or charging.”

“Don’t you do anything for her at all?” asked Hannah, surprised.

“I did, but she don’t take to nothing I do for her. If you’re going to stop a bit, I’d like mighty

well to go out for about an hour, to do some errands. I hav'n't left 'Riah for six weeks, for Katy wouldn't keep in the house two minutes, and 'Riah don't like to be left alone," said Mrs. Perkins.

"I can stay with her very well for an hour," said Hannah, glad to have the commandant of the garrison out of the way for a while. Her quick eyes had seen already many causes of 'Riah's low condition, and she thought, relieved of the voluble mother, she might reach some means of benefiting her.

"Does your head ache?" she asked 'Riah when her mother had disappeared.

"Oh yes, and I'm so hot, and the light hurts my eyes, and I keep my head under the bedclothes half the time, to get in the dark, and I can't sleep nor anything."

"Do you eat anything?"

"Nothing tastes good," said 'Riah, taking a long breath.

"You've got too many bedclothes over you; let me take some off," said Hannah.

"They *are* heavy," said 'Riah, and Hannah removed a quilt and a blanket, and folded them up neatly.

"Suppose you let me bathe your face and comb your hair; that will ease your head."

"I'm afraid you'll pull; mother does, awfully."

"No, I won't," said Hannah, making a very rash promise. She bolstered 'Riah up, and, after some search for toilette articles, was able to bathe her face, neck and hands and brush her hair.

"Oh how good that feels!" said the poor girl.

"Now suppose I help you into a chair, and you let me make your bed."

"Oh, I couldn't; I hav'n't been up for two weeks. I'll fall."

"I won't let you fall; your bed will feel so much more comfortable."

"Well, you may, and you can put clean clothes on it; mother said she ought to yesterday, only I wa'n't strong enough to get up."

Hannah carefully established her patient in a chair, and gave the bed a thorough tossing and shaking, laying the pillows out in the sun, and under 'Riah's directions getting clean sheets and cases.

"How nice it is to get my back to that hateful light!" said 'Riah, smelling her flowers.

"There must be a thick curtain put up there to shade your eyes," said Hannah. "Now,

if you do not feel worse for what you have done to day, to-morrow you must have your mother give you a warm bath and clean clothes."

"Do you think I'm going to die?" asked 'Riah; "see how thin I am, and how weak." She held out a trembling skeleton arm.

"No, I don't think you will die. I intend to show you how to get well. In three weeks' time I hope you will be well enough to go out by your house, and make some flower-beds and borders, and get all ready for roots I shall give you this fall, and seeds you shall have next spring."

Hannah now put her patient back in bed, protected her eyes from the light, and bidding her lie still and she would sing her to sleep, began the sweet strains of

"Jesus, lover of my soul."

Before the end was reached, poor 'Riah was asleep. Hannah folded the bedclothes smoothly over her chest, and laid her arms outside; she put a stand near the bed with her flowers on it, and then went to the door to look for Mrs. Perkins. Mrs. Perkins was already in sight, staggering under a big basket and bundle containing supplies for the garrison. She would evidently be able to sus-

tain a siege next time, and Hannah thought it wise to court favor and come as a friend.

“Did you stay as long as you wished?” she asked.

“Yes, neighbor, and I take it mighty kind of you.”

“We will speak softly,” said Hannah, “for your daughter is asleep.”

“’Riah asleep! If that don’t beat all! and how nice she looks. What’s come over her?”

“She feels better, I think. Now, I want you to let me be her doctor.”

“Be you a doctor?”

“Oh, a first-rate old-fashioned one, I assure you.”

“Well, doctorin’ comes high in these parts, but if you’re sure you can cure ’Riah, you can try it. I’ve got two boys out in the diggin’s, and my man, he keeps the post-office and a shop down here; it’s a pity if we can’t stand it.”

“I shall not charge you anything. All I ask is for you to do as I say,” said Hannah.

“Not charge nothing! How comes that?”

“I have children of my own, and I have lost one, and I know how to feel for you and want to help you,” said Hannah.

"That's mighty kind of you," said Mrs. Perkins, quickly drawing her big hand across her eyes.

"And my first order will be to put a good dark curtain over that window, and the next, not to let her put her head under the bed-clothes."

"I'll see to that; that's easy enough."

"I had some excellent soup for dinner, and as sick people generally like something that is made away from home, I will send a bowl of it by my niece, and you can heat it and give it to her as soon as she wakes up. I will send a little medicine for her to take while you are heating the soup."

"I don't believe I can make her take it," said Mrs. Perkins, shaking her head.

"Tell her, if she will, I will bring a pretty book and read to her to-morrow."

It was now quite time for Hannah to return home, but Mrs. Perkins, following the fashion of many women, pursued her guest to the door, and took most of the visit out on the threshold, relating how she had lived in Missouri ever since she was married, and spent most of her time on wild farms, and two years since she had come to Corral City, and "there was no telling whether her men

folks meant to go or stay. They were such hands at moving West," Mrs. Perkins remarked, "that for all she knew they'd keep it up until they'd moved themselves clean out into the Pacific ocean, and after that she'd like to see them move any more; that was one comfort." But where the comfort was in such a result, even the cheerful Hannah could not see.

Having at last escaped from Mrs. Perkins' volubility, and proven the truth of the classical statement that the descent into Avernus is easy, but the chief rub is in getting out, Hannah hastened home to prepare supper for her boarders. She never allowed a meal to be behindhand, and that day it was fortunate that she was quicker in her movements than most people, or delay would have been inaugurated. She despatched Alice with the soup, and the little girl came back laughing, saying that Mrs. Perkins had declared that it "beat all what a pleasant-spoken woman Mis' Mackey was."

Hannah found herself established as physician to 'Riah Perkins, and the patient insisted on a visit every day. As Hannah's régime at once worked wonders, 'Riah gaining strength and appetite, and having ceased expecting immediate

dissolution, Hannah was encouraged to continue her prescriptions and her calls ;* and to efforts for the restoration of the body she quietly added those directed to the renewal of the soul. Hannah's hymns and readings and good books were well received by Mrs. Perkins and 'Riah. Katy was sent to the Sunday-school, and Mrs. Perkins assented to every proposition which Hannah advanced. The conversation turned one day on Mrs. Perkins' previous spiritual advantages. In early life she had lived in the western part of the State of New York. She had not possessed a Bible, but the family had owned an almanac and a Testament, also a spelling-book, which was pretty well worn out by the time the six children had carried it to school winters.

Had they been members of any church?

Well, no; Mrs. Perkins reckoned they hadn't exactly.

Did they ever attend preaching?

Yes, once a month at the log school-house, reg'lar, only when it was too rainy, or too deep snow, or the preacher forgot to come his turn; and then they always had preaching at funerals.

Was there any church near them in Missouri?

No, there was not.

Any preaching?

No; Mrs. Perkins had never heard a word of preaching all the twenty-four years she had lived there.

Any books?

Well, there was a school-house four miles from them part of the time, where the second boy and 'Riah had learned to read, and there had come a man peddling books—pious books, Mrs. Perkins thought—and when they didn't buy he gave them two or three, and then they bought one or so out of compliment.

Did the man who sold books talk much to them?

Once he stayed all night and once to dinner. Mrs. Perkins must allow that he argued with them considerable, and prayed at night, and in the morning, and prayed at the table—in fact, he did a good deal of praying while he was there.

And did they try to follow this praying man's instructions? and did they read his books?

Mrs. Perkins explained that Perkins had never held as the Testament nor the Bible was any truer than other books, nor as Sunday was worth any more than any other day. Hoped Mrs. Mackey wouldn't take offence at this Western

declaration and testimony, but it was a free country, and everybody might do as everybody liked, and if Mis' Mackey could lead 'Riah and Katy over to her views, Mis' Perkins wasn't the woman to object. As far as she could see, him that pulled for 'em the hardest would win, and if Mis' Mackey's pulling was harder than Mr. Perkins', why, she could have 'em, that was all.

And while these two souls were at stake, and the pulling was to be between their father's infidelity and Hannah's religion, Hannah felt that it became her not to give over her efforts. As she walked home from her neighbor's, 'Riah by this time being strong enough to accompany her mother to the door and do some of the parting talking, Hannah thought within herself how Mrs. Perkins' history had revealed what a wide field is in the West unoccupied by religious privileges, destitute of Bibles—a heathen land in fact, as much as any under the sun; and she wondered, if Eastern church-members could hear a few such honestly told experiences, would they become more liberal, and in earnest on the subject of home-missions, and send forth more men into the fields where the laborers are so very few?

From such incidents as these it will be seen

that Hannah did not encounter the enmity or awake the opposition which at times met Ralph and Robert. She went to the people with kindly aid in the hours of sorrow and need, and they began to rely upon her, and feel that she was necessary to them. The good judgment which in 'Riah Perkins' case pointed out that cleanliness, quiet and proper food were needed was construed by her neighbors into wonderful skill, and every woman and child who thought themselves at the point of death sent for "Mis' Mackey" to rescue them. Like more experienced doctors and nurses, Hannah found that some of her patients were beyond all human helping, and it only remained for her to sympathize with those who were bereaved. Among these latter cases was a little child, a son of one of those members of the "whisky ring" who were loudest in moving that Ralph and Robert be expelled from Corral City. When this man saw Hannah sitting for hours by his wife, holding the babe in her lap, and in soft tones comforting the weeping mother with wise words brought from her own experience, when at last she dressed the child in its best for its confined sleep, and brought flowers for its hands and to strew about its face, he began to

think that, though Ralph and Robert did not suit him, Hannah was surely a blessing to the place, and they, for her sake, must be tolerated. He said to her, therefore: "I take this kind of you, Mis' Mackey; I ain't nothing to give you, and I s'pose you don't want nothing, but you tell the men folks up to your house that after this there ain't nothing no more between them and me."

And to this assertion, in which he had so valorously defied all rules of grammatical construction, he adhered, and when "suing" was next mentioned as a cheerful little diversion for the "ring" and an annoyance to the mill men, this man remarked that if "they, any of them, come to have such a bit of trouble as he'd had to his house, and Mackey's wife come 'round helping like she was your mother, or your wife's sister, there wouldn't be no more talk of 'suing.'"





CHAPTER VII.

ANGELS UNAWARES.

Four chapters were like Æsop's fables, and must each be followed by a moral, I do not know what plainer lesson we could draw from Hannah Mackey's experiences in the far West than that there is in that region plenty of missionary work especially suited for women, that a sensible and genial woman can there make a way for herself and for the labors of her husband also, and we might thereupon draw the deduction that every Western missionary should have a wise and gracious wife. Hannah often wished that there was at Corral City a missionary family, she felt so ignorant and so uncertain what was the best course to take, but experience is a very thorough teacher, and Hannah was improving rapidly.

As to missionaries, two came together just be-

fore the scourging clouds began to bring sleet and snow. They were not of the right kind, however; they wore long gowns and round capes, girdles with crosses dangling to them, and true half-military chapeaus which are affected by that Church which is at once a civil and a military despotism. They were, in fact, Roman Catholic priests—and may every Protestant who reads this blush at the reflection that the priest of Rome nearly always forestalls the arrival of the Protestant minister on the frontier—and as usual had come to set up a church, ready to beg all they could, but not dependent on begging, for they had some of the gold dollars of the Propaganda in their money-bags. Rome, we know, always has funds to use for church extension.

Several days of walking about Corral City and conversing with different people made these priests pretty well known, and they found some men who had been brought up to their creed, and who were all ready to see the Church of the Holy Virgin rise in Corral City, and its priests ready for a pecuniary consideration to become responsible for all their sins.

The reverend fathers were urging their claims and presenting their plans for a church, with

the manifold advantages to accrue to the city therefrom, before the post-office, the general place of gathering, when the crowd parted for a stranger to come forward. He was a man who stood, like Saul, head and shoulders above his comrades; he wore a half-Indian dress, deer-skin leggings and jerkin fantastically ornamented with fringe, embroidered moccasins, a strap over his shoulder holding shot-pouch and powder-horn, a tomahawk and long hunting-knife stuck in his belt, while the top lock of his hair was left ostentatiously long, ready to be a trophy for any Indian who should vanquish him. This man planted himself before the priests, placed the stock of his long gun on the ground, and clasped his brown sinewy palms over the muzzle. He eyed the emissaries of Rome some minutes, his gaze kindling into wrath and his brow corrugating, and the whisper passed from one to another through the crowd that "Sure-shot Andy" was going to speak.

"I've seen men of your stripe before," he said, at last, in a deep, distinct voice. "I was a prisoner then among the red skins, and they were getting ready to burn me at the stake; you 'uns wa'n't of my friends either; you 'uns were of my inimies,



The Frontiersman and the Priests.

Westward.

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and stood with the red skins. Ef I'd a bin burnt, you 'uns 'ud 'a' told me to kiss them ar things hangin' to your waists by a string, and ef Sure-shot Andy got free 'twa'n't along of you."

"My son," said the elder priest, calmly, "you are mistaken; we never met you before."

"I ain't your son," said Andy, gruffly. "I'm the son of a man as fit the red skins fair and square; not of folks as jines 'em to set 'em murderin' white men and women. Men of Corral!" he cried, throwing up a brawny arm, "don't let these here men in gownds among you. I tell you, years ago, when I was younger and greener than I be now, I see these kind of men up in Oregon, and they give guns and powder to the Injins; they set 'em up to scalpin' and murderin' white folks and settled red skins; and I tell you I see 'em with my own eyes standin' among the Injins whilst they killed white folks, and sprinklin' and crossin' them white folks' babies, and the peaceable Injins papooses, whilst their parints was dyin' and groanin', and lyin' unburied corpses;* that's what Sure-shot Andy see with

* At the massacre, in 1847, of Dr. Whitman and other Protestant missionaries, to the number of twenty, Brouillette the Jesuit was present by his own admission, and the Jesuits

these eyes that's now lookin' at these men. They wants to settle among you, they wants to build what they calls a church. Men of Corral, don't you let 'em do it. They're traitors, they're thieves, they're friends of the scalpin' Injins, and set 'em up to fight, they do!"

"It is false," said the younger priest; "it is an idle lie to harm the Church. Is it likely we are enemies to men of our own race and color?"

"You are inimies to all as don't obey you. Don't you say that Sure-shot Andy is lyin', for that I can't stand. I'm known here a fair square hunter, not a lyin' varment ov an Injin."

"You are mistaken as to us and our designs," said the elder priest.

"Ef 'twa'n't you, 'twas somebody just like you, and holdin' the same principles, doin' the same work, and buildin' the same kind of churches. You 'uns is a stripe not to be trusted, and the men of Corral had better take my word for it, or there'll be trouble in the diggin's before they knows it."

"Aye, aye, we'll take your word. Sure-shot Andy's word for us! If these men have been supplied the Indians with arms.—*See Reports of Oregon Association of June, 1869.*

helping to scalp settlers, they'll not put up a church here, they'll not stay here."

"Clear 'em out!"

"Tar and feather 'em!"

"Shoot 'em!"

"Sue 'em!"

Thus rose the chorus of rude voices of half-wild men from the diggings, who regarded the execution of any of these projects as merely cheerful divertimento. And now it would have gone hard with these priests, among the easily-excited populace living under few restraints of law, had not Robert Gray placed himself beside them, and cried out, "Friends, I side with Andy! Friends, I side with these priests! and if you will listen to me, as you have done before, I'll show you how I side with both." There was silence while he proceeded: "I side with Sure-shot Andy in so far that I do not think the doctrine which these men preach is the truth of God. I do not think to have their church built and their creed taught will save your souls or improve your lives. I do not advise you to give money to that end, but, my friends, we are citizens of a free country; we believe men innocent until they are proved guilty. These men say

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they had nothing to do with the Oregon massacre. Andy cannot prove it; let us not condemn them for deeds they never had part in. They have the same right in Corral as we have as long as they conduct themselves peaceably, and if they fail to do that, they cannot be condemned by a crowd in the street, but by a process at law. They came here as we came; let them stay as we stay; if they can spread their doctrines by honest means, we have no right to injure their persons. If you forget the laws of your country, my friends, you put yourselves on a level with the Indians Andy tells about. I am sure Andy agrees with what I say."

"Well, maybe it's fair talk for the settlements, and agreeing to law and order," said the hunter; "for my part, I live away from settlements most generally. I don't like 'em, and I don't allow nobody I don't like about my camp-fire, and ef I see a redskin, I pop him over ef I can—and generally I can."

"Friends, you agree to what I say?" cried Robert; "all shall be fair and orderly, and no harm done to those coming among us?"

"Aye, aye," cried the easily-moved throng; "we're for law and order, and if they don't walk

according, we'll sue 'em !” suing being the very quintessence of happiness, the first and last resort to a border man, and every three men being able to keep one lawyer employed. Having arrived at this conclusion, the crowd began to scatter.

“Sir,” said the elder priest to Robert, “we owe you thanks for your interference in our behalf; it was right and kind. We wish you were a son of the true Church.”

“I am what you may call an out-and-out heretic,” said Robert, smiling, “but I like to see fair play, and these men who live on the outskirts of civilization are apt to forget themselves if their passions are excited. You wish I belonged to your Church, and I wish you were preachers of that Protestantism which you denominate heresy.”

“I hardly feel safe here, even for the night,” said the younger priest, nervously.

“The tide is turned against us, and for the present we had better establish ourselves elsewhere, until the populace becomes more settled and more ready to hear the truth,” said the elder man.

“You are welcome to share our hospitality for to-night,” said Ralph, who had drawn near, “if

you would feel any more at ease with us than at the hotel where you have been stopping.”

“Thank you! the offer is kind;” and thus Ralph entertained the two priests for the night, and saw them depart next day—not, let us believe, to abandon Corral City entirely, but to establish their church elsewhere, and return to Corral when more Romanists are settled there, and when the suspicion and anger of the inhabitants have died away.

This incident gave rise to various questions in the debating-club, and Ralph and Robert gave at various times some history of Romanism and Protestantism, and showed the differences between them, and the errors into which Romanism has lapsed, and through which she has fallen away from the pure Church of antiquity of which Protestantism is now the true representative.

Sure-shot Andy had aroused Ralph’s interest; he strove to get acquainted with the rugged hunter, but the old man was taciturn when Robert addressed him on religious subjects, asking of his belief and his hope in the changes and dangers of his roving life. Andy promptly replied that he had always done his duty shootin’ Injins, that he told the truth and minded his own busi-

ness, and if there were any good lands lying outside this present life, where game was plenty, Injins unknown, and people not too crowded, he saw no reason why he should not get there.

After this, Robert ventured a little instruction and exhortation. Andy sat quiet, his eyes fixed on the westward distance, and when Robert paused, expecting question, assent or assertion, Andy, after a prolonged silence, said:

“Settler, you folks is gettin’ the upper hands of us; you’re crowding us up awful. The days of hunters and trappers is passin’ away, and by the time you get some more diggin’s started in the mountains and two or three railroads running acrost to the Pacific, there’ll be no game fur us to shoot nor Injins to chase. Peltry’s gettin’ mighty scarce; there’s too many folks in this world; you’ll get the Injins crowded out, and the hunters and trappers crowded out, and then you’ll be all crowded together in settlements. I don’t want to see that day.”

He gathered up his long frame, threw his gun over his shoulder, dropped his head forward and departed, taking long strides and going due west. Robert sighed. All he could fall back on for consolation was the command and encouragement he

often read: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not which shall prosper, this or that; or whether they shall both alike be good."

The winter passed away with hard work and little change. The first year at Corral City would evidently not be marked by those improvements which had rapidly followed each other when Ralph and Hannah worked in their forest home. The Christmas season was only marked by various excesses in drinking and gambling, quarreling and the inevitable "suing."

Hannah's Sunday-school increased to thirty members, the reading-room held its own, and Ralph instituted a Sunday evening prayer-meeting in the long dining-room, and some eight or ten grown people came to it pretty regularly.

'Riah Perkins had recovered perfect health, and Mrs. Perkins was encouraged by that and the exhortations of Mrs. Mackey to make some decided effort to bring up Katy. Her running in the street was interdicted, she was sent to be Ralph's pupil on week days, and on Sundays, Hannah took her education in hand.

When spring came, cheering as spring weather always is, Hannah had the pleasure of seeing

four or five gardens—all sowed with seed from her own—and several picket fences made, and some white-washing and house-cleaning of very Eastern fashion going on. Even these little outward marks of change were welcome, betokening aroused ambition and appreciation of ways better than former negligence.

One of Hannah's new acquaintances, made during the winter, greatly interested her; this was a woman named Foster, who had lived in different parts of the West for nearly fifteen years. She had been in her youth a member of a church, but having been cut off from all religious influences by her removal to her Western home, had failed to hold fast her profession, had even lost her Bible and been without one for nearly six years, and while she was moral and good-natured, gave no sign of Christian life. Hannah's earnest talk affected her. She wept, asked for a Bible, came to prayer-meeting, brought her children to Sunday-school, and Hannah began to have great hopes of her.

"I can't come to meeting this evening," said this woman to Hannah on Sunday morning, after having remained with her children at the Sabbath-school exercise; "we're going to have

some folks to our house, and it will keep me at home."

"I am sorry," said Hannah, "but I hope you will not be hindered from the thoughts and words suitable to holy time."

"Folks can't always do like they ought to," said Mrs. Foster, flushing, "and we ain't to be over-particular, I suppose. I'll be along next Sunday."

At tea-time one of Hannah's boarders remarked, "There's going to be a dance at Foster's to-night, and I'm going."

"A dance!" cried Ralph.

"Yes; they have several every winter, and clear about fifty dollars each time."

"A dance on Sunday night!" echoed Hannah.

"Yes; there will more come that night. Sunday is a sort of holiday, you know, and Fosters always take Sunday night for their dances."

Hannah was amazed. Here was a woman taught, at least in her youth, what were the decencies of life, to say nothing of religious duties, and she had fallen so far away from early practices as to have Sunday-night dances at her house. And then again Mrs. Foster had seemed aware of her declensions and penitent for them,

indeed seemed turning into the right way, and here, for a little money-making, she was falling back into flagrant violation of the Sabbath. Truly, the love of money is the root of all evil; and thinking over the whole story, Hannah that night shed more tears for Mrs. Foster than that woman had ever been moved to shed for herself. Discouraged, Hannah did not yet despair. It is true that Ralph said to her,

“I would not do anything more for Mrs. Foster; she is a hopeless case, and a great hypocrite.”

“I think she is not a hypocrite,” said Hannah, “but she is ignorant, and the force of bad habit is strong.” Therefore, in the course of a day or two she went to see Mrs. Foster, and not being afraid to come boldly to the occasion of her visit, said: “I am sorry to hear you gave a dance on Sabbath night. Do you not think it is a sin thus to use God’s day?”

“I’m sure I came to Sunday-school in the morning.”

“But the Lord claims the whole day; we have no right to shorten the Sabbath by one of its twenty-four hours.”

“We ain’t as prosperous as your folks are,” said Mrs. Foster, uneasily; “we find it hard to

get along. We must live; we have children to take care of, and we don't have ill-behaved people or getting drunk at our dances."

"Just now," replied Hannah, "I shall not discuss the propriety of having dances at all, or how you might manage to live without them, but I want to talk to you about keeping the Sabbath. Can you read the Bible and not see that the Lord attaches peculiar importance to that holy day, and insists upon its being carefully observed, 'a holy Sabbath unto himself?' The curse upon the Sabbath-breaker is sure and fearful, and he who desecrates the Sabbath hardens his heart, and cannot draw near to God. I have hoped you wished to live a Christian life."

"I do," said Mrs. Foster, weeping, "but I did not see any great harm in having a dance on Sunday evening once or twice a year, and I don't know what my husband would say if I set up against it."

"You should learn your duty and do it, no matter what any one would say; and if you were in earnest to serve the Lord, very likely you could persuade your husband to view these things in their proper light. You are a mother as well as a wife, and it is not likely you can perish alone.

If you take the wrong road, probably your children will take it with you ; can you make up your mind to destroy their souls?"

"I don't want to destroy their souls, or mine either," sobbed Mrs. Foster, "but everybody don't see things as you do."

"Do you take the Bible as the Lord's word, Mrs. Foster?"

"Be sure I do! I ain't a heathen!" cried the woman, indignantly.

"Then if you look into the teachings of the Bible on this subject, you will see that my view is the Bible view, and that I am only repeating to you the unchangeable word of God."

"I didn't mean any such great harm ; I knew you would think it queer, and it would not be like your doings, but I didn't look at it as any great sin," reiterated Mrs. Foster.

"Tell me how you were brought up. When you were in your early home, when you were holding membership in a church, what were your practices?"

"Why, I always danced and went to dances. We had them at the hotel winters, and I went; all the young folks did."

"And about the Sabbath?"

“We went to church and read the Bible.”

“And what else?”

“Why, sometimes we took rides, or a walk in the evening before church, and like as not we went to visit Saturday, and stayed over Sunday, and went to church in the morning. All our relations went to see each other Sunday, and nobody thought any harm of it.”

Hannah had been brought up to keep the Sabbath with Scottish strictness. She sat amazed at this revelation of early negligence, and could only wonder what were the parents and what was the pastor who allowed such desecration of holy time, such worldliness in one professing to be a member of Christ; she could see in Mrs. Foster's present conduct and ignorance but the legitimate fruits of such church and family training. How, at this late day, should she begin to repair such a long course of errors? how should she bring home to this darkened heart the truth? how should she show her the beauty of godliness? She knew she could do none of these things; she saw that only the spirit of God could touch the heart and enlighten the understanding; all she had done was mere surface work. The ready tears, the quick assent, were transient as the moment in which

they came. Hannah saw that she had been relying on herself to change her neighbor. The lesson was a good one; she blushed for shame.

There was a long silence, during which Mrs. Foster appeared to become consoled, wiped her tears, and took up her knitting. At last Hannah said: "Will you promise me two things?"

"Half a dozen if you like," said Mrs. Foster, with over haste.

"Will you read your Bible for light, and will you pray that God will help you to see and do exactly what it says?"

Hannah's earnest, solemn manner caused her heedless neighbor to think a little.

"Yes, I will," she said at last, with unwonted seriousness.

Going home from such an interview as this, what a comfort and joy it was to Hannah to find 'Riah Perkins waiting to see her, come to talk with her on the subject of religion, and giving evidence of a truly awakened heart!

Relating her visit to Mrs. Foster to Ralph and Robert called forth similar experiences of their own.

"I have come upon several men who have been church-members at the East, who give not the

least token of religious life; I stumble upon the fact of their profession much to my surprise."

"And you will find them generally those who have in youth been permitted to remain in the church following the ways of the world, whose home-training has been careless, whose piety was only remembered at the communion-table three or four times a year, and then put away with the service only to come out on the next public occasion." These were Ralph's remarks.

"What we especially need here is a good, sound, earnest preacher of the gospel, who will by the help of God arouse these sleepers and bring them from the dead, who will strengthen the things that remain and are ready to die, and will foster the feeble beginnings of a better life," said Robert.

"And where shall we find such a one?" said Hannah. "I feel sometimes as if we were here, forgotten of all the world, as if the Church had no care for the preservation of her stray members, as if religious people think all those who have come out here have wandered entirely from the fold, and will have no shepherd to care for us."

"If the Church feels so, the Lord does not,"

replied Ralph. "Our Master knoweth them that are his, and will keep all that has been committed to him."

"If we need help, very likely it is our duty to call for it," said Hannah, "and I will write to Mrs. Allen, and tell her what a good beginning we have for a church, a Sunday-school—four church-members, several who have formerly been such, and a few who are getting anxious to have instruction. Perhaps this will rouse somebody to come up to our help."

"I have been reading in our paper of the labors of missionaries, district preachers and colporteurs among the rough places of the West, but here in Corral City we seem beyond the utmost limits of their work; from the East and the Pacific coast they stop short of us on either side," observed Robert.

"I wonder," said Louis Schepberg, coming unexpectedly into the conversation, for he generally preferred to listen and to meditate—"I wonder if the Church thinks it her duty to wait for the railroad before she comes this way? It's curious that the business of this world should get so far ahead of the Lord's business. I don't see why preachers can't come out here just as well as

rumsellers, and why Bibles can't be carried this distance just as well as kegs of whisky."

This was an unusually long speech for Louis, and was received with respectful attention. Having said thus much, he apparently exhausted himself for the present occasion; he beckoned Helen and Alice to come with him, and the three were soon to be seen sitting at a corner of the dining-table in close consultation, the girls' faces bright with interest, and Louis' slow, heavy tones replying to their brisk remarks. Presently, Helen came into the sitting-room after paper, pens, blue, red and black ink, wafers and scissors, and their business with Louis, being complicated with these articles, was carried on until their aunt called them all to prayers.

The next day Helen asked Hannah's permission to confiscate a blue hair ribbon to some cause unknown, and Louis requested the use of the mill reading-room for Thursday evenings, saying he would take care of the lights and incur no danger from fire. That evening the girls could scarcely keep their attention upon their books, and as soon as Louis was heard at the outer door they rushed to meet him, hurried the old man into a corner of the dining-room and

were very eagerly talking for some minutes. Hannah asked no questions; she knew that old Louis was to be trusted, and that the girls would unfold the secret before very long. The truth came out during the month. Louis had accomplished what in Corral City might have been deemed an impossibility—he had organized a temperance society. He had found several young men who had belonged to such a society in the East, a few more who were not unwilling to enter so safe an order; and Helen having written a pledge in her most elaborate style in three kinds of ink, formed a seal, and tied the document with a blue ribbon, Louis had obtained ten signatures, and the little band met on Thursday evenings to discuss their position and further their cause. The good Swede wished to incur all the odium of the undertaking himself. If the whisky ring were moved to take lynch law on anybody, Louis said he had better be the man for the occasion, as he had neither wife nor children; and if suing was the last resort, he could very easily be spared from the mill to attend to that little recreation.

As it turned out, neither lynching nor suing was undertaken. Corral City was becoming more

impressed with its responsibility as a part of the Union, and was slowly learning that other things than faro, keno and whisky were worthy of toleration. It is true that one irate dispenser of poison threw an empty bottle at Louis, but having imbibed some of its late contents, he missed his aim, the Swede loitered on his way unhurt, and the seller was minus one bottle. A fist not over clean was shaken in Louis' face, and he was treated to three eggs as a token of somebody's appreciation of his recent services, but the fist was only shaken—its owner did not venture, like the Boston traveler, to turn moderately and quietly the offensive nose—and the traces of the eggs disappeared from the coat under Helen's application of soap and water.

After that the temperance society—the “sons,” we believe—progressed cheerfully, three new members came to the rescue, right, as ever in the long run, triumphant over wrong, and slow, steady old Louis could reflect that in his day he had done some good to Corral City.

The mill firm flourished week by week. The blessing of the Lord is indeed upon the lot of the righteous, and godliness, without dispute, is profitable for all things, both for this life and the

life to come. Times were easier for the family, and the house was being improved. Hannah had some plastering and papering done, reduced the number of her boarders, and had some furniture made at the mill. Ralph had a morning school of twelve pupils, including the four from his own family, and in the afternoons was busy doing the finer work at the mill. His health was fully re-established, but his lameness remained, and a cane was the invariable accompaniment of every step.

It was just growing dark on a September evening, and Hannah was sending Norman and Lucy to bed under escort of Alice, when Robert, who had answered a rap at the door, came in to say, "Here is a gentleman wants to know if you can take some strangers in for the night."

"It is so late," said Hannah, hesitatingly, "and I should have to make an entire change, and bring the children to sleep on the dining-room floor."

"He says there is a lady with him," said Robert.

"In that case I must accommodate, for I would not like to go to that place they call a hotel. You had better tell them they can stay here."

"Of course tell them so," said Ralph, looking

up from his reading. "I'm afraid you are forgetting your Bible, Hannah: 'Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for so doing some have entertained angels unawares.'"

"That is true, and hospitality is especially enjoined upon Christians. I hope comfort is not making me selfish," said Hannah; and as her guests were now entering the room, she turned to welcome them and offer them seats.

"Let me take your hat," she said to the lady; "it is always a long, tiresome journey here, and I am sure you feel nearly worn out."

The lady unfastened her hat strings, and as she removed the hat and veil, behold before Hannah's astonished eyes the familiar face of the former Miss Gordon!

"Mrs. Allen," cried Hannah, grasping both her hands, "are you here, in my house, positively come over this long journey!"

"I am truly here," said Mrs. Allen, "and glad to get here after my long journey. Let me introduce you to my husband."

"We have waited a long time to see a minister of the gospel in Corral City, and this is a glad night to us," said Ralph.

Hannah with alacrity ejected the little ones

from their room and established them elsewhere, while with Helen's aid she prepared a place for the weary travelers. After supper she escorted Mrs. Allen to her bedroom.

"How cosy this looks!" said the lady, surveying with pleasure the snowy curtains and bed linen, the pretty toilette table, the flowers in the vase, the bright strip of carpet near the bed, and the pine floor scrubbed to wonderful whiteness.

"Long may you stay in it! and if I can make you comfortable, it will be done," said Hannah, eagerly.

"You are surprised to see us here," said Mrs. Allen. "My husband has been ill, and the doctor recommended a long journey and entire change of air. We thought that, coming here, health might be restored, and his work of the ministry could be followed. From your letters we were sure there was work for us to do here."

"Yes indeed, plenty of work; and hard, rough work, too, I'm afraid you will think it."

"There must be somebody to do that kind, and we shall find, I dare say, that you have been preparing the way for us. It will be the old story—other men labor, and we have entered into their labors."



CHAPTER VIII.

UNPROMISING SOIL.

SHALL I spend the day taking you about among our Corral people?" asked Ralph of Mr. Allen at breakfast.

"No," replied the minister; "I will find my way among them alone."

So, early in the day, he set out for a peregrination through the devious ways of Corral, and speedily found himself among queerer places and people than the wildest flights of his innocent Eastern imagination had ever pictured. That "a minister of the gospel" should be seen sitting on a barrel in a whisky-shop, discussing the "diggin's," the relative value of "Slatér's lick" and "Pony run," and the price of carriage across the plains, that said minister should shake hands with Tommy Stuggins beside the faro-table, asking what sort of a "haul" he made in his last week's

work with shovel, pick-axe and washing-pan, and respectfully listening to ungrammatical remarks about the relative merits of the Central Pacific and the Kansas Pacific railroads, would fill the ladies' sewing society of his native church with consternation. Yet if the aforesaid minister should have scruples about making bar-room acquaintance, should pass by on the other side whenever he saw men at a faro-table, and should attack men at first sight on the subject of his legitimate business, he would speak with few people, enter few places and do little good in Corral City. Truth is, that human nature must be humored as much now as in the days when Paul was all things to all men, that he might win some; and human nature in Corral, setting the proprieties at defiance, rejoicing in the wild ways of diggings' life and very different from Eastern development, must be beguiled for its own good through much talk of "licks" and "runs," "hauls at the diggings," price of carriage over the plains, Kansas and Central and all other kinds of Pacific railroads, and benevolent interest in the last case of suing, which last is not usually more than two hours old. Showing himself the man for the emergency by his appreciation of these things, Mr. Allen

in the course of an hour's conversation, seated on top of a whisky-barrel, had found his way to one heart, and Mr. Perkins, the owner of the barrel, had made up his mind that the stranger was a "right fair, square, agreeable-spoken chap," and was ready to offer the right hand of fellowship and vow undying friendship on the spot. Mr. Allen had already seen the mill, and concluded that only those especially interested in preaching would go so far out of their way to get to it, and while he was fascinating Mr. Perkins he was considering what sort of a place the store would be to hold forth in on Sunday morning. He concluded it would do, and remarked:

"I suppose you close up your store on Sundays?"

"Not exactly," replied Mr. Perkins. "There's a lot of men from the diggings comes in Sunday, and gives a mighty fair chance for trade. I've got a lot of auction goods, and Sundays we puts 'em up."

"That upsets my plan," said Mr. Allen.

"Did you want anything of my store, stranger? for if you did, I'm a very accommodating man. Mebby you've got some goods to set up, and you might throw 'em in along with mine."

Mr. Allen remarked that he had no goods to dispose of, but he wanted to make a speech.

"How long mought your speech be?" asked Mr. Perkins.

"Not over an hour altogether," replied Mr. Allen, willing to be very moderate on the first occasion.

"Bein' as I'm so accommodating," said Mr. Perkins, "and willing to use my store for the benefit of the community, likely I could hold off for an hour somewhere along in the auction, and let you strike in. Be you a doctor advertising of medicines?"

"It might be looked at somewhat in that light, but not exactly."

"Mebby in the light of buyin' and sellin'?"

"Not precisely that either."

"Mebby then it's politics?"

"I do not know as you'd call it politics."

"Mebby it's law?"

"Well, yes; partly law."

"And likely as it's 'lection?"

"It may be partly on election, or choosing."

"'Tain't on lottery or lucky numbers?"

"Not at all."

“And mebbly it’s on the gov’nor’s ticket, and getting set up into a State?”

“On a state perhaps,” Mr. Allen admitted.

“’Pears like you’re mighty close-mouthed.”

“I don’t want to make all my speech beforehand.”

“Anyways you can reckon on an hour’s talking here next Sunday, stranger.”

“Thank you, sir. I feel much obliged to you, and if you would just mention the matter of the speech to any that comes in, I would thank you for that.”

“Thanks is poor pay,” said the impolite Mr. Perkins, “but I can’t say as I wants any other. I’ll mention your speech, stranger.”

While Mr. Allen was thus paving the way for a hearing on Sunday, his wife had been unpacking her trunks and boxes. Ralph made haste to put up a row of shelves for the books she had brought, and the family were pleased to find that the friends in their former home had not forgotten them, but had sent many tokens of affectionate remembrance, and even gifts to Alice and Helen, whom they knew only through Hannah’s letters, and to each of these girls and little Lucy had been sent a pretty hat. ’Riah Perkins came in

just as these hats were being tried on, and seemed completely fascinated by them. "How sweet they look!" she cried. "Don't I wish I could have a real store hat! I've only got a blue sunbonnet, and I *never* had nothing but a sunbonnet. I wish we didn't live out here, so I could have something."

Mrs. Allen sincerely sympathized with a pretty girl like 'Riah who for twenty years had had no better head-gear than a blue sunbonnet; she was not above trying to gain the girl's friendship, even by turning milliner, and she knew she had in her boxes material that could be converted into a hat as delightful to behold as those now adorning the heads of Helen and Alice. This important fact she mentioned to 'Riah, and the free-and-easy frontier girl did not hesitate to ask her to stop her unpacking and proceed with the bonnet business at once. The result was that 'Riah at noon presented herself before the eyes of her astonished mother in a charming blue hat, with a blue and white flower and blue strings to beautify it, and declaring that "there was the tip-topest lady at Mrs. Mackey's ever anybody set eyes on."

Being thus ready to sympathize and make friends, Mrs. Allen was soon acquainted with

nearly all the mothers and daughters known to Hannah, and her first effort to benefit them resulted in a meeting dignified by the name of a "ladies' society," which was to be held from two until five on Friday afternoon in Hannah's dining-room. The women were invited to come and bring their sewing; we confess that there was a hint of having an opportunity to obtain new patterns and fashions for aprons, dresses, etc. When they were assembled, Mrs. Allen opened the meeting with prayer; several hymns were then sung, repeating them until the words and tunes were familiar, and both were caught with surprising quickness. Mrs. Allen then read, sometimes from the Bible, sometimes from "Pilgrim's Progress," sometimes from such tracts as they would best understand and appreciate. Free conversation followed, Mrs. Allen and Hannah carefully and unawares guiding it to useful and religious topics. Thus the meeting was at once pleasant and improving, and when it had been closed by simple, earnest prayer from Hannah, the women scattered to their homes, feeling cheerful and friendly to each other, and all unconsciously softened and refined by the influences brought to bear upon them.

Mr. Allen was an energetic worker, a man who could not be idle, and who never let an opportunity for doing good slip by him unused. He attended the first meeting of the temperance society after his arrival, signed his name with the rest, gave them six volumes as the foundation of a library, and proposed that they request the ladies to make them a banner to use on public occasions. He also proposed to deliver a temperance lecture. This lecture, through the invitations and inducements of the members of the society, was attended by some fifty persons, and as Mr. Allen did not disdain to be witty and funny, as he used plain speech and was not too fine for his audience, he was loudly cheered, asked to speak again, and found two more names on the society's roll as trophies of the occasion. Street preaching was another of Mr. Allen's institutions. Accompanied by Ralph, Robert and Louis, toward the close of the day he would put himself in some place near the post-office or court-house, where men were most apt to congregate, and they would then strike up some favorite hymn. As a little knot gathered about them before the singing ceased, at its close Mr. Allen would offer a prayer, short, simple and fervent, and would then com-

mence his address by allusion to a topic of local interest, a lively anecdote bearing upon his subject, or a scrap of history, and thus secure attention at the start. He was frequently interrupted by questions, sometimes by doubts and cavils; these he at once attended to without being at all disturbed, and if any rudeness was intended, he was apt to turn it upon the perpetrator in such a way as to amuse and delight his audience, who luxuriated in what they called "'cuteness," and would sometimes cry out on such occasions, "Good for you! That beats Lawyer Grant! Squire Walker couldn't do better!" and so on. Remarks of this kind, which would demolish a man accustomed entirely to speaking to houses of quiet listeners, became matters of course and often useful to Mr. Allen. He found that street speaking was a fine school for one's nerves, and would soon render a man superior to all interruptions.

The speech in Mr. Perkins' store came off according to promise. Mr. Perkins was in the full flow of auctioneering eloquence when he saw the group from Ralph Mackey's entering his door. He knocked off the pair of suspenders—generally considered a superfluity in the diggings—to the highest bidder, and cried out, "Here's a party as

I promised the use of my store to for making a speech. My auction is going to close for one hour; after that I've a fine lot of shoes, pocket-books and plug tobacco, also three boxes of best cigars to put up."

He had by this time discovered Mr. Allen's profession, and what would probably be the drift of his speech, so he continued: "This party as I mention will make that sort of a pious speech called a sarmont. Up to the court-house Tommy Stuggins is going to sue Mick Malory for carrying off his mining tools from Slater's lick, and if any of you'd rather go hear that, you may go."

"I say, Hank, let's go hear that case!" cried a man in one extremity of the store to his friend who sat on the counter near the door.

"That's all bosh; I'm going to stay here and be ready for that plug tobacco," said Hank, getting a bit of pine to whittle. "It's all bosh about that case, for the tools belong to Joe Slater, and about the time the court decides whether they are Tommy Stuggins' or Mick Malory's, why Joe 'll come along and carry them off from both. He's just gone off a spell to hunt a better vein."

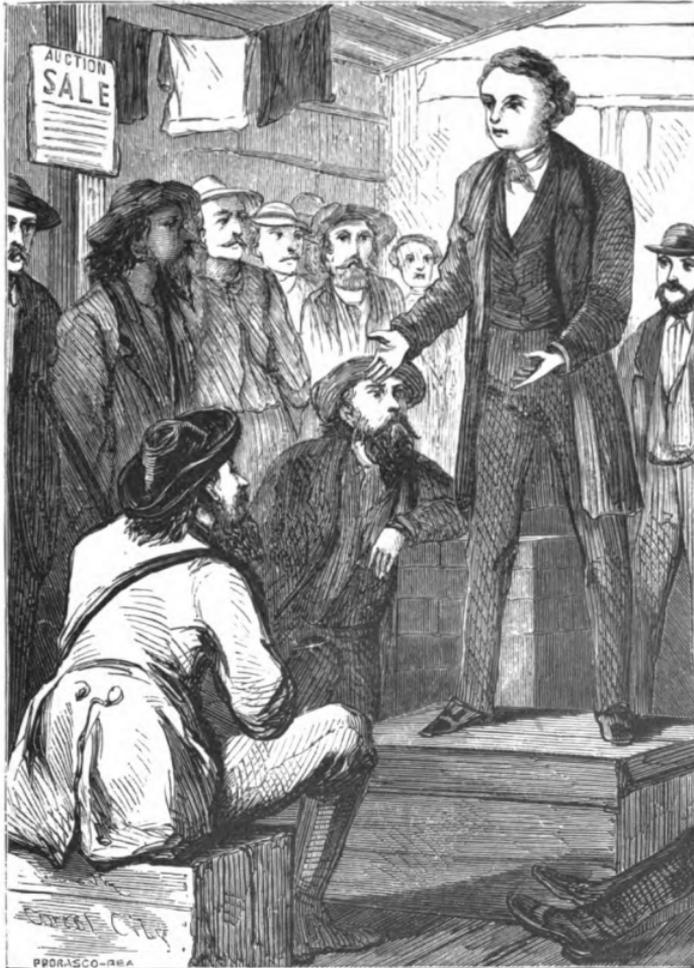
This was said while Mr. Allen was getting his place and whispering his friends what hymns to

strike up. The worthy minister had heard while he was whispering, and standing upon a box, that he might be in fair view of his audience, he cried out, "Friends, I have got a case of disputed tools to bring before you to-day for your decision. I wish you to resolve yourselves into a jury of honest, unprejudiced men, while I explain to you some facts about a set of valuable tools that have been taken from their lawful owner, and used absolutely for his injury, which is much more than Tommy Stuggins pleads against Mick Malory."

"All right, get on with it then; we're listening," cried Hank the inelegant, trimming his pine stick to a much finer point than he was accustomed to put upon anything else.

"I'll begin in my own way, if you please, and I should like your entire attention," said Mr. Allen; and he at once lifted his voice in the sweet strains of *Calvary*, in which he found several to join with him. After the usual prayer—during which we regret to say that Hank whittled and chewed tobacco, the latter performance of course an enormity peculiar to Corral City and never known in religious meetings beyond its limits—the "speech" began.

We all know what was the case Mr. Allen



• Preaching at Corral.

Westward.

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plead—man's powers, moral and physical, created by God for his peculiar service, but seized by Satan and turned against the holy kingdom. As he spoke earnestly, simply, forcibly, using plain Saxon speech that all could comprehend, hard faces grew softer, careless listeners turned upon him attentive eyes, slower and slower Hank's knife passed up and down the fragment of pine, and at last ceased its accustomed office and lay idle in its owner's hand. There was one peculiarity about Josiah Perkins, and this was that he was entirely miserable whenever his presence was unnoticed and some one else held the attention of the hour. He had seated himself on top of a pile of homespun, his elbow resting upon the "three boxes of choice cigars" which he meant to put up at auction, and thus in full view he evidently considered himself the ornament of the occasion and the leading spirit of the assemblage. He encouraged Mr. Allen by a series of very confusing nods and winks, and as long as he had any doubts whether that gentlemen could hold his own, he patronized him oppressively, motioning to people in different parts of the room to be quiet, slapping his hands together when he chose to be particularly pleased, and, when a good

point was made, indecorously indicating with his finger the individual whom he considered hit by it.

As attention became more closely fixed upon the speaker, Mr. Perkins grew moody; when every eye sought Mr. Allen's, 'Siah Perkins fidgetted and shrugged upon his pile of home-spun; when affairs came to the crisis that even rattling the choice cigars would not attract a stray glance, Mr. Perkins thought it time to interfere. Fifteen minutes yet remained of Mr. Allen's hour, and Mr. Perkins was above encroaching upon that by summarily reintroducing his auction, but he must relieve his oppressed mind or die in the attempt; so as Mr. Allen clinched an argument by scriptural reference, Mr. Perkins cried, briskly, "Hold on there! I don't allow as the Bible's good authority!"

Even Hank felt the painfulness of this interruption, and bellowed wrathfully, "Who cares what you allow? Nobody's speakin' to you."

And 'Siah Perkins' favorite aversion, the whiskey-seller whose babe had died, followed suit, crying, "You hold on yourself, 'Si'; you ain't president here like you be to the debating-club." And yet a third attack came in the words, "'Si's

got the big head so bad since he got to be president of the club that he don't allow nothing no-how!"—"the big head" being a racy Western phrase for self-conceit or importance, and not wholly inapplicable to Josiah Perkins.

To recall thoughts to their proper channel, Mr. Allen hit upon the expedient of asking how many of those assembled received the Bible as the highest authority on all subjects of which it treated. To his great delight, almost every hand was held up. He was about resuming his discourse in a cheerful frame of mind, when a sudden suspicion chilled him, and he requested as many as had ever *read* in the Bible to hold up their hands. Only some ten hands were lifted. Next, all who had *seen* a Bible raise the hand. Perhaps half those present thus signified that they had seen one. Here was something curious, and pitching upon Hank as a suitable individual from whom to obtain information, Mr. Allen said:

"I see, sir, you hold up your hand for accepting the Bible as good authority, and yet you have never to your knowledge seen one. How is that?"

"I held up my hand," replied Hank, unabashed, "because 'Siah Perkins didn't. I reckoned he was

wrong—he most ginerally is—and I went ag'in him to git on the right side.”

“Is Lawyer Lytel in the room?” demanded 'Siah, briskly jumping up from the homespun.

“I'm here,” said the individual inquired for, the legal gentleman who had appeared at the anti-Mackey meeting of the whisky-ring.

“I'm going to sue Hank Brown for libel tomorrow, and I want you to 'tend to it,” said Mr. Perkins.

“Sue away,” said Hank, resuming his whittling and comforting himself with an ample quid of “Solace” tobacco; “it'll hurt you more'n 'twill me. I don't care for you, nor Lytel neither.”

All this time Mr. Allen had been making ineffectual efforts to be heard, and soothe the indignation of 'Siah and Hank.

“Come, come, Mr. Perkins, don't make arrangements for suing our friend Brown. Just withdraw your proposal to Lawyer Lytel. I am sure Brown meant to give no offence. Brown, shake hands with Mr. Perkins. I am certain in many cases you will find his opinion valuable.”

“Mr. Perkins has retained me for this suit, and I forbid its being interfered with,” said Lawyer Lytel, bristling. “Perkins, I know very well

that Brown meant to insult you, and if he didn't to-day, he would to-morrow."

"I meant it, and I'll stick to it," said Hank, doggedly.

"Don't interrupt the meeting any longer," said some one; "let the parson go on with what he was saying."

Mr. Allen went on accordingly, yet at a decided disadvantage; the interruption had been chilling, and it was hard to resume his discourse where he had left it. He concluded his preaching as quickly as possible, and occupied his last five minutes by inquiring how many would like to have Bibles; next, how many were willing to buy them; and, lastly, how many would accept them as a gift, promising that they should be read and not destroyed. He put down the names of the Bible wishers belonging to these two classes, and while Mr. Perkins' auction revived into full vigor, the disconsolate missionary returned with his friends to their dwelling, ready to believe that his first Sabbathi-preaching had been a total failure. But this was far from the case; no honest and earnest effort to do good can be a total failure. The word is the Lord's, and shall not return unto him void. The Almighty

watches over the holy sowing through storm and shine. Patient through all the changeful spiritual seasons, He to whom a thousand years are as yesterday when it is past, waits for his unfailling harvest. Courage, preacher of the word! the bold, faithful utterance for God may seem to wander off through space to wake its only answer in the hearts of those ministering spirits that flit between us and heaven, but God's word cannot die, and at the last great account every faithful saying shall come back to its Master bringing its sheaves.

Cheerful friendship, true sympathy and honest appreciation are great mental restoratives; a good dinner is also a restorative, and so is a little repose. Under all these fortunate influences, Mr. Allen recovered himself, and that none of the Sabbath might be turned from its spiritual intention he put a Bible in his pocket, took a stout walking-stick, and accompanied by Robert Gray similarly equipped, set off to visit some of the adjacent diggings, and edge a little spiritual instruction or scriptural reading upon the three or four men he was likely to find playing cards at every "lead."

Ralph in the mean time visited a sick man who had been in his employ. Mrs. Allen had a long

talk in her own room with 'Riah Perkins, and Mrs. Rogers came to get some new light from Hannah on the "hard sayings" she was continually finding in Scripture. Scripture to Mrs. Rogers was full of hard sayings, because she had set herself to follow her own way and God's way, to hold earth and win heaven, to serve God and serve Mammon all at the same time. There are a good many—and east of Corral City also—who make up their minds to just such a course as Mrs. Rogers, but are not quite so frank about it, added wisdom giving them added duplicity.

The country about Corral City is wild and mountainous. North and west lies the golden El Dorado of the miners; how rich in the precious metal are the rocky slopes and abrupt spurs none can tell. Had the noisy streams but intelligible voices to speak what treasures are hidden where they flowed, or, gossip like, to repeat the whispered secrets of the hills, more numerous than the inquirers at Delphi or at Dodona would come the rough-bearded, hard-handed wearers of deerskin and homespun to question them. As it is, only some accident of flowing water carrying golden dust, of fallen earth revealing hidden wealth, or, more frequently, laborious use of spade

and pickaxe, with the application of scientific knowledge, wins what all come to seek. South and east of Corral are the pineries, rooted above beds of coal, an inexhaustible source of gain. Amid so much of promise and fulfillment it is curious and pitiful to note how much there is also of disappointment and disaster; and the bold fact that the vicious and the lawless are constantly kept the poorest and most unfortunate might strike even the attention of the entirely reckless. Did one of these Western "roughs," the gambler, rioter and swearer of the diggings, make some lucky hit, and load himself with spoil, instead of judicious investment and wise preservation of his new wealth would come a wild period of "sprees," of dice, of faro, of keno, of idleness and vice, and the bacchanal over he would go back to dig, poorer than ever, with sinewy hand shaking, clothes torn, tools lost, hope departed, memory a torment, and heart and lips overflowing with curses on the wretched lot for which he was alone to blame. Better men, having found "treasure hid in a field," would return to Eastern friends and home, or, if identified in their interest with the new city, would use their gains as the foundation of loftier fortunes

and the beginning of an honorable name and home.

But the region of Corral was not divided between these two extremes, for there were men who never had what they called a "run of good luck," and others who, making what in the East would be more than a competence, were still kept poor by the enormous cost of living, of transportation across the plains and hills, and, worse still, by the abundance of sharpers, who, while they were like the lilies in neither toiling nor spinning, like the unjust steward of biblical memory, who could not dig and was ashamed to beg, showed themselves kindred of the people of the cannibal islands in fattening upon their fellow-men.

Going some four miles north-west on that Sabbath afternoon, when his sermon had been shipwrecked upon the shoals of 'Siah Perkins' self-assertion, Mr. Allen found lying on the roadside, his hat crushed over his eyes and his head thrust under the shelter of some low, scrubby trees, a brawny, big-framed miner. The man lay with one foot drawn up, the other lifted defiantly into the sunshine across the erected knee, and as if the trees and the felt hat were not shelter enough for his eyes, his arms were crossed over

them also, the knotted muscles staring through the rags of his red flannel sleeves. Beside him on the ground was a revolver in a leathern case, and twisted up near by, a fragment of greasy brown paper, the last surviving witness to a lunch of cheese and bologna. As Mr. Allen and Robert Gray drew near a puff of wind trundled the paper out of sight, and the sound of their footfalls was lost to the man in its rustle, or in his meditations, for it was evident that he was not asleep. There was a tensity in the figure that proclaimed that the forgetfulness of slumber was far away.

The man's lonely and neglected appearance might indicate that he was lost to the care of friends, lost also to all care for himself. But Mr. Allen doubted that he was lost to the fatherly care of the Lord our God, or to his care as God's minister.

"Well, friend!" cried he, "you seem to have a share both of the sunshine and shadow of this world."

The man jerked himself up as if he had been stung, the strong arms and the sheltering hat fell, and lo! on either bronzed, seamed cheek a tear! A tear! one would as soon have looked for a

grace said over a faro table or a Bible in a lager beer shop. If there was token of softness in the tear, there was none in his voice or look, for he scowled angrily, crying out, "What do you mean by stealing on a fellow in that way, confound you! You might have got a dose of lead before you or I had time to think, there's such a set of rascals lying 'round loose in these parts."

Robert Gray thought their new acquaintance might support the character of a rascal lying around loose in the present little drama, but he prudently forbore to say so; and Mr. Allen replied cheerfully, "Well, there's been no dose of lead, and no harm done, and I don't think you'll find us of the rascal fraternity. We did not intend to be silent in our approach; it was an accident. I'm out hunting for a lost—"

He paused so long that the man said sulkily:
"Lost what?"

Robert Gray had broken a twig from the tree, and was uneasily chewing it; he also recklessly poked the earth with his cane. Coming to an end of these manifestations, he seated himself on the other side of the cluster of bushes, in sight, however, pulled a paper from his pocket and went to reading. Mr. Allen meanwhile had been secretly

studying the man at his side, and slowly answered to his query, "A lost sheep."

"I ain't seen none," said the man, gruffly; then added, "You must be keeping it for a show; sheep are scarce enough in these parts."

"It was," said Mr. Allen, deliberately, "a lost sheep of the house of Israel."

The man started violently, a light sprang to his eyes, his lip twitched—evidently Mr. Allen was speaking to him in no unknown tongue—and presently he made answer,

"You haven't found it then. I belong to the goats."

"Well," said Mr. Allen, smiling, "I'm glad to find you, nevertheless, for you are the first man I've met out here who knows where to place himself."

"Oh," said the stranger, sharply, "here it is—a sheep and a goat, and rightly placed too, you on the right hand, I on the left."

"I claim to be one of the assistant shepherds," said Mr. Allen, still smiling.

"You've roamed out to the wrong place then; you will find none of the flock in these regions."

"You're from the East," said Mr. Allen, giving the man's shoulder a friendly grasp—"from

the region of Bibles and churches, I see plainly. Come, now, how long have you been out here, and what's your name?"

"I've been out here long enough to forget my name," said the man, his surliness returning.

"So long? And long enough for those you left at home to forget it too? Your mother, your sister, your—"

"Hold on there," said the man, taking his arm in a vise-like clasp, "don't mention them any farther. I came out here because I lost all I cared for. I came out here to forget all I'd had and all I'd lost, and I've been out here five years, and I'm no nearer forgetting than I was at the start. I did not come to make money, and I haven't made any."

His head dropped; there was a despondency in his tones that even more than his words touched Mr. Allen's heart.

"Yours is a hard lot, sir. I am sorry for you." This was all he said, but said it so heartily that the man felt it, was warmed by it; he grew softer, more confidential.

"I'm different from what I used to be," he said, sadly.

"I see you are," said Mr. Allen.

"It's trouble did it. I was a machinist, I had all I needed, and more, plenty of friends and books to read, but when— Well, it was the cholera did it all. After I lost my wife, I couldn't stay there, nor live the old life, and here I've gone right down."

"You must come up again," said Mr. Allen.

The man shook his head.

"I'm at the house next the lumber mill, and would be glad to see you. But remember, there is One who feels your every sorrow, who sees you, hears you, loves you."

"Who took away all I had," interrupted the man.

"To make you ready to receive himself. 'What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.'"

Mr. Allen rose as he spoke, laid his pocket Bible on the man's folded arms, tapped Robert Gray on the shoulder and walked away. He felt that the less said now the better.

Five days after, just at dusk, a tall man from the diggings, clean, well brushed and dressed in a whole, comfortable mining-suit, asked at Ralph Mackey's for "the preacher." It was not the last time he came, bringing each time a clearer brow

and brisker step, and as he came and went, Mr. Allen's heart grew glad.

Three weeks from that eventful Sunday, Mr. Allen was preaching at the court-house, urging the study of the word of God upon his rough hearers. When he finished, the man whom he had found lying under the bushes rose, holding up a little book. He spoke:

“You all know who I am?”

“Ay, ay, Grant Northrup.”

“And you know what I have been and how I have lived?”

“We know it, we know it.”

“And you see this book; it is a Bible;” he held it high. “It is God's word, and as such it has come to me. It has made a new man of me, I believe; it has comforted me when I thought all comfort was gone. You shall see now what good this Bible can do a man by seeing what good it does to me. Here is a plain, rough fellow, one of yourselves, living in these diggings, and the Bible suits him—suits exactly his case. Read it, all of you, and you will find how good it is.”

This was Grant Northrup, the miner's speech, and home it went to the hearts that heard it.



CHAPTER IX.

SCHOOLMASTER AT HOME.

WHILE busy and happy in her new home, Hannah did not lose her interest in her old friends, and was glad to receive a second letter from Semantha. It was written on foolscap, and very decently directed. We embalm it in these archives :

“DEAR MIS’ MACKKEY: I thought I would write and tell you we are glad you like it out there. I have been to school to Mr. Porter, and can write better nor I did that time. Mom is first rate, and pop has got our house built bigger, and fixt up with curtins to every winder. There is twenty more houses at the town, and Mr. Porter is building a school house out of his own pocket, and we voted to call the town Portersville after him. A missionary is coming here to live, and we will have church in the school house. Pop and mom

is going to join and so be I, only I ain't half good enough, and don't never expect to be. The man that bout your house is going to join, and so is his wife and son. The son comes here, mom says to see me, but I say he don't, neither, only to see pop. But I have a new white apron and a blew hair ribbon I wear when he comes. All is well and love you same as ever.

“Your dear friend,

“SEMANTHY MARTHY HOPKINS.”

Under Mr. Porter's tuition Semantha had certainly improved. Hannah rejoiced over periods, capitals and generally respectable spelling, though as we see some words were too much for Semantha yet. Portersville, to use its new cognomen, was prospering, and Hannah felt as if she and Ralph had had a hand in its improvement. This was pleasant to look back upon; it was pleasanter still to see just as much encouragement in Corral City. The conversion of Grant Northrup made an immediate change; it was something the Corral people could appreciate. The alteration in the man was not to be mistaken. Instead of being reckless, morose, untidy and uncivil, he became quiet, friendly and gentlemanly; his shanty, which

had been hardly fit for the lair of a beast, was made comfortable and tidy; cot, chairs and table appeared there. He got books from his new friends, and subscribed for papers and a magazine for himself. Mrs. Mackey found a woman, the wife of their sick mill-hand, to bake Grant's bread and wash and mend his clothes, and thus increase his comfort. While improving in outward respectability, the converted man, urged by a sense of duty, threw off his morbid silence, conversed freely with his acquaintances, and plainly told them of his changed life and feeling, referring all to the blessing and enlightening of God's Spirit upon the reading of the word. He became forward in every good work, bringing men with him to preaching, prayer-meeting and temperance society.

As to the weekly prayer-meeting, a new life entered into it, and the numbers attending increased. Mrs. Rogers had for some time come regularly to prayer-meeting, creeping in in a shy, uncomfortable way, her shaker bonnet pulled down over her eyes, and her shawl hanging about her in a manner suggestive of extreme depression and melancholy. She had always sat in a remote corner, a long-drawn sigh now and then being

her only mark of appreciation of what was going on about her.

Now, Mrs. Rogers came in with her shawl trimly pinned, her head uplifted, her bonnet strings bowed and her cotton gloves on. She saluted her acquaintances with a nod, and sat down within the range of candlelight. What made the difference? Why, Dan Rogers, her husband, came along with her, with his hair and coat brushed, and always close behind him came Grant Northrup, who had been the means of bringing him thither.

Grant had over Dan Rogers the influence that a strong mind acquires over a weak one. Dan Rogers was undeniably a weak man, never a very wicked one, and with possibilities for becoming both good and useful. At Grant Northrup's suggestion, Dan Rogers came to prayer-meeting, began to read his Bible, and attended preaching. These things evidently awoke in him an uneasiness; he ceased taking an occasional glass of whisky, admitted that he had "led the wrong sort of a life," would be "better for religion," and announced his intention of abandoning the use of profane language, but found that this was easier said than done, that the habit of swearing fixes

itself closely upon one, and is much easier to begin than to leave off.

While Dan Rogers seemed thus turning from the error of his ways, Louis Schepberg told Mr. Gray that he had heard some of Dan's companions inquiring for the customary Sunday dance at his house, and Dan partly agreeing to have one soon for their entertainment and his own pecuniary profit.

"What will you do about that?" asked Louis.

"Nothing, myself. Grant Northrup is the man to handle Dan Rogers. We must tell him."

Grant, being told, went to see Dan, and asked if he proposed to give another Sunday dance.

"I've partly promised," said Dan, uneasily.

"It is a promise better broken than kept. I can tell you the Lord will bring some judgment upon you if you profane his day."

"I can hardly make a living, anyway, and there are the children to be taken care of," said Dan.

"God could easily remove that excuse by taking away your children."

This was such a fearful thought that Dan kept silence some time, turning it over; at last he said:

"I don't know, but if I quit having the dances,

the old woman will say I'm taking the bread out of her mouth and the children's."

"No, she won't; she says she only has dances because you want them."

"When did she say that?"

"The last time you had one."

"I've had them a good while, and no harm done."

"Would you like to die Monday morning after you have had a Sunday-night dance?"

"I wouldn't like to die any time."

"But the dying time *must* come, you know. Every man has his limit set him; he doesn't know how soon he will get to the end of his rope. You may have come nearly to the end of your line, Dan; better stop and think. Live closer, work harder, go without what you really need—do anything but burden your soul with these Sunday dances."

Louis Schepberg soon had further information for Mr. Gray. Dan Rogers had given notice that he would have no more dances at his house.

Having given up thus much for duty, it was natural that Dan should set a higher estimate on that duty, and study it more carefully to see what that really was for which he had sacrificed a money

advantage. What were the evil and punishment he would shun? What were the goodness and reward to which he would attain?

The result was that he saw clearly that there was a morality, a religion, a future, different from the low ideas he had formed before, but Dan was too superficial in his examinations, and hastily decided that by his one sacrifice he had attained to all that was worth attaining, had become "as good as anybody," and began to plume himself accordingly. These feelings were soon discerned by his friends, and a series of plain talks from Mr. Allen and Grant Northrup showed Dan that they did not view his actions as he did himself.

"You talk," he said, sulkily, "as if I was a great sinner. Did not I give up Sunday dances for the sake of religion?"

"That does not prove that you have any, and you have no right to make a merit of what you have done."

"What will I make a merit of then?"

"Of nothing that you are or do."

"Well, now, that's queer talk! What is religion?"

"It is turning from old wicked ways, being *bound back* to God and holiness."

“Hain’t I turned from old ways? There’s the dances.”

“That is but one thing, and there must be a heart-turning, an inward as well as an outward change. It is not your merit, but the merit of Christ, that will make you a Christian. You have sins to be settled for, evil dispositions to be destroyed, new feelings to gain, and all these things none but Christ can do for you.”

There was much conversation like this, and day by day, hearing these plain truths, Dan Rogers learned more fully what religion was and what his own hard, sinful heart was also.

“Oh, sir,” he said, to Mr. Allen, “it’s a mighty hard thing to be a Christian.”

“I hope,” said Mr. Allen, “that you’ll never prove it is a great deal harder not to be one.”

This talk was just before prayer-meeting. Dan went home with a gloomy countenance. About midnight, Mr. Allen heard some one tramping up and down the walk before the house. The steps continued so long near the house that Mr. Allen—who, like many other ministers, was spending wakeful night-hours thinking of the souls under his care—rose and looked out of the window to see who this was even more restless

than himself. The pedestrian was looking up, and called out,

“Be that you, Mister Allen?”

“Yes; who is that?”

“It’s Dan Rogers.”

“What’s the matter, Dan?”

“I’m finding out how mighty hard it is not to be a Christian, that’s what’s the matter. Oh, Mr. Allen, I’m scared putty nigh out of my life. I daren’t even go to sleep.”

Mr. Allen did not think there was any advantage in having any one “scared out of his life”—he thought such a state of mind prevented sober thoughts—so he bade Dan sit down on the step and he would come and speak with him. He dressed and went down, and after nearly an hour of conversation in the quiet moonlight, Dan went home feeling more quiet and not less serious. Dan’s nocturnal excitement and his very plain statements of his feelings aroused his wife to more than usual uneasiness. She wanted somebody to talk to, somebody who would smooth matters over to her if possible; she remarked to herself that “’Twa’n’t likely talkin’ to Mis’ Mackey or Mis’ Allen ’d do a mite of good, they was so over-particular,” so as soon as her breakfast-

dishes were washed, and the house swept, Mrs. Rogers went off to her neighbor Perkins, expecting consolation.

"Say, Mis' Perkins," said Mrs. Rogers, sitting down by her friend, who was peeling turnips for dinner, "I b'lieve my Dan's getting religion."

"I should think you'd be mighty glad of it. I wish I could say the same of 'Siah," said Mrs. Perkins.

"Why, how you talk!" cried Mrs. Rogers.

"I'll say it again," said Mrs. Perkins, cutting a turnip in four pieces with unnecessary ardor. "I wish 'Siah was, and would stop his funning ag'in the Bible. My 'Riah says she's got religion, and Mis' Allen b'lieves her, and so do I, and it's made a great deal better girl of her. Since 'Riah took to readin' her Bible and sayin' her prayers, she ain't sassed me onct, she ain't loafin' 'round to the neighbors with her head half combed, but she gits Katy tidied and off to school, and lends a main hand with the work, and she *do* work surprisin'. If 'Siah Perkins had got religion like 'Riah, 'tain't likely he'd gone off and left me with only three sticks of wood cut and not a pinch of flour in the house. So he wouldn't! 'Riah's had to go to the store to see him about it now;" and

Mrs. Perkins cut half a dozen turnips up with amazing velocity, and shook the parings into the swill pail very much as if she were shaking all regard for the offending 'Siah out of her mind.

"Well, I declare!" cried Mrs. Rogers; "now I'm a mind to wish that those Mackeys had never come here with the grist of people they're brought with them. I don't know but we were doing well enough, and they're kept me in a continual worry."

"I don't wish they hadn't come," said Mrs. Perkins, getting a basin of meal to make corn-bread for the boarders she had inherited from Hannah. "If she hadn't, I'd lost 'Riah."

"Seeing you set such store by them, maybe you mean to get religion yourself," said Mrs. Rogers.

"I don't know what I mean to do to-day, I'm so oncommon riled by that 'Siah. I don't see as I can do anything unless I had some more wood. Yes, mebbly I *would* be better for religion."

Not getting the sort of comfort she came for, Mrs. Rogers bade good-morning, and turned toward her home. She went along feeling both vexed and melancholy. She crossed a street where four or five children were concocting a mud pie. She did not notice them, but two of her

own, her youngest, were there, and seeing her go by, left their play to follow her to their house. Her eldest girl also ran out of a friend's yard and joined the procession; so Mrs. Rogers, pacing sullenly along, had a train of three going after her. Pat, pat, pat, fell the tread of children's feet. "We're coming, mammy!" cried the children, and pat, pat, pat, still fell their feet along the way. Mrs. Rogers thought of what Hannah had once said to her. "Wherever you go your children are likely to follow. Are you willing that they should follow you to eternal loss and ruin?"

No, Mrs. Rogers was not willing. Wherever her obstinate feet might go, unto whatever destruction her devious way might lead, she wanted her children to go upward to light and peace and the joyous presence of God. And still after her came the pat, pat, of their feet, and still the children cried, "We're coming, mammy, we're coming 'long of you." All at once the hard mood gave way, and tears rained over the mother's face, and she wiped them away with the corner of her shawl. The children had, all unconsciously, got the better of the devil, and for that time driven him out of their mother's heart. That afternoon Mrs. Rogers went early to the women's meeting at

Mrs. Mackey's, and so got a chance to talk with Mrs. Allen alone.

"I hear 'Riah Perkins has got religion."

"I hope she has."

"Oh, Mis' Allen, why can't I get it?"

"I'm afraid you do not really desire it enough, Mrs. Rogers."

"I want it, I'm sure I want it. I don't believe I ever had any, and I wasn't brought up right, but now I want it."

"Is it really your first object? Do you not try to drive the want away, and try to think you are well enough as it is, and feel angry at any one who knows and says you need something more?"

"That's true," said Mrs. Rogers, weeping; "and I've wished—only for the children's sake—that you and Mis' Mackey hadn't come to Corral. But, Mis' Allen, I feel powerful bad, and so does Dan Rogers. I do wish you could do something for me."

"I can't," said Mrs. Allen; "Jesus must do it all."

"Won't you pray for me, Mis' Allen?"

"Yes, surely."

"Won't Mis' Mackey, too?"

"Yes, I know she will."

"And won't 'Riah and the rest of them?"

"Yes."

"Well, I wisht you would."

"We will, but it will not do any good—none at all—unless you are willing to pray for yourself, and do pray for yourself, heartily."

Mrs. Rogers bowed her head on her folded arms, and sat crying some time. At last she said:

"Yes, I know that. I guess I won't stay to meeting this afternoon; I feel too bad. I'll slip out the back way and go home, and when I get there, I'll go to praying for myself."

"Do so, and I will tell our friends how you feel, and we will pray for you."

"Yes," said Mrs. Rogers, "I wisht you would if such a poor, no-account creature is worth praying for. I look mighty mean to myself, but I'm going home to ask the Lord to have mercy on me, for if he don't I guess nobody else will."

This low estimate which Mrs. Rogers put upon herself was a sign of a better state of feeling, and it was shared by her husband.

"Well, Dan," said Mr. Allen, stopping by his place of labor.

"It's curious," said Dan.

“What’s curious?”

“Why, to think I made so much of quitting them dances, like as ’twas mighty good of me to leave ’em off. ’Twa’n’t good at all; why, I hadn’t any business to have ’em any way. I kept ’em up too long—should never have begun. If I’m proud of stopping Sunday dances, I don’t know what I wouldn’t be proud of.”

Mr. Allen was out looking for a place to preach in on Sunday. It was getting to be cold weather, too cold to hold a congregation on the street corners; the post-office was too small, the court-house was engaged for what was called a concert, a time of noise and lager beer and clouds of smoke. Mr. Allen did not know what better to do than to persuade ’Siah Perkins to share his store with him on Sunday morning, suspending his auction for a while. He meant to go and ask, but had small hopes of succeeding. Mr. Perkins was not at the store, and Mr. Allen followed him to the post-office. Mr. Allen had never served in the circumlocution office; he had a way of going straight to the point in his conversation. He did not begin the request for the store by remarks upon the weather, and inquiries after Mrs. P., ’Riah and all the other P.’s. He had not himself

to introduce as before; Mr. Perkins knew him now, and all about him, so he shook hands with a cordial "Good-afternoon," nodded all round to the assembled company, and hoped they were coming on well, and then told 'Siah that he was looking for a place to preach, and would like an hour's opportunity in his store.

"Why, man alive! I've an auction on hand."

"But you cannot auction all day; you must have a resting-time; just let me cut in while you are resting your throat."

"My throat don't need any resting. I can croak as long as there's goods and people."

"Yes," cried burly Hank, who was whittling as usual, "you can croak a good deal longer than anybody wants to hear you."

"You needn't come to hear," said 'Siah, gruffly.

"I don't mean to; I'm going to hear the parson. Say, parson, give us a good story or two, like you did about that diamond last time."

"I say," cried Tommy Stuggins, "we'll all go to hear the parson, and if 'Siah Perkins won't lend his store, he can have his auction to himself."

"Thomas Stuggins, I don't know but that's actionable," said Lawyer Lytel, who was leaning

against the wall under an unusually heavy press of whisky.

“What’s actionable in that?” demanded Tommy.

“It’s a plan—a plan to injure Mr. Perkins’ business. Yes, you advise people to let him have his auction alone. Now, he *cannot* have his auction alone; it is evident, Thomas, that there must be some third party there besides Mr. Perkins and the goods to make an auction at all. Yes, Thomas, I think your remark is actionable, and I advise Mr. Perkins to sue you.”

“That’s enough from you at present,” said Hank; and taking the drunken lawyer by the shoulders, he added, “There’s the door; just go get up that case.”

“Couldn’t some of you get that man to reform, to sign the pledge?” asked Mr. Allen as Lawyer Lytel stupidly left the post-office and staggered down the street.

“No,” said Tommy Stuggins; “there’s no more hope of him than there is of Hank. Hank drinks just as hard, only he can carry more of that sort of sail than Lytel.”

“No hope of Hank, no hope of Hank!” said Mr. Allen, letting his hand drop on Hank’s shoulder, and speaking very softly in Hank’s ear.

"No hope? Oh yes; there must be hope of Hank."

Hank did not answer. Mr. Allen knew how to stop when he had said enough; he turned from Hank to Mr. Perkins.

"Come, my friend, don't you think you can let me have your store?"

Mr. Perkins had begun to consider that by letting Mr. Allen interrupt the auction by a preaching, more people might gather in and so be in reach of the auction, for Mr. Allen's speaking was becoming quite popular, so he answered: "Well, I don't know; mebby I might *oblige* you. It will put me out considerable, but I'm a very accommodating man, and my women folks are mighty fond of your women folks."

"Hold on there!" said Hank; "I don't know as it's a question of women folks at all. The parson wants to speak in your store, and you needn't run all over creation before you say yes or no. You like to hear yourself talk mighty well. You always did, but this debatin'-club's been nigh the ruin of you. I 'bieve, 'Si' Perkins, you'd stand and cry up a pair of 'spenders or a box of blackin' out on the middle of Salt Lake Desert just to hear your own voice."

"If Hank's got done talking, Mr. Allen, mebby I *can* accommodate you about the store, only you must not go to preaching up keeping Sunday, and not buying or selling on that day, 'cause that will hurt my trade."

"Here, now," said the liquor-dealer whose hostility Hannah had subdued, and whose children went to day and Sabbath-school, "let me talk. Mr. Allen, you may come and speak in *my* store. I've got a barrel there as ain't been unheaded, and you can stand on that and speak just what you like, and ag'in anything you please, if it's the whisky under your feet. I don't brag of being accommodating like 'Si', but you can have my shebang next Sunday."

Here was a fine chance—a chance to preach in a whisky-shop! Mr. Allen could get in a stronghold of Satan, and defy the devil as much as he pleased. Here was the gate of the fortress set open, and if Mr. Allen could go in like a strong man, if he could go strong in the might of God, armed with the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit, shod with peace, helmeted with salvation, girt about with prayer, might he not bind the strong man and spoil his goods?

Mr. Allen always hoped, and studied, and

prayed over his sermon, but now for this Sabbath day, for this opening that had been made for him, for this difficult foothold which he had never expected to gain, how did he cry unto the strong for strength, and lift up his eyes unto the hills whence came his help!

Sabbath came. As Mr. Allen passed down the street to his appointed place of preaching, those who knew him, who felt an interest in his work, who could join their voices in Zion's songs, followed him. There came Rogers and his wife, Mrs. Perkins, her eldest son and 'Riah, Grant Northrup, the family that filled Ralph Mackey's house to overflowing, and Louis Schepberg, with his sons of temperance, now twenty strong. The Lord had done great things for them, whereof they were glad, and in the sunshine of the late November, when the earth and the trees were bare, and the winds came cold from the crests of the gold-filled hills, and whistled down to the sombre green of the pineries sharp and chill, these newly-stirred hearts were warmed with the light of heavenly love, and rejoiced in the new spring of grace that was waking within them.

Once in the shop, mounted on the new barrel containing Matt Brown's—the dealer said—best

rye whisky, Mr. Allen saw about him new faces—in Corral he was for ever seeing new faces—and aside from new faces there were other sights more unexpected. Matt Brown's shop was divided by a partition four and a half feet high into two parts. It was, in fact, two shops, with but half a wall between them. On one side, near the new whisky-barrel, he had made preparations for Mr. Allen's audience, but on the other side were tables, and about twenty men engaged in playing or watching games of roulette, whilst at the back of the store were four French traders at another table, disputing and swearing in French over rouge et noir. Mr. Allen was confounded, and looked at Matt.

“They won't bother you,” said Matt; “all they care for is their own game. They have that place every Sunday to play in, but you can have this place as often as you like.”

There was no help for it. Roulette, rouge et noir and gospel preaching, singing and praying, must go on within arm's length of each other, or the gospel must be driven out into the cold, and Mr. Allen was not the watchman on the walls of Zion who would beat a retreat before anybody. Before beginning his sermon, Mr. Allen had a

few remarks on this wise to fix attention: "The population of Corral reminds me of the sands on the seashore, not so much for multitude as that it is for ever shifting. You come, you go; one day here, the next I seek you and I cannot find you. Some great wave of emigration sweeps you hither from the East, a second bears you farther westward, for ever out of the reach of any voice of warning or encouragement I can lift up. To-day you can hear me; and as you may never hear me again, I tell you to-day what shall be most important for you to know, what can change all your lives, set you heavenward, bring you to God. The eyes of the Lord are in every place! Hank!"

Hank, thus suddenly addressed, squared himself up and eyed the speaker.

"Hank, you liked the story I told of a diamond last Sunday. I have another diamond story to tell to-day."

"Spin it out then," said Hank; "I'm listening."

Now, what would please Hank was likely to please others; what he would listen to others might think it worth while to hear; and profound attention reigned in Mr. Allen's half of the double

store—attention undisturbed by the winning and losing at roulette and the buzz about rouge et noir—while Mr. Allen told the Arabian legend of that stolen diamond called, from its size and brightness, the Eye of God, which darkness could not hide nor daylight quench; whose rays like swords of flame pierced through and through the infidel who plundered it; which, hidden in his bosom, darted through him like ten thousand daggers, filling him with burning light; which set in order all his sins before his eyes; which, hidden, glared up from the earth more luminous than ever; which sleep could not banish, nor the horrors of voluntary blindness obscure, pursuing him in wrath and power, until in an auspicious hour tears of penitence calmed its lightning flash, confession and restitution softened it to a lambent light, which was more blessed than the summer morning, and in mild splendor led him back to home, and on toward heaven.

Even from the roulette table stole a little group to rest folded arms on the partition and hearken. Was the story to be all? Oh no! the eye of the Almighty God follows the sinner through his life's devious ways, in holy anger pursues him still, searches out the black recesses

of his spirit, makes life a torment, death a terror, judgment unendurable and eternity a fiery indignation. But, lo! moved to penitence, bathed in the blood of Calvary, pressing toward God himself, the repentant sinner finds that eye full of a father's love, a light, a joy, a promise—at last eternal peace.

This was the preaching to stir those hardy souls, this was the eloquence that woke the dormant conscience, the human hopes and fears that in the outlived life had seemed to die. Down Hank's cheeks stole something that might be a tear. Heretofore he had scornfully refused a Bible, saying he wanted to be given either a dime novel or a song-book; now he held out a big hand toward Robert Gray's Bible. Robert put it into his hand; Hank nodded, and thrust the book into his pocket. One man paled and trembled as did no other hearer; he pressed closer and closer to the speaker, lost to all else but the strong words of the hour: that man was Matt Brown. Had one questioned Mr. Allen that morning whether he believed his word was sent to Matt Brown, whether he believed Matt Brown could or would receive that word, whether he might be a subject of converting grace, good man as Mr. Allen was,

we fear he would have had to answer that Matt was such a hardened old whisky-seller that he was probably past praying for. Now, here Mr. Allen's weak faith was made to blush, and his amazed heart to cry out, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name;" for hardly had the last word of the benediction fallen from his lips, when Matt said huskily, "Off that"—that being the whisky-barrel. He turned it upon its side, cried, "Clear the way!" pushed it with fierce kicks into the street, grasped his big axe from its place near the door, swung it high over his head; down it came with a resounding crash. The whisky burst forth into the gutter; and while the crowd looked on, Matt Brown turned with long steps toward the region of the pines. After him went Mr. Allen, not too fast, not losing sight of him, but ready to speak the word in season which Matt Brown should need.

Around Ralph Mackey's dining-table sat a thankful group that day.

"This," said Robert Gray, "is the work that truly pays. I came out here to make money, ready and willing to do good incidentally, but as I have worked the Lord's labor has grown upon my heart, and my own has dwindled to its pro-

per size and place—not first, but last. Work for myself and family I shall, and let the Lord bless as seemeth him good, but first let his work be my work and my delight.”

“So say I, Robert,” said Ralph; “to-day it looks to me a small matter if I make a little property out here or not. The Lord has pledged us bread and water at least, and rather than the earthly inheritance for my children I choose the lot of helping to bring many souls into glory.





CHAPTER X.

HOPE FOR DAYS TO COME.

THE defection of Matt Brown was a cause of great consternation in the whisky ring. As soon as the "ring" had partially recovered itself, it closed together more firmly than ever about the cherished institutions of making, selling and drinking whisky, and called a convention at the court-house. The convention was addressed very loudly, if not logically, by Lawyer Lytel and other mighty men, and passed a series of resolutions condemning Mr. Allen and the preaching; condemning Louis Schepberg and the "sons;" condemning Robert Gray and the reading-room; condemning religion, temperance and Sabbath keeping;—all of which were pronounced innovations, and also insults to the ancient customs of Corral City—customs which loomed up honorable with the gray antiquity of

at least six years, and were coeval with the foundation of the city. These weighty resolutions, in an intricate script, peculiar to Lawyer Lytel since he had become so intimate with King Whisky, prepared in lively defiance of grammatical usage and cheerful superiority to the dictionary, were displayed on the doors of the court-house and post-office, were also tacked upon a post in front of the hotel, but in that position captivated the fancy of a venerable goat, who proceeded to devour them, and got them down with much less difficulty than Lawyer Lytel had got them up. The posting of these resolutions was celebrated with a general drink so long and deep that there were immediately on record several cases of assault and battery, of delirium tremens, of window breaking and minor peccadilloes, which kept the court-room in a ferment for several weeks.

Religion, we all know, has nothing in common with a dram-shop, and Matt Brown speedily retired from his business as a liquor-seller, and took to something more reputable. His acquaintances told him he was on the road to starvation, had ruined himself and would die a beggar; but there were no present indications of such an event. Before long his three little boys appeared in new

suits, his wife was magnificent in a plaid shawl, and Matt himself mounted a new hat of unrivaled respectability. Matt became a close companion of Louis Schepberg, was made an officer in the temperance society, and was so diligent in acquiring information about the conduct of the business at the lumber mill that Robert Gray suspected that he meant to establish himself somewhere in that trade.

Matt having left the store, it was no longer possible for Mr. Allen to obtain it for a preaching-place; 'Siah Perkins became suddenly very resolute in denying his store, as he feared the spread of what he called Mr. Allen's "idees" would hinder Sunday trade; the "ring" constantly engaged the court-room for "speeches, concerts or shows" of some kind, evidently for the purpose of keeping it from Mr. Allen. Mr. Gray now applied to the grocer, a man from whom he purchased the family supplies, and to whom his patronage was of great importance, for the use of his store on Sabbath mornings. The grocer was not an ill-disposed man, and seemed willing to give Mr. Allen the privilege of preaching among his boxes and barrels. His brother, however, who acted as his head clerk, was very much opposed

to the preaching, and loudly declared that Mr. Allen should not come to the store. Despite the young man's interference, consent was given, and on Sabbath morning Mr. Allen proceeded to preach at the store. The store had been enlarged by an addition built beside the main room, and opening upon it like a recess, there being no partition. Hardly had Mr. Allen announced his text when the grocer's brother, and three other lads of similar character, entered this addition, and began arranging, with considerable noise, a space for some of their performances. Two of them carried dogs under their arms, and it was evident that a dog fight was in contemplation. In a few moments the fight was begun, the snarls and yells of the dogs and the inciting calls of their owners mingling with the words of the preacher.

"Young men, you are interrupting me greatly. I wish you would take those dogs out," said Mr. Allen.

"You won't get your wish then," said one lad. "You can get your mouth off there as much as you like, and we'll fight the dogs here."

Should Mr. Allen dismiss his audience on account of this so-called sport? He thought not, but concluded to speak louder, hoping that the

dog-fighters might go elsewhere for more space. Not finding him sufficiently insulted and annoyed by their conduct, one of them soon called out: "Say, parson! which dog will you bet on? Lay your money down on the yellow one. He'll whip; he's got the shortest ears."

Hank had been leaning against a barrel apparently only intent on the preaching. He was watching for his chance, however, and now saw his time had come. Darting at the struggling beasts, he tore them apart and flung them out of the door. With short yelps of triumph over their escape, the dogs raced up the street, two of the young men after them. The other two eyed Hank, furious at their defeat, but the miner was too big for them to handle. To revenge themselves one of them cried out that he would perform an Indian war-dance for the edification of the company. He began whooping and leaping into the air, when he felt himself seized behind, and, lo! a new friend of order had taken him in hand; this was no other than Ralph Mackey's big dog Royal. Royal's eyes blazed; his strong teeth were fast in the clothing of the noisy lad in alarming proximity to his skin.

"Take him off! take him off!" he shrieked.

“Stand perfectly still and he will not hurt you,” said Louis Schepberg, coolly; and with Royal thus acting as policeman and keeping the young rowdy in order, the sermon proceeded undisturbed to its close. Corral people were too used to queer sights to have their attention called off from the speaking by the spectacle of a youth in custody of a fiery-eyed dog; as long as the youth kept silence they paid no heed to him, and with Royal’s eyes and teeth so near the fellow dared make no noise.

In such circumstances, with such interruptions and discouragements, amid such opposition, must the Western missionary sometimes labor; in such soil must the good seed be sown, and what wonder that so much falls by the wayside to be carried off by the birds of the air, that so much is lost among the thorns, that storms and suns blast the sudden up-springing of so much more? Yet with all this loss, how sure and beautiful is the growth of that part of the seed that falls into good ground, and brings forth, even as Mr. Allen had here seen, fruit, some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred fold!

Ministers who know how fatiguing to them are their ordinary Sabbath exercises, and who find

themselves exhausted at the close of a day of preaching to quiet and respectful audiences, can appreciate Mr. Allen's fatigue after a sermon delivered amid so much noise and excitement. He went home wearied out, and in the afternoon was forced to lie down instead of going to the reading-room for conversation, as was his custom. Mr. Allen had started from the East in the feebleness consequent upon a severe illness; he found his health wonderfully improved in his rugged life at Corral City, but his friends sometimes feared that his new cares and discomforts would soon wear him out. The group of men about the reading-room fire, supplied with the books, papers and magazines liberally sent by Dr. Gordon's church, fell naturally into a discussion of the events of the morning, of the burden resting upon their pastor and the many hindrances of their work.

"For my part," said Robert Gray, "I see no way but for us to build a church."

"Build a church! How can we?" said Matt Brown.

"By every one taking hold with a will. I said the other day that I had made up my mind to put the Lord's work first and foremost. I

would not live without a house for my family. I will not be without a house for the Lord. As soon as the spring opens we must break ground and get our church up, and we had better have a meeting of the towns-people and discuss our plans, and see what we can do and what help we can get."

The next week a meeting was held in the court-house to deliberate upon building a church; and as speeches were to be made by Mr. Allen, Robert Gray, and also by Matt Brown and Grant Northrup, a crowd was gathered to hear.

Ralph Mackey and Robert Gray offered to give all the lumber for the building. Mr. Allen promised a reed organ as the gift of himself and wife. Grant Northrup remarked for the ladies that they would prepare carpets. Louis Schepberg said they might look to him for the pulpit books, and Grant Northrup further stated that he would be responsible for the lamps. In consideration of the lower part of the church house being used for a school-room, the building lot was given by Corral City, and different people promised days' work at cutting stone, carpentry and hauling building-material.

The church party was evidently in the ascend-

ant, and the whisky ring could only gnash its teeth and drink some of its own poison, which was now in less demand than formerly. Even 'Siah Perkins did not dare to confess himself an opponent of the church movement; the pressure at home and abroad was too much for him; and he went so far as to remark that he "always meant to be accommodating, and just as like as not he'd do something for that church before it was done."

News of the projected church went eastward. Dr. Gordon's congregation promised a Sunday-school library and a bell, and from Grant Northrup's friends on the Atlantic Coast, rejoicing in good news of their long-lost wanderer, came a gift of four hundred dollars to pay for painting and plastering. The most irreligious men of Corral began to take an interest, saying that "Corral was picking up, and public buildings were increasing, the price of property would improve," and so on, taking the view that worldly men take of church matters.

When spring came, "church erection" was fairly inaugurated. As the foundations of the house were laid, and the walls began to rise, it was remarked that it would be "very respectable to have a church," the school-room would be very

useful, the place would be more eligible for public speaking than the court-house, and those who had not given a penny toward the work expressed themselves very plainly on the subject of free seats and perfect equality, and "hoped the church folks would not feel stuck up."

When the organ arrived in safety from Chicago, and Mrs. Allen, rejoicing to get hold of her favorite instrument again, began to call forth sweet sounds, a crowd gathered on the walk before the house, and the next prayer-meeting night the dining-room was full. Taking advantage of this musical interest, the temperance society had a public meeting at the court-room, with addresses and plenty of music from the organ, and songs from a temperance glee-book which had just come to them from the East. Loudest among the singers rose the voice of Hank, who was in perfect ecstasies over the songs, and declared them the best he had ever heard; after the meeting copies of two papers were distributed through the audience, and every one went home well pleased and inclined to believe that religion was not going to prove a detriment to Corral City.

If all our Eastern churches would take some lawless, noisy, impressible frontier town in hand,

furnishing means liberally, instead of doling out a starvation price to the minister and nothing to the church, there would be many places improving like Portersville and Corral, and many harvests would be gathered and garnished which are now likely to die in the ground. So long as our Eastern Christians will insist upon keeping the treasury for church erection straitened for means, while they put the colportage fund on short-commons, and the Board of Home Missions on half rations, they shall find leanness in their own souls; the cramp which they admit to their ecclesiastical extremities will rush in upon their vitals, producing not only a fearful congestion, but danger of instant death. Churches, like human bodies, must keep up a lively circulation if they mean to have health and comfort; and moreover, there is a reckoning day for churches—for stingy churches—and when the sum of their pecuniary shortcomings and niggardly giving shall be reckoned up, they shall hear Him who scrupled not to give his heavenly glory and his blood for us saying, “Ye did it unto me, ye did it unto me!”

Unto him! When, stripped of all our thin disguises, we are brought up to plead, with con-

fusion of face, guilty at the last dread assize and bar of heaven, how shall we wish that instead of a little portion that we did not want, instead of a cold, half-dead wish that Zion should prosper, instead of a little time that had no other work to fill it, we had given ourselves, our all, a hearty, joyous offering to the Lord our God! It will look worth the doing then; it may not now, when the day lies so far in the distance, but if we were not so dolefully ignorant of heavenly science, and could use the telescope of faith aright, instead of this barbarian looking through the wrong end, that day's scenes might be nearer and clearer and larger to us than now.

Happy day for Corral when the church was finished; when the carpets were laid; when God's good book took its appropriate place in the pulpit-desk; when the bell rang out its holy call on the hitherto unconsecrated air, and as the people of Corral thronged into the place of worship, the soft sweet strains of the organ bore their praises upward on melodious waves! There had been sowing in tears—here was reaping in joy. But there were to be years of sowing and weeping still.

The pastor in the East sees around him, year

after year, nearly the same faces; new ones may appear by times in the pews, new homes may be open to his visitation, but the hands which first clasped his in welcome for the most part greet him still; the babes he has seen smiling in their mothers' arms grow up in his Sabbath-school; the young people whose marriage he has blessed are among his stanch supporters; the home feeling often (and it should always) grows sweeter and closer as the years pass away. Such comfort is denied, for the most part, to the pioneer pastor of the far West. They who, smitten with the restlessness of emigration, go westward, often move on and on.

Such a hegira began to be contemplated almost as soon as the church at Corral was built; the little flock was small and weak, but it must be divided. Mr. Allen saw this with an inexpressible pang.

"This is the best you can hope or expect," said Ralph Mackey to him, "and there is a cheerful side to it if we will look at it. We are a pioneer church in every sense; we are a church of pioneers; we must expect our members every year to go out from us; and if we can feel that they go to carry the gospel into other fields, to

plant churches in godless places, we should be glad to have them go."

"And will they do this?" said Mr. Allen.

"They will if their religion is worth anything."

"We must make this a point of particular instruction," remarked Mr. Allen.

"Certainly. I never can forget the counsels and directions I got from your father-in-law, good Doctor Gordon, before I left his parish. Dear old man! if I have done any good, it is to be referred to him. We must bind our departing members to establish Sunday-schools and prayer-meetings wherever they go, even if they have but two or three to meet together."

"In a multitude of counselors is safety," said Mr. Allen; "you have cheered me wonderfully, Ralph, and I shall take that promise to two or three for my text next Sunday morning, and give those who are contemplating removal some plain talk."

"It is with our churches in this region as with families; the children grow up and the homestead is too narrow for them; they want to set off to make their own homes. The parents are sorry to have them go, but when they see these same

children spreading the gospel in dark places, building churches, planting schools and making the beginning of flourishing towns, both patriotism and religion make the parents glad that they gave their children up."

"That is true, Mr. Mackey, but every parent likes to give his child something wherewith to make his start in the world—a foundation whereon to build. We must gather together something for our emigrants, and as we have no more in the way of books, tracts and papers than we daily need here, we much write to father Gordon's church to send a supply."

"That is a church," said Ralph, "that does not stint in giving."

"And it thrives on giving. 'The liberal soul shall be made fat,' says the Scripture, and that church has proved it so; in things temporal and spiritual it has grown by giving."

Early autumn was the time for the move westward, that the emigrants might be fairly settled before cold weather. The men of the party made a summer trip to their chosen location to prepare for the coming of their families, and then returned. Everywhere was heard the busy note of preparation. It made the inhabitants of Corral feel

almost as if they were living in the East to see others striking boldly out west of them. All those of the church who were to remain in Corral gave their best energies to teaching and helping those who were to go. The children about to leave gained nearly all of Ralph's attention in the school-room.

When Dr. Gordon's church responded to the call for books, they sent also two young men who had long been contemplating moving West, and saw now a good opportunity to go with those who knew the country and would make agreeable and moral companions. One of these young men was accompanied by his sister, who, having no other relatives, would not be separated from him after arrival. Ralph felt less anxiety about his pupils and the future Sunday-school.

Another welcome but entirely unexpected addition was made to the party. This was Semantha, not Hopkins now, but Hurd, who made her appearance at Corral with her husband, to Hannah's great surprise.

Hannah was sitting with Mrs. Allen. On Hannah's lap lay another little daughter. Times had changed greatly since her Lucy was such a babe; in worldly things the Mackeys had pros-

pered greatly. Hannah looked up from the infant to her friend, saying,

“When Norman was a baby, we thought we must get our children away from town life to a farm; we directed every effort to that end. In trying to accomplish this we have succeeded in getting into Corral City, a place which I should in those days of planning have thought only fit to ruin them. Still, we saw no other way but to come here, and really the children seem as healthy, happy and obedient as if we had secured a large farm for them to live on.”

“This was evidently the Lord’s place for you. If you do your duty in the world and to your children, you need not fear but all will be well,” replied Mrs. Allen.

“It is two years and a month since we came here,” said Hannah, “and the time has passed very quickly and happily.”

There was a tap at the door. Alice rose from her sewing and set it open. Hannah looked with a dim recollection at the comely young woman who entered, but only when a broad, well-known smile lit the guest’s face did she recognize Semantha.

“Can this be Semantha Hopkins!”

“Not Hopkins now,” said Semantha, embracing her friend; “I got tired of that name. I came in alone to surprise you. *He’s* out there with our wagon, and I’ll call him.”

“He,” as Semantha said—Benjamin Hurd—properly came in at Semantha’s call. They had found from Hannah’s letter that the party from Corral were going to the portion of the country they had selected for their future home, so they had made haste to join them.

“You wouldn’t know Portersville, it has grown so,” said Semantha. “We’ve got four painted houses there, and there are thirty scholars in the school, and our missionary is *such* a nice man! Pop and mom think their eyes of him.” So we see that Semantha had not yet become quite elegant in her expressions.

Semantha had a visit of several days with her friends. She “deserved it,” she said, “for she had made Ben hurry every step of the way, so she could have a good long talk with Mrs. Mackey.”

Semantha made friends with ’Riah Perkins when she found her ready to vie with her in extolling Hannah. She displayed to the girls quilts of her own manufacture, and blankets made for her by her mother, and the store of dried fruits

she had prudently laid up for housekeeping. Turning from this exhibition toward Hannah, she exclaimed: "Mrs. Mackey, you've just *made* me. What an awful dick I was when I first went to see you that Sunday a little better than three years ago!"

Ralph invited all the company who were to leave Corral together to take tea at his house the evening before their departure. Louis Schepberg was going; he said he wanted to see some more of the West, but was sure in course of time he should get back to his home with the Mackeys.

"Old friend, I'm glad you're going," said Ralph. "I'll miss you—we all shall—but I know you'll do a good work, and carry the cause of religion and temperance wherever you go."

Louis, before supper, retired with Master Norman behind the kitchen door, and that youngster emerged from the concealment and went to his mother wearing the watch she had sold to Louis, and saying, "Louis says it's mine, to wear when I'm a man, and you're to keep it till I grow up," and from this arrangement Louis would not recede. Matt Brown, his wife and three boys were going; Dan Rogers and his family and Grant Northrup were of the number also; the two young

men and the young woman from Doctor Gordon's congregation, and Semantha and her husband.

When supper was over the dining-room was filled with busy talkers. "Above all things," said Mr. Allen, "keep holy the Sabbath; in your journeys, in your home, make it holy time, devote it to good deeds and growth in grace. Nothing is more heart-hardening than the desecration of that day, and I believe that it is just as destructive to temporal as to spiritual prosperity."

"You are going to a rough field; you will see hard work; that is an emigrant's lot," said Ralph. "But you must not become discouraged and give over doing."

"I shall not," said Semantha. "After what you and Mrs. Mackey did at Portersville, I shall think any place worth working for."

"Here's my advice," said Robert Gray: "don't be full of your own work, your business, your money-making all the week, and come tired out to Sunday, expecting to break square off and give that to the Lord, but work for the Lord every day, have the religious interest of the community always in your mind."

"I feel very much encouraged about this company," said Mr. Allen; "you are all church-mem-

bers, and I believe earnest and whole-hearted ones."

"For my part," remarked Matt Brown, "I feel that I owe the next place I settle in all the good work I can do as a set-off to the way I did here in Corral. Five years I sold whisky in this place; it makes me feel terrible bad to think of it."

"I don't know as that was any worse than my Sunday dances," said Dan Rogers. "We were both doing wrong ourselves and tempting our neighbors. Well, the Lord is great in forgiving, we found, and now that we know our duty we ought to do it with might and main."

"I don't want to give up our Thursday meetings," said Mrs. Rogers to Hannah; "I do enjoy our mothers' society, and I don't see but that we can keep one up where we're going. It encourages me and steadies me about bringing up the children wonderfully."

"I *did* think," said Mrs. Brown, "that I *never* could pray before folks, but when we're all together in our meeting I don't mind it a bit; it's a real comfort to me."

"You must surely keep up your meeting and let your children come to it," said Mrs. Allen.

"Begin at once with the prayer-meeting and

your Sunday-school," enjoined Mr. Allen, "and while you have a public religion have religion in the family. Let no household be without family worship, and so shall the blessing of God be upon all your habitations."

With the gray morning the canvas-covered emigrant wagons would wind out of Corral, with the travelers and their household stuff, toward the new homes that lay far away in the Northwest, in a goodly land that, now wild and unsettled, shall at last become wealthy, busy and populous. Let us hope that so shall the word of God abound, so shall churches be established, schools multiplied and Christian work be faithfully done, that these numerous people shall be children of the Highest, and at last citizens of the New Jerusalem.

Another day passed, and their friends had gone; the different members of the family sought their rooms for the night. Ralph and Hannah sat alone; the babe was sleeping on Hannah's knee. Ralph had now no pine models, was busy over no slate—the "Hope" he had spent months in building and planning had been long since abandoned; but there was a heart-hope which had grown through the passing years—the hope of

heaven, which filled his life more and more, making all things shrink and pale before its beauty. For this hope he would live; to share it with others, to make it brighten and fill the horizon of other lives, would be his dearest aim; no other work seemed worthy of the labor of consecrated heart and hands.

“Hannah!” said Ralph Mackey to his wife—Hannah looked up to answer—“God has greatly blessed us. The departure of our friends reminds me of the days when we were coming West. We have gone forth with joy and been led out with peace. As our labors have been multiplied, so have our rewards; our trials have been turned for our advantage; we have been made ashamed of our fears; our comforts have kept pace with our works. What God is like unto our God? With David we can say, ‘I will bless the Lord who hath given me counsel; I have set the Lord always before me; therefore my heart is glad.’ We came West to save money; we have learned a higher aim, and will stay here to save souls.”

THE END.