

about her make her a picture of one who had been in her youth "a weel brocht-up lass."

Her house is her mirror. The newly plastered log-built walls are snow-white, the pine floor snow-white, and when the cloth is spread for tea, it, too is snow-white. Upon the wall hangs a row of graduated pewter plates, covers. How pathetically incongruous are they on the walls of this Canadian log house! But they shine. The table and the chairs shine. The spoons and knives and glasses and dishes shine, glitter. The whole kitchen is spotless, from the white window blinds to the white floor, and there is a glitter on every side, from the pathetic pewter covers on the walls to the old silver teaspoons upon the table.

Mr. McPhail comes in, a small man with a quiet, husky voice and a self-respecting manner. His eye is clear and dark blue, and has a look of intellect in it. When he speaks he has a way of looking straight into you with a steady, thoughtful gaze. A man would find it equally difficult to doubt or to deceive him. The pioneer life has bowed his body and subdued his spirit, but the whole mass of his trials and the full weight of his burdens have not broken his heart's courage, nor soured its sweetness, nor dimmed his hope in God.

We are invited to tea with an air of apologetic cordiality. The food is fit for princes—homemade bread white and flaky, butter yellow and sweet, eggs just from the nest, and cream. There is cream enough for your tea, for fruit, and to drink! Cake there is, too, and other dainties; but not for me. No cake nor dainty can tempt me from this bread and butter. Queen Victoria has not better this night. I much doubt if she has as good! God bless her!

At the head and foot of the table sit the father and mother, and Alexander, Jean, and Donald, with the missionary and myself, make up the company. The children take their tea in silence but for a whispered request now and then, or a reply to some low-toned direction from the mother. They listen interested in their elders' talk, and hugely amused at the jokes. There is no pert interjection of smart sayings, so awful in ill-trained children of ill-bred parents. They have learned that ancient and almost forgotten doctrine that children should be seen. I tell my best stories and make my pet jokes just to see them laugh. They laugh, as they do everything else, with a gentle reserve; and occasionally Jean, a girl of fifteen, shy like the rest, pulls herself up with a blush lest she has been unduly moved to laughter. The mother presides over all with a quiet efficiency, taking keen, intelligent interest in the conversation, now and then putting a revealing question, all the while keeping a watchful eye upon the visitors' plates lest they should come near being empty.

The talk goes back to the old times. But these people talk with difficulty when their theme is themselves. But my interest and questions draw their story from them.

Fifteen years ago the father and mother left the cozy Glasgow home and the busy life of that busy city, and came over sea and land with their little girl and baby boy to Winnipeg. There they lived for two years, till with the land-yearning in their hearts they came out from the town to this far-back spot away beyond the Marshes. Here they cut out of the forest their home, and here they have lived amid the quiet, cool woods ever since, remote from the bustle and heat of the great world.

"Why to this place instead of to any other?" I ask.

"There was the hay from the Marshes to be sold, and the wood, too," answered the little man. "But," he went on, "I could not make much out of the wood, and I was too old to learn, so I gave it up, and went into Winnipeg to work at my trade. And, indeed," he added cheerfully, "I made very good wages of it."

I look at him and think of the day when he gave up the fight with the wood, and came in beaten to tell his wife how he must go to the city. I know

she smiled at him, her heart going down the while, and cheered him, though she was like to despair at the thought of the lonely winter. Ah, the pathos of it! Did God help them that day? Ay, and for many a day after. And may He forgive all people whose lives overflow with plenty of everything, and who fret their souls for petty ills.

Through the winter the snow piled up round the shanty where lived the little fair-haired woman and her little girl of nine years and two babies now, thinking, talking, dreaming, weeping, waiting for the spring and the home-coming of the father. One of the horses died, and the other was sold. Their places were taken by oxen. "And the oxen are really very good; I like to work with the oxen," says the little man, with heroic Scotch philosophy and invincible content. He cannot have the best; he will make the best of what he can have. Again, may God forgive us who fling down tools because they are not the best, and refuse to work, and fret instead.

Those days are all gone, but they are not yet passed out of the life of this family. They have left their stamp on heart and character of these steadfast, gentle people, for they are a part of all that they have met.

After tea I am told that I have not yet seen Katie, and the manner of telling makes me feel that there is something in store for me. And so there is. I am taken across a narrow hall and into another room, spotless as the kitchen, the same white walls, white floor, and dainty curtains. This is Katie's room, and there upon a bed lies Katie herself. I have come into the heart of the home.

Katie is the eldest of the family. She is the little girl of nine that stayed through the long winter with the mother, and helped her with the babies inside and the beasts outside, and was the cheer and comfort of the house, while the father was away in Winnipeg, brave little girl that she was. She is now twenty-four, and for the last nine years she has suffered from a mysterious and painful illness, and now for eighteen months she has lain upon her bed and she cannot rise. We all have in us the beast feeling that shrinks from the weak and wounded; but when I look at Katie there is no shrinking in me. Her face has not a sign of fretful weakness. It seems as if it had caught the glitter of the home, of the pewter covers, and the old silver teaspoons. It is bright. That is its characteristic. The broad brow is smooth, and the mouth, though showing the lines of suffering—what control these lines suggest!—is firm and content. The dark eyes look out from under their straight black brows with a friendly searching. "Come near," they say; "are you to be trusted?" and you know you are being found out. But they are kindly eyes and full of peace, with none of that look in them that shows when the heart is anxious or sore. The face, the mouth, the eyes, tell the same tale of a soul that has left its storms behind and has made the haven, though not without sign of the rough weather without.

There is no sick-room feeling here. The coverlet, the sheets, the night-dress, with frills at the breast and wrists—everything about Katie is sweet and fresh. Every morning of her life she is sponged and dressed and "freshed up a bit" by her mother's loving hands. It takes an hour to do it, and there are many household cares; but what an hour that is! What talk, what gentle, tearful jokes, what tender touches! The hour is one of sacrament to them both, for He is always there in whose presence they are reverent and glad.

We "take the books," and I am asked to be priest. One needs his holy garments in a sanctuary like this. After the evening worship is over I talk with Katie.

"Don't you feel the time long? Don't you grow weary sometimes?"

"No! Oh, no!" with slight surprise. "I am content."

"But surely you get lonely—blue now and then?"

"Lonely?" with the brightest of smiles. "Oh, no! They are all here."

Heaven forgive me! I had thought she perhaps might have wanted some of the world's cheerful distraction.

"But was it always so? Didn't you fret at the first?" I persisted.

"No, not at the first."

"That means that bad times came afterwards?"

"Yes," she answers slowly, and a faint red comes up in her cheek as if from shame. "After the first six months I found it pretty hard."

I wait, not sure what thoughts I have brought to her, and then she goes on:

"It was hard to see my mother tired with the work, and Jean could not get to school;" and she could go no further.

"But that all passed away?" I asked, after a pause.

"Oh, yes!" and her smile says much. It was the memory of her triumph that brought her smile, and it illumined her face.

My words came slowly. I could not comfort where comfort was not needed. I could not pity, facing a smile like that; and it seemed hard to rejoice over one whose days were often full of pain. But it came to me to say:

"He has done much for you; and you are doing much for Him."

"Yes: He has done much for me." But she would go no further. Her service seemed small to her, but to me it seemed great and high. We, in our full blood and unbroken life, have our work, our common work, but this high work is not for us—we are not good enough. This He keeps for those His love makes pure by pain. This would almost make one content to suffer.

Next morning we all went to the little log school, where the Communion service was to be held—all but the father and Katie.

"You have done me much good," I could not but say before I left; "and you are a blessing in your home."

The color rose in her pale cheek, but she only said:

"I am glad you were sent to us."

Then I came away, humbly and softly, feeling as if I had been in a holy place, where I was not worthy to stand. And a holy place it will ever be to me—the white room, the spotless white room, lit by the glory of that bright, sweet, patient face. At the table that day the mother's face had the same glory—the glory of those that overcome, the reflection of the glory to follow. Happy, blessed home! The snows may pile up into the bluff and the blizzards sweep over the whistling reeds of the Marshes, but nothing can chill the love or dim the hopes that warm and brighten the hearts in the little log house Beyond the Marshes, for they have their source from that high place where love never faileth and hopes never disappoint.

United States Rebuilding Mexico City

Mexico real estate, city and suburban, has gone up from 200 to 500 per cent, in the last few years. The city is being rebuilt with American capital, business and residential sections alike; trolleys run to all the suburban towns, and these are being rebuilt also in costly and substantial style. The city shows all up-to-date improvements in construction and equipment, and the signs likewise of abundant prosperity. It is every year becoming a more attractive and delightful place for permanent residence, and more and more foreigners, attracted by its beauty and healthfulness, are taking up their abode there. The country at large shows the good effects of a wise administration going over the full period of a generation; it builds more railroads, opens more mines and gets richer year by year, keeping out of the revolutions in which most of the Latin-American republics fritter away the little prosperity that comes to them.