Neville Trueman the Pioneer Preacher

William Henry Withrow

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NEVILLE TRUEMAN,
THE
PIONEER PREACHER.
A TALE OF THE WAR OF 1812.
BY THE
REV. W. H. WITHROW, M.A.

TO THE
REV. EGERTON RYERSON, D.D., LL.D.,
WHOSE LONG LIFE
HAS BEEN DEVOTED TO THE SERVICE OF HIS COUNTRY,

THIS
“Story of the War,”
WHOSE HISTORY
HE HAS WITH GRAPHIC PEN RECORDED,
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
BY
THE AUTHOR.
[Illustration]

PREFACE.

In this short story an attempt has been made—with what success the reader must judge—to present certain phases of Canadian life during the heroic struggle against foreign invasion, which first stirred in our country the pulses of that common national life, which has at length attained a sturdier strength in the confederation of the several provinces of the Dominion of Canada. It will he found, we think, that the Canadian Methodism of those troublous times was not less patriotic than pious. While our fathers feared God, they also honoured the King, and loved their country; and many of them died in its defence. Reverently let us mention their names. Lightly let us tread upon their ashes. Faithfully let us cherish their memory. And sedulously let us imitate their virtues.

A good deal of pains has been taken by the careful study of the most authentic memoirs, documents, and histories referring to the period; by personal examination of the physical aspect of the scene of the story; and by frequent conversations with some of the principal actors in the stirring drama of the time—most of whom, alas! have now passed away—to give a verisimilitude to the narrative that shall, it is hoped, reproduce in no distorted manner this memorable period.

W. H. W.

TORONTO, March 1st, 1880.

[Illustration]

[Illustration]

NEVILLE TRUEMAN, THE PIONEER PREACHER

[Footnote: The principal authorities consulted for the historical portion of this story are:—Tupper's Life and Letters of Sir Isaac Brock, Auchinleck's and other histories of the War, and Carroll's, Bangs', and Playter's references to border Methodism at the period described. Many of the incidents, however, are derived from the personal testimony of prominent actors in the stirring drama of the time, but few of whom still linger on the stage. For reasons which will be obvious, the personality of some of the characters of the story is Slightly veiled under assumed names.]

CHAPTER I. WAR CLOUDS.

Now lower the dreadful clouds of war;
Its threatening thunder rolls afar;
Near and more near the rude alarms
Of conflict and the clash of arms
Advance and grow, till all the air
Rings with the brazen trumpet blare.

Towards the close of a sultry day in July, in the year 1812, might have been seen a young man riding along the beautiful west bank of the Niagara River, about three miles above its mouth. His appearance would anywhere have attracted attention. He was small in person and singularly neat in his attire. By exposure to summer's sun and winter's cold, his complexion was richly bronzed, but, as he lifted his broad−leafed felt hat to cool his brow, it could be seen that his forehead was smooth and white and of a noble fulness, indicating superior intellectual abilities. His hair was dark,

—his eye beneath
Flashed like falchion from its sheath.

His bright, quick glances, alternating with a full and steady gaze, betokened a mind keenly sympathetic with emotions both of sorrow and of joy. His dress and accoutrements were those of a travelling Methodist preacher of the period. He wore a suit of “parson's grey,” the coat having a straight collar and being somewhat rounded away in front. His buckskin leggings, which descended to his stirrups, were splashed with mud, for the day had been rainy. He was well mounted on a light−built, active−looking chestnut horse. The indispensable saddle−bags, containing his Greek Testament, Bible, and Wesley's Hymns, and a few personal necessaries, were secured across the saddle. A small, round, leathern valise, with a few changes of linen, and his coarse frieze great−coat were strapped on behind. Such was a typical example of the “clerical cavalry” who, in the early years of this century, ranged through the wilderness of Canada, fording or swimming rivers, toiling through forests and swamps, and carrying the gospel of Christ to the remotest settlers in the backwoods.

Our young friend, the Rev. Neville Trueman, afterwards a prominent figure in the history of early Methodism, halted his horse on a bluff jutting out into the Niagara River, both to enjoy the refreshing breeze that swept over the water and to admire the beautiful prospect. At his feet swept the broad and noble river, reflecting on its surface the snowy masses of “thunderhead” clouds, around which the lightning still played, and which, transfigured and glorified in the light of the setting sun, seemed to the poetic imagination of the young man like the City of God descending out of heaven, with its streets of gold and foundations of precious stones, while the rainbow that spanned the heavens seemed like the rainbow of the Apocalypse round about the throne of God.

Under the inspiration of the beauty of the scene, the young preacher began to sing in a clear, sweet, tenor voice that song of the ages, which he had learned at his mother's knee among the green hills of Vermont—

Jerusalem the golden,
With milk and honey blest,
Beneath thy contemplation,
Sink heart and voice oppress,
I know not, oh! I know not
What joys await me there;
What radiancy of glory,
What bliss beyond compare.
They stand, those walls of Zion,
All jubilant with song,
And bright with many an angel,
And all the martyr throng.
With jasper glow thy bulwarks,

Thy streets with emeralds blaze,
The sardius and the topaz
Unite in thee their rays.
Thine ageless walls are bonded
With amethyst unpriced;
The saints build up its fabric,
The corner−stone is Christ.

[Footnote: We cannot resist the temptation to give a few lines of the original hymn of Bernard of Clugny, a Breton monk of English parentage of the 12th century—"the sweetest of all the hymns of heavenly homesickness of the soul," and for generations one of the most familiar, through translations, in many languages. The rhyme and rhythm are so difficult, that the author was able to master it, he believed, only by special inspiration of God.

Urbs Syon aurea, patria lactea, cive decora,
Omne cor obruis, omnibus obstruis et cor et ora,
Nescio, nescio, quae jubilatio, lux tibi qualis,
Quam socialia gaudia, gloria quam specialis.]

For a moment longer he gazed upon the broad, flowing river which divided two neighbouring peoples, one in language, in blood, in heroic early traditions, and the common heirs of the grandest literature the world has ever seen, yet severed by a deep, wide, angry−flowing stream of strife, which, dammed up for a time, was about to burst forth in a desolating flood that should overwhelm and destroy some of the fairest fruits of civilization in both countries. As he gazed northward, he beheld, on the eastern bank of the river, the snowy walls and grass−grown ramparts of Fort Niagara, above which floated proudly the stars and stripes.

As he gazed on the ancient fort, the memories of its strange eventful history came thronging on his mind from the time that La Salle thawed the frozen ground in midwinter to plant his palisades, to the time that the gallant Prideaux lay mangled in its trenches by the bursting of a cohorn—on the very eve of victory. These memories have been well expressed in graphic verse by a living Canadian poet—a denizen of the old borough of Niagara. [Footnote: William Kirby, Esq., in CANADIAN METHODIST MAGAZINE for May, 1878.]

Two grassy points—not promontories—front
The calm blue lake—the river flows between,
Bearing in its full bosom every drop
Of the wild flood that leaped the cataract.
And swept the rock−walled gorge from end to end.
'Mid flanking eddies, ripples, and returns,
It rushes past the ancient fort that once
Like islet in a lonely ocean stood,
A mark for half a world of savage woods;
With war and siege and deeds of daring wrought
Into its rugged walls—a history
Of heroes, half forgotten, writ in dust.
Two centuries deep lie the foundation stones,
La Salle placed there, on his adventurous quest
Of the wild regions of the boundless west;
Where still the sun sets on his unknown grave.
Three generations passed of war and peace;
The Bourbon lilies grew; brave men stood guard;
And braver still went forth to preach and teach
Th' evangel, in the forest wilderness,
To men fierce as the wolves whose spoils they wore.
Then came a day of change. The summer woods
Were white with English tents, and sap and trench
Crept like a serpent to the battered walls.
Prideaux lay dead 'mid carnage, smoke, and fire

Before the Gallic drums beat parley—then
Niagara fell, and all the East and West
Did follow: and our Canada was won.

As the sun sank beneath the horizon, the flag slid down the halyards, and the sullen roar of the sunset gun boomed over the wave, and was echoed back by the dense forest wall around and by the still low−hanging clouds overhead. A moment later the British gun of Fort George, on the opposite side of the river, but concealed from the spectator by a curve in the shore, loudly responded, as if in haughty defiance to the challenge of a foe.

Turning his horse's head, the young man rode rapidly down the road, beneath a row of noble chestnuts, and drew rein opposite a substantial−looking, brick farmhouse, but with such small windows as almost to look like a casematad fortress. Dismounting, he threw his horse's bridle over the hitching−post at the gate, and passed through a neat garden, now blooming with roses and sweet peas, to the open door of the house. He knocked with his riding−whip on the door jamb, to which summons a young lady, dressed in a neat calico gown and swinging in her hand a broad−leafed sunhat, replied. Seeing a stranger, she dropped a graceful “courtesy,”—which is one of the lost arts now−a−days,—and put up her hand to brush back from her face her wealth of clustering curls, somewhat dishevelled by the exercise of raking in the hayfield.

“Is this the house of Squire Drayton?” asked Neville, politely raising his hat.

The young lady, for such she evidently was, though so humbly dressed—*simplex munditiis*—replied that it was, and invited the stranger into the large and comfortable sitting−room, which bore evidence of refinement, although the carpet was of woven rags and much of the furniture was home−made.

“I have a letter to him from Elder Ryan,” said Neville, presenting a document elaborately folded, after the manner of epistolary missives of the period.

“Oh, you're the new presiding elder, are you?” asked the lady. “We heard you were coming.”

“No, not the presiding elder,” said Neville, smiling at the unwonted dignity attributed to him, “and not even an elder at all; but simply a Methodist preacher on trial—a junior, who may be an elder some day.”

“Excuse me,” said the young lady, blushing at her mistake. “Father has just gone to the village for his paper, but will be back shortly. Zenas, take the preacher's horse,” she continued to a stout lad who had just come in from the hayfield.

“I will help him,” said Neville, proceeding with the boy. It was the almost invariable custom of the pioneer preachers to see that their faithful steeds were groomed and fed, before they attended to their own wants.

Miss Katherine Drayton—this was the young lady's name—was the eldest daughter of Squire Drayton, of The Holms, as the farm was called, from the evergreen oaks that grew upon the riverbank. Her mother having been dead for some years, Katherine had the principal domestic management of the household. This duty, with its accompanying cares, had given her a self−reliance and maturity of character beyond her years. She deftly prepared a tasteful supper for the new guest, set out with snowy napery and with the seldom−used, best china.

“Hello! what's up now?” asked her father, cheerily, as he entered the door. He is worth looking at as he stands on the threshold, almost filling the doorway with his large and muscular frame. He had a hearty, ruddy, English look, a frank and honest expression in his light blue eyes, and an impulsiveness of manner that indicated a temper—

That carries anger as the flint bears fire,
Which much enforced, showeth a hasty spark,
And straight is cold again.

He was not a Methodist, but his dead wife had been one, and for her sake, and because he had the instincts of a gentleman, of respect to the ministerial character, he extended a hospitable welcome to the travelling Methodist preachers, who were almost the only ministers in the country except the clergyman of the English Church in the neighbouring village of Niagara.

“The new preacher has come, father. He brought this letter from Elder Ryan,” said Katherine, handing him the missive.

The Squire glanced over it and said, “Any one that Elder Ryan introduces is welcome to this house. He is a right loyal gentleman, if he did come from the States. I am afraid, though, that the war will make it unpleasant for most of those Yankee preachers.”

“Why, father, is there any bad news?” anxiously inquired the young girl.

"Ay! that there is," he replied, taking from his pocket the *York Gazette*, which had just reached Niagara, three or four days after the date of publication.

Here the young preacher returned to the house, and was cordially welcomed by the Squire. When mutual greetings were over, "This is a bad business," continued the host, unfolding the meagre, greyish−looking newspaper. "I feared it would come to this, ever since that affair of the *Little Belt* and *President* last year. There is nothing John Bull is so sensitive about as his ships, and he can't stand defeat on the high seas."

"War is not declared, I hope," said Neville, with much earnestness.

"Yes, it is," replied the Squire, "and what's more, Hull has crossed the Detroit River with three thousand men. [Footnote: Rumour had somewhat exaggerated the number of his force. It was only twenty−five hundred.] Here is part of his proclamation. He offers 'peace, liberty, and security,' or, 'war, slavery, and destruction.' Confound his impudence," exclaimed the choleric farmer, striking his fist on the table till the dishes rattled again. "He may whistle another tune before he is much older."

"What'll Brock do, father?" exclaimed Zenas, who had listened with a boy's open−mouthed astonishment to the exciting news.

"He'll be even with him, I'se warrant," replied the burly Squire. "He will hasten to the frontier through the Long Point country, gathering up the militia and Indians as he goes. They are serving out blankets and ammunition at the fort to−night. I saw Brant at Navy Hall. He would answer for his two hundred tomahawks from the Credit and Grand River; and Tecumseh, he said, would muster as many more. We'll soon hear good news from the front. The Commissary has given orders for the victualling of Fort George. We are to take in all our hay and oats, beef cattle, and flour next week."

"O Father, mayn't I go with Brock"? exclaimed the young enthusiast Zenas, "I'm old enough."

"We may soon be busy enough here, my son. No place is more exposed than this frontier. The garrisons at Forts Porter and Niagra are being strengthened, and I could see the Yankee militia drilling as I rode to the village."

"Hurrah!" shouted the thoughtless boy, "won't it be fun? We'll show them how the Britishers can fight."

"God grant, my son," said the farmer solemnly, "that we may not see more fighting than we wish. I've lived through one bloody war and I never want to see another. But if fight we must for our country, fight we will."

"And I'm sure none more bravely than Zenas Drayton," said Katherine proudly, laying her hand on her brother's head.

"You ought to have been a boy, Kate," said her father admiringly. "You've got all your mother's pluck."

"I'd be ashamed if I wouldn't stand up for my country, father: I feel as if I could carry a musket myself."

"You can do better, Kate: you can make your country worth brave men dying for," and he fondly kissed her forehead, while something like a tear glistened in his eyes.

For a time Neville Trueman mused without speaking, as if the prey of conflicting emotions. At last he said with solemn emphasis, "My choice is made: I cast in my lot with my adopted country. I believe this invasion of a peaceful territory by an armed host is a wanton outrage and cannot have the smile of Heaven. I daresay I shall encounter obloquy and suspicion from both sides, but I must obey my conscience."

"Young man, I honour your choice," exclaimed the Squire effusively, grasping his hand with energy. "I know what it is to leave home, and kindred, and houses and lands for loyalty to my conscience and my King. I left as fair an estate as there was in the Old Dominion because I could not live under any other flag than the glorious Union Jack under which I was born. It was a dislocating wrench to tear myself away from the home of my childhood and the graves of my parents for an unknown wilderness. Much were we tossed about by sea and land. Our ship was wrecked and its passengers strewn like seaweed on the Nova Scotia coast— some living and some dead—and at last, after months of travel and privation, on foot, in ox carts and in Durham boats, we found our way, I and a few neighbours, to this spot, to hew out new homes in the forest and keep our oath of allegiance to our King."

The old U. E. Loyalist always grew eloquent as he referred to his exile for conscience' sake and to the planting by the conscript fathers of Canada of a new Troy under the aegis of British power.

"*I* came of regular Yankee stock," said Mr. Trueman. "My mother was a Neville—one of the Nevilles of Boston. She heard Jesse Lee's first sermon on Boston Common, and joined the first Methodist society in the old Bay State. My father was one of Ethan Allen's Green Mountain Boys, and assisted at the capture of Ticonderoga.

He was also a volunteer at Bunker Hill. It was then he met my mother, being billeted at her father's house."

"You have rebel blood in you and no mistake," said the Squire.

"I believe the colonists were right in resisting oppression in '76," continued Neville; "but I believe they are wrong in invading Canada now, and I wash my hands of all share in their crime."

"We will not quarrel about the old war," said the veteran loyalist. "The *Gazette* here says that many of your countrymen agree with you about the new one. At the declaration of hostilities the flags of the shipping at Boston were placed at half−mast and a public meeting denounced the war as ruinous and unjust."

"I foresee a long and bloody strife," said Neville.

"Neither country will yield without a tremendous struggle. It is ungenerous to attack Great Britain now, when, as the champion of human liberty, she is engaged in a death−wrestle with the arch despot Napoleon."

"But Wellington will soon thrash Boney," interjected Zenas, who was an ardent admirer of the Peninsular hero, "and then his redcoats will polish off the Yankees, won't they, father?"

"If you had seen as much of the horrors of war, my boy, as I have, you would not be so eager for it. God forbid it should deluge this frontier with blood; but if it do, old as I am, I will shoulder the old Brown Bess there above the fireplace that your grandfather bore at Brandywine and Yorktown."

"What I dread most is the effect on religion," said Trueman. "Several of the Methodist preachers are, like myself, American− born, and we all are stationed by an American bishop. I am afraid many will go back to the States, and all will be liable to suspicion as disloyal to this country by the bigoted and prejudiced. But I shall not forsake my post, nor leave these people as sheep without a shepherd. If there is to be war and bloodshed and wounds and sudden death on this frontier circuit, they will need a preacher all the more, and, God helping me, I'll not desert them.

"I am a man of peace, and fight not with worldly weapons, but I can, perhaps, help those who do."

"God bless you for that speech, my brave lad," exclaimed the Squire. "Nobody questions *my* loyalty, and if need arise, I'll give you a paper, signed with my name as a magistrate, that will protect you from harm."

Kate had sat quiet, busily sewing, during this conversation, but her heightened colour and her quickened breathing bore witness that she was no uninterested listener. With a look of deep gratitude, she quietly said, "We are all very much obliged to you, Mr. Neville, for your noble resolve."

The young man thought that grateful look ample compensation for the mental sacrifice that he had made, and an inspiration to unfaltering fidelity in carrying it into effect.

The next morning all was bustle and excitement at the farmhouse. "All hands were piped," to use a sea phrase, to aid in the revictualling of the fort, the orders for which were urgent. Breakfast was served in the huge kitchen, the squire, his guest, his children, and the hired men all sitting at the same table, like a feudal lord, with his men−at−arms, in an old baronial hall.

"Father," said Zenas, "Tom Loker and Sandy McKay have gone off with the militia. They went to the village last night and signed the muster−roll. I saw them marching past with some more of the boys and the redcoats early this morning."

"I saw them, too," said the squire. "They needn't have given me the slip that way. It will leave me short−handed; but I wouldn't have said nay if they wanted to go."

After breakfast Neville mounted his horse and rode off to the place appointed for holding the Methodist Conference,—the new meeting−house near St. David's. He soon overtook the detachment of militia, which was marching to join, at Long Point, the main force which Brock was to lead thither from York by way of Ancaster. He noticed that the men, though tolerably well armed, were very indifferently shod for their long tramp over rough roads. They had no pretence to uniform save a belt and cartouch box, and a blanket rolled up tightly and worn like a huge scarf. As He walked his horse for awhile beside Tom Loker who had groomed his horse the night before, he told him what the squire had said about his joining the militia.

"Did he now?" said Tom. "Then my place will be open for me when I return. We'll be back time enough to help run in that beef and pork into the fort, won't we, Sandy?"

"That's as God pleases," said the Scotchman, a sturdy, grave−visaged man. "Ilka bullet has its billet; an' gin we're to coom back, back we'll coom, though it rained bullets all the way."

Neville bade them God speed and rode on to "Warner's meeting−house," as it was called. It was a large frame structure, utterly devoid of ornament, near the roadside. "Hitching" his horse to the fence, he went in. A meagre

handful of Methodist preachers were present—not more than a dozen—indeed, the entire number in the province was very little more than that. In the chair, in front of the quaint, old−fashioned pulpit, which the present writer has often occupied, sat a man who would attract attention anywhere. He was nearly six feet in height, and of very muscular development; indeed tradition asserted that he had once been a prize−fighter. His dark hair was closely cut, which increased his resemblance to that especially unclerical and un−Methodistic character. This was the Rev. Henry Ryan, the Presiding Elder of the Upper Canada District—extending from Brockville to the Detroit River. [Footnote: The whole of Lower Canada formed another district, of which the celebrated Nathan Bangs was at that time Presiding Elder.] In a full rich voice, in which the least shade of an Irish accent could be discerned, he was addressing the little group of men before him. The ministers labouring in Canada had expected to meet their American brethren; but, on account of the outbreak of the war, the latter had remained on their own side of the river, and held their Conference near Rochester, New York State. The bishop, however, appointed the Canadian ministers to their circuits, but the relations of Methodism in the two countries were almost entirely interrupted during the war. A few of the ministers labouring in Canada obeyed what they conceived the dictates of prudence, and returned to the United States; but the most of them, although cut off from fellowship, and largely from sympathy with the Conference and Church by which they were appointed, continued steadfast at their posts and loyal to the institutions of the country, notwithstanding the obloquy, suspicion, and persecution to which they were often subjected. In this course they were greatly sustained and encouraged by the unfaltering faith and energy of Elder Ryan, who, though subsequently in his history he became a religious agitator, was at this period a most zealous and effective preacher, one who, in the words of Bishop Hedding, “laboured as if the thunders of the day of judgment were to follow each sermon.” During the agitations and civil convulsions by which the country was disturbed, he continued to meet the preachers in annual conference, and endeavoured to maintain the ecclesiastical organization of Methodism till it was permitted to renew its relations with the mother Church of the United States.

On the present occasion, Elder Ryan gave a rousing exhortation, like the address of a general on the eve of a battle, that inspired courage in every heart. Then followed a few hours of deliberation and mutual council on the course to be adopted in the critical circumstances of the time. Certain prudential arrangements were made for maintaining the connexional unity of the Church under the stress of disorganizing influences, and certain provisions effected for the unforeseen contingencies of the war. Then, after commending one another to God in fervent prayer, and invoking His guidance of their lives and His blessing on their labours, they sang that noble battle hymn and marching song of Charles Wesley's:—

In flesh we part awhile,
But still in spirit joined,
To embrace the happy toil
Thou hast to each assigned;
And while we do Thy blessed will,
We bear our heaven about us still.

They looked like a forlorn hope, like a despised and feeble remnant, but they were animated with the spirit of a conquering army. With many a hearty wring of the hand and fervent “God bless you!” and, not without eyes suffused with tears, they took their leave of one another, and fared forth on their lonely ways to their remote and arduous fields of toil.

CHAPTER II. THE EVE OF BATTLE.

The next scene of our story opens on the eve of an eventful day in the annals of Canada. About sunset in an October afternoon, Neville Trueman reached The Holms, after a long and weary ride from the western end of his circuit, which reached nearly to the head of Lake Ontario. The forest was gorgeous in its autumnal foliage, like Joseph in his coat of many colours. The corn still stood thick, in serried ranks, in the fields, no longer plumed and tasseled like an Indian chief, but rustling, weird−like, as an army of spectres in the gathering gloom. The great yellow pumpkins gleamed like huge nuggets of gold in some forest Eldorado. The crimson patches of ripened buckwheat looked like a blood−stained field of battle: alas! too true an image of the deeper stains which were soon to dye the greensward of the neighbouring height.

The change from the bleak moor, over which swept the chill north wind from the lonely lake, to the genial warmth of Squire Drayton's hospitable kitchen was most agreeable. A merry fire of hickory wood on the ample hearth—it was long before the time of your close, black, surly−looking kitchen stoves—snapped and sparkled its hearty welcome to the travel−worn guest. It was a rich Rembrant−like picture that greeted Neville as he entered the room. The whole apartment was flooded with light from the leaping flames which was flashed back from the brightly−scoured milk−pans and brass kettles on the dresser—not unlike, thought he, to the burnished shields and casques of the men−at−arms in an old feudal hall.

The fair young mistress, clad in a warm stuff gown, with a snowy collar and a crimson necktie, moved gracefully through the room, preparing the evening meal. Savoury odours proceeded from a pan upon the coals, in which were frying tender cutlets of venison— now a luxury, then, in the season, an almost daily meal.

The burly squire basked in the genial blaze, seated in a rude home−made armchair, the rather uncomfortable−looking back and arms of which were made of cedar roots, with the bark removed, like our garden rustic seats. Such a chair has Cowper in his “Task” described,—

> “Three legs upholding firm
> A messy slab, in fashion square or round.
> On such a stool immortal Alfred sat,
> And swayed the sceptre of his infant realms:
> And such in ancient halls may still be found.”

At his feet crouched Lion, the huge staghound, at times half growling in his sleep, as if in dreams he chased the deer, and then, starting up, he licked his master's hand and went to sleep again.

On the opposite side of the hearth, Zenas was crouched upon the floor, laboriously shaping an ox−yoke with a spoke−shave. For in those days Canadian farmers were obliged to make or mend almost everything they used upon the farms.

Necessity, which is the mother of invention, made them deft and handy with axe and adze, bradawl and waxed end, anvil and forge. The squire himself was no mean blacksmith, and could shoe a horse, or forge a plough coulter, or set a tire as well as the village Vulcan at Niagara.

“Right welcome,” said the squire, as he made room for Neville near the fireplace, while Katherine gave him a quieter greeting and politely relieved him of his wrappings. “Well, what's the news outside?” he continued, we must explain that as Niagara, next to York and Kingston, was the largest settlement in the province, it rather looked down upon the population away from “the front,” as it was called, as outsiders almost beyond the pale of civilization.

“No news at all,” replied Neville, “but a great anxiety to hear some. When I return from the front, they almost devour me with questions.”

The early Methodist preachers, in the days when newspapers or books were few and scarce, and travel almost unknown, were in one respect not unlike the wandering minstrels or trouveres, not to say the Homeric singers of an earlier day. Their stock of news, their wider experience, their intelligent conversation, and their sacred minstrelsy procured them often a warm welcome and a night's lodging outside of Methodist circles. They diffused much useful information, and their visits dispelled the mental stagnation which is almost sure to settle upon an isolated community. The whole household gathering around the evening fire, hung with eager attention upon their

lips as, from their well−stored minds, they brought forth things new and old. Many an inquisitive boy or girl experienced a mental awakening or quickening by contact with their superior intelligence; and many a toil−worn man and woman renewed the brighter memories of earlier years as the preacher brought them glimpses of the outer world, or read from some well−worn volume carried in his saddle−bags pages of some much−prized English classic.

“Well, there has been news in plenty along the line here,” said the squire, “and likely soon to be more. The Americans have been massing their forces at Forts Porter, Schlosser, and Niagara, and we expect will be attempting a crossing somewhere along the river soon.”

“They'll go back quicker than they came, I guess, as they did at Sandwich,” said Zenas, who took an enthusiastically patriotic view of the prowess of his countrymen.

“I reckon the 'Mericans feel purty sore over that business,” said Tom Loker, who, with Sandy McKay, had come in, and, in the unconventional style of the period, had drawn up their seats to the fire. “They calkilated they'd gobble up the hull of Canada; but 'stead of that, they lost the hull State of Michigan an' their great General Hull into the bargain,” and he chuckled over his play upon words, after the manner of a man who has uttered a successful pun.

“You must tell us all about it,” said Neville: “I have not heard the particulars yet.”

“After supper,” said the squire. “We'll discuss the venison first and the war afterwards,” and there was a general move to the table.

When ample justice had been done to the savoury repast, Miss Katherine intimated that a good fire had been kindled in the Franklin stove in the parlour, and, in honour of the guest, proposed an adjournment thither.

The squire, however, looked at the leaping flames of the kitchen fire as if reluctant to leave it, and Neville asked as a favour to be allowed to bask, “like a cat in the sun,” he said, before it.

“I'm glad you like the old−fashioned fires,” said the farmer. “They're a−most like the camp−fire beside which we used to bivouac when I went a−sogering. I can't get the hang o' those new−fangled Yankee notions,” he continued, referring to the parlour stove, named after the great philosopher whose name it bore.

A large semicircle of seats was drawn up around the hearth. The squire took down from the mantel his long−stemmed “churchwarden” pipe.

“I learned to smoke in Old Virginny,” he said apologetically. “Had the real virgin leaf. It had often to be both meat and drink when I was campaigning there. I wish I could quit it; but, young man,” addressing himself to Neville, “I'd advise you never to learn. It's bad enough for an old sojer like me; but a smoking preacher I don't admire.”

Zenas, crouched by the chimney−jamb, roasting chestnuts and “popping” corn; Sandy, with the characteristic thrift of his countrymen, set about repairing a broken whip−stock and fitting it with a new lash; Tom Loker idly whittled a stick, and Miss Katharine drew up her low rocking−chair beside her father, and proceeded to nimbly knit a stout−ribbed stocking, intended for his comfort—for girls in those days knew how to knit, ay, and card the wool and spin the yarn too.

“Now, Tom, tell us all about Hull's surrender,” said Zenas, to whom the stirring story was already an oft−told tale.

“Wall, after I seed you, three months agone,” said Tom, nodding to Neville, and taking a fresh stick to whittle, “we trudged on all that day and the next to Long P'int, an' a mighty long p'int it wuz to reach, too. Never wuz so tired in my life. Follering the plough all day wuz nothing to it. But when we got to the P'int, we found the Gineral there. An' he made us a rousin' speech that put new life into every man of us, an' we felt that we could foller him anywheres. As ther wuz no roads to speak of, and the Gineral had considerable stores, he seized all the boats he could find.”

“Requiseetioned, they ca' it,” interjected Sandy.

“Wall, it's purty much the same, I reckon,” continued Tom, “an' a queer lot o' boats they wuz—fishin' boats, Durham boats, scows [Footnote: In the absence of roads, boats were much used for carrying corn and flour to and from the mills, and for the conveyance of farm produce.]—a'most anythin' that 'ud float. Ther' wuz three hundred of us at the start, an' we picked up more on the way. Wall, we sailed an' paddled a matter o' two hundred miles to Fort Malden, an' awful cramped it wuz, crouchin' all day in them scows; an' every night we camped on shore, but sometimes the bank wuz so steep an' the waves so high we had to sail on for miles to find a creek we could run

into, an' once we rowed all night. As we weathered P'int Pelee, the surf nearly swamped us."

"What a gran' feed we got frae thae gallant Colonel Talbot!" interjected Sandy McKay. "D'ye mind his bit log bothie perched like a craw's nest atop o' yon cliff. The 'Castle o' Malahide,' he ca'd it, no less. How he speered gin there were ony men frae Malahide in the auld kintry wi' us! An' a prood man he was o' his ancestry sax hunnerd years lang syne. Methinks he's the gran'est o' the name himsel'—the laird o' a score o' toonships a' settled by himsel'. Better yon than like the gran' Duke o' Sutherland drivin' thae puir bodies frae hoose an' hame. Lang suld Canada mind the gran' Colonel Talbot [Footnote: Posterity has not been ungrateful to the gallant colonel. In the towns of St. Thomas and Talbotville, his name is commemorated, and it is fondly cherished in the grateful traditions of many an early settler's family. He died at London, at the age of eighty, in 1853.] But was na it fey that him as might hae the pick an' choice o' thae braw dames o' Ireland suld live his lane, wi' out a woman's han' to cook his kail or recht up his den, as he ca'd it."

"I've been at his castle," said Neville, "and very comfortable it is: He lives like a feudal lord,—allots land, dispenses justice, marries the settlers, reads prayers on Sunday, and rules the settlement like a forest patriarch."
"Tell about Tecumseh," said Zenas, in whose eyes that distinguished chief divided the honours with General Brock.

"Wall," continued Loker, "at Malden there wuz a grand pow−wow, an' the Indians wore their war−paint and their medals, and Tecumseh made a great harangue. He was glad, he said, their great father across the sea had woke up from his long sleep an' sent his warriors to help his red children, who would shed the last drop of their blood in fighting against the 'Merican long knives." "And they'll do it, too," chimed in Zenas, in unconscious prophecy of the near approaching death of that brave chief and many of his warriors.

"An' Tecumseh," continued the narrator, "drawed a map of Detroit an' the 'Merican fort on a piece o' birch bark, as clever, I heered the Gineral say, as an officer of engineers."

"But was na yon a gran' speech thae General made us when we were tauld tae attack thae fort?" exclaimed Sandy with martial enthusiasm. "Mon, it made me mind o' Wallace an' his 'Scots wham Bruce hae aften led.' I could ha' followed him 'gainst ony odds, though odds eneuch there were—near twa tae ane, an' thae big guns an' thae fort tae their back."

"Wasn't I glad to see the white flag come from the fort as we formed column for assault, instead o' the flash o' the big guns, showin' their black muzzles there," Loker ingenuously confessed. "I'm no coward, but it makes a feller feel skeery to see those ugly−lookin' war dogs splttin' fire at him."

"Hae na I tell't ye," said Sandy, somewhat sardonically, "gin ye're born tae be hangit, the bullet's no made that'll kill ye."

"Ye're as like to be hanged yerself," said Tom, somewhat resentfully, giving the proverb a rather literal interpretation.

"Tush, mon, nae offence, its ony an auld Scotch saw, that. But an angry mon was yon tall Captain Scott [Footnote: Afterwards Major−General Scott, Commander−in−Chief of the United States army. The prisoners were sent to Montreal and Quebec. Hull was subsequently court−marshalled for cowardice and condemned to death, but he was reprieved on account of Revolutionary service.] at thae surrender. How he stamped an' raved an' broke his sword."

"I am sure the Gineral was very kind to them. On our march home, the prisoners shared and fared as well as we did."

"I heard," said Neville, "that Hull was afraid the Indians would massacre the women and children who had taken refuge in the fort."

"No fear of that," said Loker. "Tecumseh told the Gineral they had sworn off liquor during the war. It's the fire−water that makes the Indian a madman, an' the white man, too."

"Well, thank God," said Neville, "it is a great and bloodless victory. I hope it will bring a speedy peace."

"I am afraid not," said the squire, arousing from his doze in the "ingle nook." "We had a seven years' struggle of it in the old war, and I fear that there will have to be some blood−letting before these bad humours are cufed. But we'll hope for the best. Come, Katharine, bring us a flagon of your sweet cider."

The sturdy brown flagon was brought, and the gleaming pewter mugs were filled—it was long before the days of Temperance Societies— even the preacher thinking it no harm to take his mug of the sweet, amber−coloured draught.

Neville read from the great family Bible that night the majestic forty−sixth psalm, so grandly paraphrased in Luther's hymn,

“Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott;”

the favourite battle−hymn, chanting which the Protestant armies marched to victory on many a hard−fought field—the hymn sung by the host of Gustavus Adolphus on the eve of the fatal fight of Lutzen.

As he read the closing verses of the psalm the young preacher's voice assumed the triumphant tone of assured faith in the glorious prophecy:

“He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth; He breaketh the bow and cutteth the spear in sunder; He burneth the chariot in the fire.

“Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

“The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.”

“Amen!” unconsciously but fervently responded the soft low voice of Katherine Drayton to this prophecy of millennial peace, and this solemn avowal of present confidence in the Most High.

Alas! before to−morrow's sun should set, her woman's heart should bleed at the desolations of war brought home to her very hearthstone.

CHAPTER III. QUEENSTON HEIGHTS.

About seven miles from the mouth of the Niagara River, a bold escarpment of rock, an old lake margin, runs across the country from east to west, at a height of about three hundred feet above the level of Lake Ontario. Through this the river, in the course of ages, has worn a deep and gloomy gorge. At the foot of the cliff and on its lower slopes, nestled on the western side the hamlet of Queenston and on the eastern the American village of Lewiston. On the Canadian side, where the ascent of the hill was more abrupt, it was overcome by a road that by a series of sharp zigzags gained the tableland at the top. Halfway up the height was a battery mounting an 18−pound gun, and manned by twelve men, and on the bank of the river, some distance below the village, was another mounting a 24−pound carronade. On either side of the rocky pass from which the river flows, the spiry spruces and cedars with twisted roots grapple with the rocks and cling to the steep slopes.

The river emerges from the narrow gorge, a dark and tortured stream. For seven miles since its plunge over the great cataract, it has been convulsed by raging rapids and rugged rocks and by a seething whirlpool. As it here glides out into a wider channel, it bears the evidences of its tumultuous course in the resistless sweep of its waters and the dangerous eddies and “boilers” by which its dark surface is disturbed. At this point is a favourite fishing−ground. The schools of herring attempting to ascend the river are here unable to overcome the swiftness of the current and are caught in large quantities by the rude seines and nets of the neighbouring fishermen, a waggon−load sometimes being caught in a few hours. Notwithstanding the invasion of Canada by Hull and the capture of Detroit by Brock, a sort of armed truce was observed along the Niagara frontier; and Brock had orders from Sir George Provost, Commander−in−Chief and Governor−General, to stand strictly on the defensive. As the schools of fish at this season of the year were running finely, the fishermen of the villages on each side of the river were eagerly engaged in securing their finny harvest, on which much of their winter food supply depended. As this was a mutual necessity, each party, by a tacit consent, was allowed to ply this peaceful avocation, for the most part, undisturbed by hostile demonstrations of the other.

For the defence of the whole frontier of thirty−four miles from Fort Erie to Fort George, Brock had only some fifteen hundred men, of whom at least one−half were militiamen and Indians. On the American side of the river, a force of over six thousand regulars and militia were assembled for the invasion of Canada. These were distributed along the river from Fort Niagara to Buffalo. Brock was compelled, therefore, still further to weaken his already scanty force by being on the alert at all points, as he knew not at which one the attack would be made. Consequently there were only some three hundred men, mostly militia, quartered at Queenston at the time of which we write. They were billeted at the inn and houses of the village and in the neighbouring farmhouses and barns.

The morning of the thirteenth of October, a day ever memorable in the annals of Canada, broke cold and stormy. Low hung clouds mantled the sky and made the late dawn later still, and cast still darker shadows on the sombre clumps of spruce and pines that clothed the sides of the gorge, and on the sullen water that flowed between. A couple of fishermen of the neighbourhood who were serving in the militia had been permitted by the officer in command to attend to their seines, with the injunction to keep a sharp look−out at the same time, and to be ready at an instant's summons to join the ranks. As the schools of herring were in full run, they had remained all night in the little bothie or hut, made of spruce boughs, down at the water−side, that they might at the earliest dawn draw their seine and set it again unmolested by the stray shots from the opposite side, which, notwithstanding the truce, had of late occasionally been fired. At the same season of the year, the same operation can still be witnessed at the same place—the narrow ledge beneath the cliff, along the river−bank, especially near the abutment of the broken Suspension Bridge.

The elder of the two men was a sturdy Welshman—Jonas Evans by name—a Methodist of the Lady Huntingdon connexion. The other, Jim Larkins, was Canadian born, the son of a neighbouring farmer. About four o'clock in the morning they emerged from their spruce booth and began hauling with their rude windlass upon the seine, heavily laden with fish.

“Hark!” exclaimed Jonas to his companion, “what noise is that? I thought I heard the splash of oars.”

“It is only the wash of the waves upon the shore or the sough of the wind among the pines. You're likely to

hear nothing else this time o' day, or o' night rather."

"There it is again," said the old man, peering into the darkness, "And I'm sure I heard the sound o' voices on the river. See there!" he exclaimed as a long dark object was descried amid the gloom. "There is a boat, and there behind it is another; and I doubt not there are still others behind. Run, Jim, call out the guard. The Lord hath placed us here to confound the devices of the enemy."

Snatching from the booth his trusty Brown Bess musket, without waiting to challenge, for he well knew that this was the vanguard of the threatened invasion, he fired at the boat, more for the purpose of giving the alarm than in the expectation of inflicting any damage on the moving object in the uncertain light.

The sound of the musket shot echoed and re−echoed between the rocky cliffs, and repeated in loud reverberations its thrilling sound of warning.

"Curse him! we are discovered," exclaimed the steersman of the foremost boat, with a brutal oath. "Spring to your oars, lads! We must gain a footing before the guard turns out or it's all up with us. Pull for your lives!"

No longer rowing cautiously with muffled oars, but with loud shouts and fairly churning the surface of the water into foam, they made the boat—a large flat−bottomed barge—bound through the waves. Another and another emerged rapidly from the darkness, and their prows successively grated upon the shingle as they were forced upon the beach. The invading troops leaped lightly out with a clash of arms, and at the quick, sharp word of command, formed upon the beach.

Meanwhile, on the cliff above, the sharp challenge and reply of the guard, the shrill *reveille* of the bugle, and the quick throbbing of the drums calling to arms is heard. The men turn out with alacrity, and are soon seen, in the grey dawn, running from their several billets to headquarters, buckling their belts and adjusting their accoutrements as they run. Soon is heard the measured tramp of armed men forming in companies to attack the enemy. Sixty men of the 49th Grenadiers, under the command of Captain Dennis, and Captain Halt's company of militia advance with a light 3−pounder gun against the first division of the enemy, under Colonel Van Rensselaer, who has formed his men on the beach and is waiting the arrival of the next boats. These are seen rapidly approaching, but to get them safely across the river is a work of great difficulty and danger. The current is swift, and the swirling eddies are strong and constantly changing their position. On leaving the American shore, they were obliged to pull up stream as far as possible. But when caught by the resistless sweep of the current, they were borne rapidly down, their track being an acute diagonal across the stream. To reach the only available landing− place, they must again row up stream in the slack water on the Canadian side, their whole course being thus like the outline of the letter 'N'. [Footnote: The present writer has a vivid remembrance of a night−passage of the river under circumstances of some peril. It was in a small flat−bottomed scow. Shortly after leaving the American shore, a tremendous storm of thunder, lightning, rain, and hail burst over the river. The waves, crested with snowy foam which gleamed ghastly in the dim light of our lantern, threatened to engulf our frail bark. The boatman strained every nerve and muscle, but was borne a mile down the river before he made the land. That distance he had to retrace along the rugged, boulder−strewn, and log−encumbered shore. We reached the landing in a still more demoralized condition than the American invaders, but met a warmly hospitable, not hostile, reception.]

Of the thirteen boats that left the American shore, three were driven back by the British fire—the little three−pounder and the two batteries doing good service as their hissing shots fell in disagreeably close proximity to the boats, sometimes splashing them with spray, and once ricocheting right over one of them.

The first detachment of invaders were driven with some loss behind a steep bank close to the water's edge, but they were soon reinforced by fresh arrivals, and, being now in overwhelming strength, steadily fought their way up the bank.

Meanwhile, where was Brock? Such, we venture to think, was the most eager thought of every mind on either side. He was speeding as fast as his good steed could carry him to his glorious fate. The previous night, at head−quarters at Fort George, he had called his staff together and, in anticipation of the invasion, had given to each officer his instructions. In the morning, agreeably to his custom, he rose before day. While dressing, the sound of the distant cannonade caught his attentive ear. He speedily roused his aides−de−camp, Major Glegg and Colonel Macdonel, and called for his favourite horse, Alfred, the gift of his friend, Sir James Craig. His first impression was that the distant firing was but a feint to draw the garrison from Fort George. The real point of attack he anticipated would be Niagara, and he suspected an American force to be concealed in boats around the

point on which Fort Niagara stood, ready to cross over as soon as the coast was clear. He determined, therefore, to ascertain personally the nature of the attack before withdrawing the garrison.

With his two aides, he galloped eagerly to the scene of the action. As he approached Queenston Heights, the whole slope of the hill was swept by a heavy artillery and musketry fire from the American shore. Nevertheless, with his aides, he rode at full speed up to the 18−pounder battery, midway to the summit. Dismounting, he surveyed the disposition of the opposed forces and personally directed the fire of the gun. At this moment firing was heard on the crest of the hill commanding the battery. A detachment of American troops under Captain (afterwards General) Wool had climbed like catamounts the steep cliff by an unguarded fisherman's path. Sir Isaac Brock and his aides had not even time to remount, but were compelled to retire with the twelve gunners who manned the battery. This was promptly occupied by the Americans, who raised the stars and stripes. Brock, having first despatched a messenger to order up reinforcements from Fort George and to command the bombardment of Fort Niagara, [Footnote: This was done with such vigour that its fire was silenced and its garrison compelled for the time to abandon it.] determined to recapture the battery. Placing himself at the head of a company of the Forty−ninth he charged up the hill under a heavy fire. The enemy gave way, and Brock, by the tones of his voice and the reckless exposure of his person, inspirited the pursuit of his followers. His tall figure—he was six feet two inches in height, —his conspicuous valour, and his general's epaulettes and cockade attracted the fire of the American sharpshooters, and he fell, pierced through the breast by a mortal bullet. As he fell upon his face, a devoted follower rushed to his assistance. “Don't mind me,” he said. “Push on the York volunteers,” and with his ebbing life sending a love−message to his sister in the far−off Isle of Guernsey, the brave soul passed away.

CHAPTER IV. THE WAGES OF WAR.

At The Holms, as may well be supposed, the rude alarum of war, at the very door, as it were, threw the quiet household into unwonted excitement. The early cannonade brought every member of the family with eager questioning into the great kitchen.

“It has come,” said the squire, “the day I have long looked for. We muse meet it like brave men.”

“God defend the right,” added Neville, with solemn emotion.

“And forgive and pity our misguided enemies,” said Katharine, the tears standing in her eyes.

“And send them back quicker than they came,” exclaimed Zenas, with some more hard words of boyish petulance.

“We must help to send them, eh, Sandy?” said Tom Loker.

“Ay, please God,” devoutly answered Mr. McKay. “I doubt na He will break them in pieces like a potter's vessel—a vessel fitted for destruction.”

After a hurried breakfast the two men hastened to join their militia company, Mary having first filled their haversacks with a liberal supply of bread and cheese, ham sandwich, and, at Sandy's special request, a quantity of oaten bannocks.

“They're aye gude to fecht or march on,” he said, “an' we're like eneuch to hae baith to thole or ere we win hame again.”

The apparition of Sir Isaac Brock and his aides galloping past the house in the early dawn, and an hour later of the breathless messenger returning to hurry up re−enforcements, and of the troops from Fort George marching by to the inspiring strains of “The British Grenadiers,” had been witnessed by Zenas, and had excited his highest enthusiasm. “Now, father,” he said, “the time has come for me to do my part for my country.”

“You shall, my son,” said the squire tenderly. “Even as David went to his brethren in the camp, shall you bear succour to the brave fellows who are fighting our battles. Some of them may sorely want help before the day is over.”

“And I,” said Neville, “will go with him. I hope I may be of some use, too.”

“That you may,” answered the squire. “I only fear there may be but too much need for your services.”

With busy hands the old soldier and his son loaded the waggon with such articles as his military experience had taught him would be most needed by men exposed to all the deadly vicissitudes of war. Katharine prepared a great boilerful of tea—“The best thing in the world,” said the squire, “for fighting men.” All the bread in the house, a huge round of cold beef and half a dozen smoked hams, a large cheese, several jars of milk, and the last churning of great yellow rolls of butter were gladly given to the patriotic service. With his own hands the squire put up a generous parcel of his best Virginia leaf tobacco. “I know well,” he said, “how it soothes the pain of wounds and numbs the pangs of hunger.” More thoughtful provision still, Kate, with a sigh, brought out the stout roll of lint bandage which, at her father's suggestion, she had prepared for the unknown contingencies of the border war.

“O this is dreadful, father,” she said. “It seems almost like making a shroud before the man who is to wear it is dead.”

“It may save some poor fellow's life, my dear,” he answered, “and one must always prepare for the worst, war is such an uncertain game. Indeed, wounds and death are almost the only things certain about it.”

“Keep in the rear of the troops, my son, and take your orders from Major Sheaffe or of the army surgeon. I told them both what we were sending, as they passed. Keep out of gunshot and avoid capture: the time may come only too soon when you'll share the battle's brunt yourself.”

“I wish it were to−day, father. I'd give almost anything to be with Brock and his brave fellows.”

“So would I, my son; but I must be the home−guard. It would never do to leave Kate and the maids unprotected, with an invasion so near. And no work can be more important than may be before you both before you return.”

The brave boy drove off to the scene of action, the distant rattle of musketry, and at short intervals the loud roar of the cannon, making his heart throb with martial enthusiasm. The young preacher communed with his own

heart on the unnatural conflict between his own kinsmen after the flesh and the compatriots of his spiritual adoption—and was still. The brave old veteran, shouldering the musket that had done good service at Brandywine and Germantown, patrolled the river road bounding the farm.

As they approached the village of Queenston, Neville and Zenas found that a temporary lull in hostilities had taken place. The Americans had possession of the heights, and were strongly re− enforced from the Lewiston side of the river.

The redcoats from Fort George—about four hundred men of the 41st regiment, together with a part of the 49th, which had already been in action—were about to march by a by−road apparently away from the scene of action.

“Hello!” said Zenas to young Ensign Norton, of the 41st regiment, who was a frequent visitor at his father's house. “I don't understand this. You are not running away from these fellows are you? Why don't you drive the Yankees from that battery?”

“We intend to, young Hotspur, but it would be madness to charge up that hill in face of those guns. We are to take them in flank, I suppose, and drive them over the cliff.”

“Where's Brock?” asked the boy, jealous of the fame of his hero, which he seemed to think compromised by this prudent counsel.

“Have not you heard,” said Norton, with something between a sigh and a sob? “He'll never lead us again. He lies in yonder house,” pointing to a long, low, poor−looking dwelling−house on the left side of the road.

“What! dead? killed—so soon?” cried the boy, turning white, and then flushing red, and unconsciously clenching his fists as he spoke.

“Yes, Mister,” said a war−bronzed soldier standing by, who looked doubly grim from the blood trickling down his powder−blackened cheek from a scalp wound received during the morning skirmish. “I stood anear him when he fell, an' God knows I'd rather the bullet had struck me; my fighting days will soon be over, anyhow. But we'll avenge his death afore the day is done. They call us the green tigers, them fellers do, an' there's not a man of us won't fight like a tiger robbed of her whelps, for not a man of us wouldn't 'a' died for the General.”

“To the right, wheel, forward march!” came the order from the Colonel, and the “green tigers” filed on with the grim resolve to conquer or to die.

The militia, clad chiefly in homespun frieze, with flint−lock muskets and stout cartridge boxes at their belts, were drawn up at the roadside, and were being supplied with ammunition, previous to following the regulars.

A number of Indians, whose chief dress was a breach clout and deerskin leggings, formidable in their war−paint and war plumes, with scalping−knives and tomahawks, were only partially held in hand by Chief Brant, conspicuous by his height, his wampum fillet and eagle plumes, and his King George's medal on his breast.

“Drive on to the village,” said Major−General Sheaffe, who was now chief in command, to Zenas as he passed. “You will find plenty to do there.”

At the house where Brock's body lay, a single sentry stood at guard, his features settled in a fixed and stony stare, as though by a resolute effort controlling his emotions. Beyond the village a strong guard was drawn up, and two field pieces, with their gunners, occupied the road.

Soldiers were passing in and out of a large barn which stood near the roadside. They came in groups of two each from the trampled hill slope, bearing on stretchers their ghastly burden of bleeding and wounded men. Although coming within musket−range of the American force, no molestation was offered. Their work of humanity was felt to be too sacred for even red−handed War to disturb. Indeed, both American and British wounded were cared for with generous impartiality.

Zenas and Neville, assisted by an officer's orderly, conveyed their hospital stores into the barn. On bundles of unthreshed wheat, or on trusses of hay, were a number of writhing, groaning, bleeding forms, a few hours since in the vigour of manhood's strength, now maimed, some of them for life, some of them marked for death, and one ghastly form already cold and rigid, covered by a blood−stained sheet At one side they beheld an army surgeon with his sleeves rolled up, but, notwithstanding this precaution, smeared with blood, kneeling over a poor fellow who lay upon a truss of hay, and probing his shoulder to trace and, if possible, extract a bullet that had deeply penetrated.

“Why, Jim Larkins, is that you?” exclaimed Zenas, recognizing an old neighbour and recent schoolfellow.

“Yes, Zenas, all that's left of me. I won't fight no more for one while, I guess,” he answered, as he moaned

with agony as the doctor probed the wound.

“Give him a drink,” said the doctor, and Zenas, as tenderly as a girl, supported his head and held to his parched lips a mug of cold and refreshing tea.

“Blessings on the kind heart that sent that,” said the wounded man.

“It was Kate,” said Zenas.

“I knowed it must be,” murmured Jim, who was one of her rustic admirers. “Tell her,” he continued, in the natural egotism of suffering, “she never did a better deed. Heaven reward her for it.”

Zenas thought of the benediction pronounced on the cup of cold water given for the Master, and rejoiced in the privilege of ministering to these wounded and, it might be, dying men.

“You'll have to lose your arm, my good fellow,” said the doctor, kindly, but in a business−like way, “the bone is badly shattered.” “I was afear'd o' that ever since I got hit. I was just a−takin' aim when I missed my fire,—I didn't know why, didn't feel nuthin', but I couldn't hold the gun. Old Jonas Evans, the Methody local preacher, was aside me, a−prayin' like a saint and a− fightin' like a lion. 'The Lord ha' mercy on his soul,' I heared him say as he knocked a feller over. Well, he helped me out o' the fight as tender as a woman, and then went at it again as fierce as ever.”

“Don't talk so much, my good follow,” said the doctor, who had been preparing ligatures to tie the arteries and arranging his saw, knife, and tourniquet within reach. The operation was soon over, Jim never flinching a bit. Indeed, during action, and for some time after, the sensibilities seem, by the concurrent excitement, mercifully deadened to pain.

“I'd have spared t'other one too, an' right willin',” said the faithful fellow, “if it would have saved Brock.”

Zenas, at the doctor's direction, held the poor fellow's shattered arm till the amputation was complete. As the dissevered limb grew cold in his hands, he seemed more distressed than its late owner. Instead of laying it with some others near the surgeon's table, he wrapped it tenderly, as though it still could feel, in a cloth, and going out where a fatigue party were burying on the field of battle—clad in their military dress, in waiting for the last trump and the final parade at the great review—the victims of the fight, he laid the dead arm reverently in the ground, and covered it with its kindred clay. He thought of his sister's remark, about preparing the shroud before death, but here was he burying part of the body of a man who was yet alive.

Neville, meanwhile, had been speaking words of spiritual comfort and counsel to the wounded and the dying, and receiving their last faint−whispered messages to loved ones far away. He also read, over the ghastly trench in which the dead were being buried—one wide, long, common grave, in which lay side by side friend and foe, those recently arrayed in battle with each other, slain by mutual wounds, and now at rest and for ever—the solemn funeral service. As he pronounced the words, “Dust to dust, ashes to ashes,” the earth was thrown on the uncoffined dead, and then over the soldiers' grave their comrades fired their farewell volley and again mounted guard against the foe.

Zenas received a lesson in surgery that day of which he found the benefit more than once before the war was over. He was soon able to apply one of Katharine's lint bandages or dress a wound with a deftness that elicited the commendation not only of the subject of his ministration, but even of the knight of the scalpel himself. Neville, too, evinced no little skill in the surgeon's beneficent art.

“Young Drayton,” said the surgeon, “I think we shall have to trespass on the hospitality of your house on behalf of Captain Villiers, here. He has received a severe gunshot wound, from which he will be some time in convalescing. I know no place where he will be so comfortable, and I know the squire will make him welcome.”

“Of course he will,” said Zenas, with alacrity. “He would make even those wounded Yanks welcome, much more an officer of the King.”

While Neville remained to minister to the dying, Zenas made a comfortable bed of hay in his now empty waggon, on which the wounded captain was placed, with a wheat sheaf for a pillow, and drove carefully to The Holms. He was preceded by a waggon conveying a number of wounded soldiers to the military hospital at Niagara. As this load of injured and anguished humanity was driven down and up the steep sides of the ravine which crosses the road to the north of the village, at every jolt over the rough stones a groan of agony was wrung from the poor fellows, that made the heart of Zenas ache with sympathy and when the team stopped at the top of the hill, the blood ran from the waggon and stained the ground. War did not seem to the boy such a glorious thing as when he saw the gallant redcoats in the morning marching to the stirring strains of the “British Grenadiers.”

The boy seemed to have become a man in a few hours. Not less full of enthusiasm and high courage, but more serious and grave, and never again was he heard vapouring about the “pomp and circumstance of glorious war.” [Footnote: Accounts of several of the above−mentioned incidents were gleaned from the conversation of an intelligent lady, recently deceased, who, as a young girl, was an eye−witness of the leading events of the war.]

CHAPTER V. A VICTORY AND ITS COST.

While the events just described had been taking place, an important movement was made for the recovery of Queenston Heights. Major−General Sheaffe, with a force of about nine hundred redcoats and militia, made a circuitous march through the village of St. David's, and thus gained the crest of the heights on which the enemy were posted. Here he was re−enforced by the arrival of a company of the 41st grenadiers and a body of militiamen from Chippewa.

With a volley and a gallant British cheer, they attacked, about two o'clock in the afternoon, the American force, which had also been re−enforced to about the same number as the British. Courage the enemy had, but they lacked the confidence and steadiness imparted by the presence of the veteran British troops. Nevertheless, for a time they stoutly stood their ground; but, soon perceiving the hopelessness of resistance, they everywhere gave way, and retreated precipitately down the hill to their place of landing. The Indians, like sleuth hounds that had broken leash, unhappily could not be restrained, and, shrieking their blood− curdling war−whoops, pursued with tomahawk and reeking blade the demoralized fugitives. Many stragglers were cut off from the main body and attempted to escape through the woods. These were intercepted and driven back by the exasperated Indians, burning to avenge the death of Brock, for whom they felt an affection and veneration for which the savage breast would scarce have been deemed capable.

Terrified at the appearance of the enraged warriors, many of the Americans flung themselves wildly over the cliff and endeavoured to scramble down its rugged and precipitous slope. Some were impaled upon the jagged pines, others reached the bottom bruised and bleeding, and others, attempting to swim the rapid stream, were drowned in its whirling eddies. One who reached the opposite shore in a boat made a gesture of defiance and contempt toward his foes across the river, when he fell, transpierced with the bullet of an Indian sharpshooter.

Two brothers of the Canadian militia fought side by side, when, in the moment of victory, a shot pierced the lungs of the younger, a boy of seventeen, with a fair, innocent face. His brother bore him from the field in his arms, and, while the life−tide ebbed from his wound, the dying boy faltered—

“Kiss me, Jim. Tell mother—I was not—afraid to die,” and as the blood gushed from his mouth, the brave young spirit departed.

All that day, and on many a foughten field thereafter, the living brother heard those dying words, and in his ear there rang a wild refrain, which nerved his arm and steeled his heart to fight for the country hallowed by his brother's blood.

“O, how the drum beats so loud!
'Close beside me in the fight,
My dying brother says, 'Good night!'
And the cannon's awful breath
Screams the loud halloo of Death!
And the drum,
And the drum
Beats so loud!”

Such were some of the dreadful horrors with which a warfare between two kindred peoples was waged; and such were some of the costly sacrifices with which the liberties of Canada were won. As from the vantage ground of these happier times we look back upon the stern experiences of those iron days, they inspire a blended feeling of pity and regret, not unmingled with a vague remorse, shot through and through our patriotic pride and exultation, like dark threads in a bright woof. Through the long centuries of carnage and strife through which the race has struggled up to freedom, how faint has seemed the echo of the angel's song, “Peace on earth, good will to men.”

“I hear even now the infinite fierce chorus,
The cries of agony, the endless groan.
Which, through the ages that have gone before us,
In long reverberations reach our own.

"Is it, O man with such discordant noises,
With such accursed instruments as these,
Thou drownest Nature's sweet and kindly voices,
And jarrest the celestial harmonies.

* * * * *

"Down the dark future, through long generations,
The echoing sounds grow fainter and then cease;
And like a bell, with solemn, sweet vibrations
I hear once more the voice of Christ say, 'Peace!'
"Peace! and no longer from its brazen portals
The blast of War's great organ shakes the skies!
But beautiful as songs of the immortals,
The holy melodies of love arise."

The result of the battle of Queenston Heights was the unconditional surrender of Brigadier Wadsworth and nine hundred and fifty officers and privates as prisoners of war. But this victory, brilliant as it was, was dearly bought with the death of the loved and honored Brock, the brave young Macdonnell, and those of humbler rank, whose fall brought sorrow to many a Canadian home.

"Joy's bursting shout in whelming grief was drowned,
And victory's self unwilling audience found;
On every brow the cloud of sadness hung,—
"The sounds of triumph died on every tongue."

Three days later all that was mortal of General Brock and his gallant aide−de−camp was committed to the earth with mournful pageantry. With arms reversed and muffled drums and the wailing strains of the "Dead March," the sad procession passed, while the half−mast flags and minute guns of both the British and American forts attested the honour and esteem in which the dead soldiers were held by friends and foes alike. Amid the tears of war−bronzed soldiers and even of stoical Indians they were laid in one common grave in a bastion of Fort George. A grateful country has since erected on the scene of the victory—one of the grandest sites on earth—a noble monument to the memory of Brock, and beneath it, side by side, sleeps the dust of the heroic chief and his faithful aide−de−camp—united in their death and not severed in their burial.

As Neville and the squire and Zenas turned away from the solemn pageant of which they had been silent spectators, the latter remarked,

"Captain Villiers said he'd almost give his other arm to be able to be present to−day and lay a wreath on the coffin of his gallant chief. As he couldn't come, he wrote these verses, which he wished me to post to the York *Gazette*. He said I might read them to you, Mr. Trueman, before I sent them." And the boy, not very fluently, but with a good deal of feeling, read the following lines:—

"Low bending o'er the ragged bier,
The soldier drops the mournful tear,
For life departed, valour driven,
Fresh from the field of death, to Heaven.
"But Time shall fondly trace the name
Of BROCK upon the scrolls of Fame,
And those bright laurels, which should wave
Upon the brow of one so brave,
Shall flourish vernal o'er his grave."

Neville commended the graceful tribute with generous warmth, when Zenas remarked,

"The Captain will be glad to hear you like them. Leastways, I suppose so. He read them himself to Kate this morning, and seemed pleased because they made her cry."

"He is a brave gentleman," says the squire. "I fear it will be long before he mounts his horse, again."

"O he'll soon be round again," chimed in Zenas. "He said Kate would be his Elaine, to nurse the wounded Lancelot back to life. Who was Lancelot?"

"Some of those moon−struck poetry fellows, I'll be bound," said the squire contemptuously.

“Nay, a very gallant knight,” said Neville, who had when a boy, read with delight Sir Thomas Mallory's book of King Arthur; but he did not seem to relish the comparison and led the conversation into a serious vein, as befitting the solemn occasion.

CHAPTER VI. THE CAPTURE OF YORK.

After the battle of Queenston Heights an armistice of a month followed, during which each party was gathering up its strength for the renewal of the unnatural conflict. General Smyth, who had succeeded Van Rensselaer, assembled a force five thousand strong, for the conquest of Canada. At the expiration of the armistice, he issued a Napoleonic proclamation to his “companions in arms.” “Come on, my heroes” it concludes; “when you attack the enemy's batteries let your rallying word be: 'The cannon lost at Detroit, or death.'“

At length, before day−break on the morning of November 28th—a cold, bleak day—a force of some five hundred men, in eighteen scows, attempted the capture of Grand Island, in the Niagara River. A considerable British force had rallied from Fort Erie and Chippewa. In silence they awaited the approach of the American flotilla. As it came within range, a ringing cheer burst forth, and a deadly volley of musketry was poured into the advancing boats. A six−pounder, well served by Captain Kerby, shattered two of the boats; and the Americans, thrown into confusion, sought the shelter of their own shore.

General Smyth now sent a summons for the surrender of Fort Erie. Colonel Bishopp, its commandant, sarcastically invited him to “come and take it.” After several feints the attempt was abandoned, and the army went into winter quarters. Smyth, an empty gasconader, was regarded, even by his own troops, with contempt, and had to fly from the camp to escape their indignation. He was even hooted and fired at in the streets of Buffalo, and was, without trial, dismissed from the army,—a sad collapse of his vaunting ambition.

In the meanwhile, General Dearborn, with an army of ten thousand men, advanced by way of Lake Champlain to the frontier of Lower Canada. The Canadians rallied *en masse* to repel the invasion, barricaded the roads with felled trees, and guarded every pass. On the 20th of November, before day, an attack was made by fourteen hundred of the enemy on the British out−post at Lacolle, near Rouse's Point; but the guard, keeping up a sharp fire, withdrew, and the Americans, in the darkness and confusion, fired into each other's ranks, and fell back in disastrous and headlong retreat. The discomfited general, despairing of a successful attack on Montreal, so great was the vigilance and valour of the Canadians, retired with his “Grand Army of the North” into safe winter quarters, behind the entrenchments of Plattsburg. A few ineffectual border raids and skirmishes, at different points of the extended frontier, were characteristic episodes of the war during the winter, and, indeed, throughout the entire duration of hostilities.

In their naval engagements the Americans were more successful. On Lake Ontario, Commodore Chauncey equipped a strong fleet, which drove the Canadian shipping for protection under the guns of Niagara, York, and Kingston. He generously restored the private plate of Sir Isaac Brock, captured in one of his prizes.

In these naval conflicts the greatest gallantry was exhibited in the dreadful work of mutual slaughter. The vessels reeked with blood like a shambles, and, if not blown up or sunk, became floating hospitals of deadly wounds and agonizing pain.

In the United States Congress this unnatural strife of kindred races was vigorously denounced by some of the truest American patriots. Mr. Quincy, of Massachusetts, characterized it as the “most disgraceful in history since the invasion of the buccaneers.” But the Democratic majority persisted in their stern policy of implacable war.

The patriotism and valour of the Canadians were, however, fully demonstrated. With the aid of a few regulars, the loyal militia had repulsed large armies of invaders, and not only maintained the inviolable integrity of their soil, but had also conquered a considerable portion of the enemy's territory. [Footnote: Condensed from Withrow's History of Canada, 8vo. edition, chap. xxii.]

The winter dragged its weary length along. Its icy hand was laid upon the warring passions of man, and, for a time, they seemed stilled. Its white banners of snow proclaimed a truce—the trace of God—through all the land. Apprehensions of a sterner conflict during the coming year filled every mind, but caused no dismay,— only a firm resolve to do and dare—to conquer or to die—for their firesides and their homes.

Neville Trueman toiled through the wintry woods, the snowdrifts, and the storms to break the bread of life to the scattered congregations of his far−extended circuits. His own flock, who knew the man, knew how his loyalty had been tested, and what sacrifices he had made for his adopted country. By a few religious and political bigots, however, his American origin was a cause of unjust suspicion and aspersion, which stung to the quick his

sensitive nature. He was especially made to feel the unreasoning and bitter antipathy of the Indians to the nation of American “long−knives,” with whom they classed him, notwithstanding his peaceful calling and his approved loyalty.

One day Trueman entered the bark wigwam of an Indian chief, for the double purpose of obtaining shelter from a storm and of trying to teach the truths of the Christian religion to those devotees of pagan superstition. He found several young braves assembled at a sort of council, gravely smoking their long pipes in dignified silence. His entrance was the occasion of not a few dark scowls and sinister glances.

“Ugh! Yankee black−robe,” sneered one of the braves. “Friend of the 'long−knives.' The day of fight at Big Rapids him strike up my arm as me going to tomahawk Yankee prisoner. Had great mind to kill him, too.”

“Ugh!” echoed another; “me see him helping wounded 'long−knife,' just like him brother.”

“No! Him good King George's man,” exclaimed the old chief, who had seen his impartial ministration to the wounded of both armies. “Him love Injun. Teach him pray to true Great Spirit.”

But not always did he find such a true friend among the red men; and not unfrequently was the scalping−knife half unsheathed, or the tomahawk grasped, and dark brows scowled in anger, as he sought the wandering children of the forest for their soul's salvation. But their half−unconscious fear of the imagined power of the pale−face medicine−man, their involuntary admiration of his undaunted courage, and, let us add, the protecting providence of God, prevented a hair of his head from being harmed.

The spring came at length with strange suddenness, as it often comes in our northern land, causing a magical change in the face of nature. A green flush overspread the landscape. The skies became soft and tender, with glorious sunsets. The delicate−veined white triliums and May−apples took the place of the snowdrifts in the woods; and the air was fragrant and the orchards were abloom with the soft pink and white apple−blossoms.

The little town of Niagara was like a camp. The long, low barracks on the broad campus were crowded with troops, and the snowy gleams of tents dotted the greensward. The wide grass−grown streets were gay with the constant marching and counter−marching of red−coats, and the air was vocal with the shrill bugle−call or the frequent roll of the drums. Drill, parade, and inspection, artillery and musket practice, filled the hours of the day. Fort George had been strengthened, victualled, and armed. That solitary fort was felt to be the key that, apparently, held possession of the south− western peninsula of Canada.

One evening, early in May, a motley group were assembled in the large mess−room of the log barracks of the fort. It was a long low room built of solid logs. The thick walls were loop−holed for musketry, and on wooden pegs, driven into the logs, the old Brown Bess muskets of the soldiers were stacked. Rude bunks were ranged along one side, like berths in a ship, for the men to sleep in. The great square, naked timbers of the low ceiling were embrowned with smoke, as was also the mantel of the huge open fire−place at the end of the room. The rudely−carved names and initials on the wall betrayed the labours of an idle hour. Around the ample hearth, during the long winter nights, the war−scarred veterans beguiled the tedium of a soldier's life with stories of battle, siege, and sortie, under Moore and Wellington, in the Peninsular wars; and one or two grizzled old war−dogs had tales to tell of

“Hair−breadth 'scapes in the imminent deadly breach”—

of exploits done in their youth during Arnold's siege of Quebec, or at Brandywine and Germantown.

Now the faint light of the tallow candles, in tin sconces, gleams on the scarlet uniforms and green facings of the 49th regiment, on the tartan plaid of the Highland clansman, on the frieze coat and polished musket of the Canadian militiaman, and on the red−skin and hideous war−paint of the Indian scout, quartered for the night in the barracks. In one corner is heard the crooning of the Scottish pipes, where old Allan Macpherson is playing softly the sad, sweet airs of “Annie Laurie,” “Auld Lang Syne,” and “Bonnie Doon;” while something like a tear glistens in his eye as he thinks of the sweet “banks and braes” of the tender song. Presently he is interrupted by a sturdy 49th man, who trolls a merry marching song, the refrain of which is caught up by his comrades:

“Some talk of Alexander and some of Hercules,
Of Hector and Lysander, and such great names as these;
But of all the world's great heroes
There are none that can compare,
With a tow−row−row−row−row−row−row,
To the British Grenadiers!”

In another corner old Jonas Evans, now a sergeant of militia, was quietly reading his well−thumbed Bible, while others around him were shuffling a greasy pack of cards, and filling the air with reeking tobacco−smoke and strange soldiers' oaths. When a temporary lull, in the somewhat tumultuous variety of noises occurred, he lifted his stentorian voice in a stirring Methodist hymn:

“Soldiers of Christ, arise,
And put your armour on,
Strong in the strength which God supplies
Through His eternal Son.
Stand then against your foes,
In close and firm array:
Legions of wily fiends oppose
Throughout the evil day.”

The old man sang with a martial vigour as though he were charging the “legions of fiends” at the point of the bayonet. In a shrewd, plain, common−sense manner, he then earnestly exhorted his comrades−in−arms to be on their guard against the opposing fiends who especially assailed a soldier's life. “Above all,” he said, “beware of the drink−fiend—the worst enemy King George has got. He kills more of the King's troops than all his other foes together.” Then, with a yearning tenderness in his voice, he exhorted them to “ground the weapons of their rebellion and enlist in the service of King Jesus, the great Captain of their salvation, who would lead them to victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil, and at last make them kings and priests forever in His everlasting kingdom in the skies.”

Those rude, reckless, and, some of them, violent and wicked men, fascinated by the intense earnestness of the Methodist local− preacher, listened with quiet attention. Even the Indian scout seemed to have some appreciation of his meaning, and muttered assent between the whiffs of tobacco−smoke from his carved−stone, feather−decked pipe. The moral elevation which Christian−living and Bible−reading will always give, commanded their respect, and the dauntless daring of the old man—for they knew that he was a very lion in the fight, and as cool under fire as at the mess− table—challenged the admiration of their soldier hearts.

Once a drinking, swearing bigot constituted himself a champion of the Church established by law, and complained to the commanding major that “the Methody preacher took the work out of the hands of their own chaplain,”—an easy−going parson, who much preferred dining with the officers' mess to visiting the soldiers' barracks.

“If he preaches as well as he fights, he can beat the chaplain,” said the major. “Let him fire away all he likes, the parson won't complain; and some of you fellows would be none the worse for converting, as he calls it. If you were to take a leaf out of his book yourself, Tony, and not be locked up in the guard−house so often, it would be better for you!”

With the tables thus deftly turned upon him, poor Antony Double−gill, as he was nick−named, because he so often contrived to get twice the regulation allowance of “grog,” retired discomfitted from the field.

While the group in the mess−room were preparing to turn into their sleeping−bunks, the sharp challenge of the sentry, pacing the ramparts without, was heard. The report of his musket and, in a few moments, the shrill notes of the bugle sounding the “turn out,” created an alarm. The men snatched their guns and side−arms, and were soon drawn up in company on the quadrangle of the fort. The clang of the chains of the sally−port rattled, the draw−bridge fell, the heavy iron−studded gates swung back, and three prisoners were brought in who were expostulating warmly with the guard, and demanding to be led to the officer for the night. When they were brought to the light which poured from the open door of the guard− room, it was discovered with surprise that two of the prisoners wore the familiar red and green of the 49th regiment, and that the third was in officer's uniform. But their attire was so torn, burnt, and blackened with powder, and draggled and soaked with water, that the guard got a good deal of chaffing from their comrades for their capture.

“This is treating us worse than the enemy,” said one of the soldiers, “and that was bad enough.”

The adjutant now appeared upon the scene to inquire into the cause of the disturbance.

“I have the honour to bear despatches from General Sheaffe,” said the young officer; when the adjutant promptly requested him to proceed to his quarters, and sent the others to the mess−room, with orders for their generous refreshment.

There their comrades gathered round them, eagerly inquiring the nature of the disaster, which, from the words that they had heard, they inferred had befallen the left wing of the regiment, quartered at the town of York. In a few brief words they learned with dismay that the capital of the country was captured by the enemy, that the public buildings and the shipping were burned, that the fort was blown up, and that a heavy loss had befallen both sides.

While the men dried their water−soaked clothes before a fire kindled on the hearth, and ate as though they had been starved, they were subject to a cross−fire of eager questions from every side, which they answered as best they could, while busy plying knife and fork, and "re−victualling the garrison," the corporal said, "as though they were expecting a forty days' siege."

"And siege you may have, soon enough," said Sergeant Shenston, the elder of the two men. "Chauncey and Dearborn will drop down on *you* before the week's out."

Disentangling the narrative of the men from the maze of questions and answers in which it was given, its main thread was as follows:

Early on the morning of the 27th of April, Chauncey, the American commodore, with fourteen vessels and seventeen hundred men, under the command of Generals Dearborn and Pike, lay off the shore a little to the west of the town of York, near the site of the old French fort, now included in the new Exhibition Grounds. The town was garrisoned by only six hundred men, including militia and dockyard men, under Gen. Sheaffe. Under cover of a heavy fire, which swept the beach, the Americans landed, drove in the British outposts, which stoutly contested every foot of ground, and made a dash for the dilapidated fort, which the fleet meanwhile heavily bombarded. Continual re−enforcements enabled them to fight their way through the scrub oak woods to within two hundred yards of the earthen ramparts, when the defensive fire ceased. General Pike halted his troops, thinking the fort about to surrender. Suddenly, with a shock like an earthquake, the magazine blew up, and hurled into the air two hundred of the attacking column, together with Pike, its commander. [Footnote: The magazine contained five hundred barrels of powder and an immense quantity of charged shells.] Several soldiers of the retiring British garrison were also killed. This act, which was defended as justifiable in order to prevent the powder from falling into the hands of the enemy, and as in accordance with the recognized code of war, was severely denounced by the Americans, and imparted a tone of greater bitterness to the subsequent contest.

The town being no longer tenable, General Sheaffe, after destroying the naval stores and a vessel on the stocks, retreated with the regulars towards Kingston. Colonel Chewett and three hundred militiamen were taken prisoners, the public buildings burned, and the military and naval stores, which escaped destruction, were carried off. The American loss was over three hundred, and that of the British nearly half as great. [Footnote: See Withrow's History of Canada, 8vo. edition, chap. xxiii.]

"How did you get your clothes so burnt?" asked the corporal, when the narrative was concluded, pointing to the scorched and powder−blackened uniform of the narrator.

"It is a wonder I escaped at all," said Sergeant Shenstone. "I was nearly caught by the explosion. I was helping a wounded comrade to escape, when, looking over the ramparts, I beheld the enemy so close that I could see their teeth as they bit the cartridges, and General Pike, on the right wing, cheering them on—so gallant and bold. I was a−feared I would be nabbed as a prisoner, and sent to eat Uncle Sam's hard−tack in the hulks at Sackett's Harbour, when, all of a sudden, the ground trembled like the earthquakes I have felt in the West Indies; then a volcano of fire burst up to the sky, and, in a minute, the air seemed raining fire and brimstone, as it did at Sodom and Gomorrah. It seemed like the judgment−day. I was thrown flat on the ground, and when I tried to get up I was all bruised and burnt with the falling clods and splinters, and my comrade was dead at my side. I crawled away as soon as I could— there was no thought then of making prisoners."

"But what gar'd the magazine blaw up? Was it an accident?" asked old Allan McPherson, the Highland piper, who had listened eagerly to the tragic story.

"No accident was it. Sergeant Marshall, of the artillery, a desperate fellow, who swore the enemy should lose more than they would gain by taking the fort, laid and fired the train. The General had already given the order to retreat, and knew nothing of it."

"God forgie him!" exclaimed the old Scotchman. "Yon's no war ava— it's rank murder. I can thole a fair and square stan up fecht, but yon's a coward trick."

"Ye'd say so," said Private McIntyre, Shenstone's comrade, "gin ye saw the hale place reeking like a

shawmbles, an' the puir' wretches lying stark and scaring like slaughtered sheep. I doubt na it was a gran' blunder as weel as a gran' crime. Forbye killing some o' oor ain folk it will breed bad bluid through the hale war. I doubt na it will mak it waur for ye, for Fort George's turn mun come next."

"I hear Dearborn swore to avenge the death of General Pike. All the vessels' flags were half−mast, and the minute−guns boomed while they rowed his dead body, wrapped in the stars and stripes, to the flag−ship; and Chauncey carried off all the public property, even to the mace and Speaker's wig from the Parliament House, and the fire−engine of the town." [Footnote: These were conveyed to Sackett's Harbour and deposited in the dockyard storehouse, where they were exhibited as trophies of the conquest.]

"How did you get away with the despatches?" asked Jonas Evans. "I should think Chauncey would try to take us by surprise, but the Lord would not let him."

"To avoid capture," said Shenstone, "Sheaffe placed the Don between him and the enemy as soon as possible, and broke down the bridge behind him. There were only four hundred of us altogether. Captain Villiers, who had recovered from his wound, and Ensign Norton set out on horseback, with despatches for Fort George; and, in case they should be captured, Lieutenant Foster undertook to convey them by water, and we volunteered to accompany him. We got a fisherman's boat at Frenchman's Bay. It was a long, tough pull across the lake, I tell you. At night the wind rose, and we were drenched with spray and nearly perished with cold. After two days hard rowing against head wind, we made land, but were afraid to enter the river till nightfall. We slipped past Fort Niagara without detection, but had like to be murdered by your sentry here. We might well ask to be saved from our friends."

An unwonted stir soon pervaded the fort and camp. Again the ponderous gates yawned and the draw−bridge fell, and orderlies galloped out into the night to convey the intelligence to the frontier posts, and to order the concentration of every available man and gun at Fort George. The sentries were doubled on the ramparts and along the river front. The entire garrison was on the *qui vive* against a surprise. The next day Captain Villiers, with his companion, reached the fort, fagged out with their hundred miles' ride in two days—they had been compelled to make a wide *detour* to avoid capture. The whole garrison was in a ferment of excitement and hard work. Stores, guns, ammunition, accoutrements were overhauled and inspected. The army bakery was busy day and night. Forage and other supplies of every sort were brought in. Extra rations were made ready for issue, and every possible precaution taken against an anticipated attack, which, it was felt, could not long be delayed.

CHAPTER VII. THE FALL OF FORT GEORGE.

But short respite was granted before the fall of the blow which, for a time, annihilated British authority on the frontier. On the third day after the reception of the evil tidings of the capture of York, Chauncey's fleet was seen in the offing; but for six days adverse winds prevented it from landing the American troops beneath the protection of the guns of Fort Niagara. Day after day they stood off and on, but were unable to make the land. “The stars in their courses fought against Sisera,” said Jonas Evans, as he watched the baffled fleet, “and the Lord, with the breath of His mouth, fighteth for us.”

At length, having landed General Dearborn and his troops, Chauncey conveyed his wounded to Sackett's Harbour, the great American naval depot on Lake Ontario, and hastened back with a strong body of re−enforcements. The gallant Colonel Vincent, commandant at Fort George, bated not a jot of heart or hope,—although he was able to muster only some 1,400 troops. Yet these, with spade and mattock, toiled day after day to strengthen its ramparts and ravelins, and to throw up new earthworks and batteries. One fatal want, however, was felt. The stock of ammunition was low, and as Chauncey, with his fleet, had the mastery of the lake, it could not be replenished from the ample supply at Fort Henry, at Kingston.

At length the fateful day arrived. On the twenty−sixth of May, at early dawn, Chauncey's ships, fifteen in number, were drawn up in crescent form off the devoted town, their snowy sails gleaming in the morning sun. On the opposite sides of the river the grim forts frowned defiance at each other, and guarded, like stern warders, the channel between them. The morning *reveille* seemed the shrill challenge to mortal combat. Sullen and silent, like couchant lions, through the black embrasures the grim cannon watched the opposite shores; and at length, from the feverish lips of the guns of the American fort, as if they could no longer hold their breath, leap forth, in breath of flame and thunder roar, the fell death−bolts of war. The fierce shells scream through the air and explode within the quadrangle of Fort George, scattering destruction and havoc, or, perchance, bury themselves harmlessly in the earthen ramparts. The ships take up their part in the dreadful chorus. From their black sides flash forth the tongues of flame and wreaths of smoke, and soon they get the range with deadly precision. The British guns promptly reply. The gunners stand to their pieces, though an iron hail is crashing all around them. Now one and another is struck down by a splinter or fragment of shell, and, while another steps into his place, is borne off to the bomb−proof casemates, where the surgeon plies his ghastly but beneficent calling.

For hours the deadly cannonade continues, but amid it all, the dead General, buried in a disused bastion, sleeps calmly on:

“He has fought his last fight, he has waged his last battle, No sound shall awake him to glory again.”

Jonas Evans, who had been an old artilleryman, takes the place of a wounded gunner, lifts the big sixty−eight pound balls, rams them home, and handles the linstock as coolly as if on parade. “Bless the Lord!” he said to a comrade while the piece was being pointed, “I am ready to live or die; it's no odds to me. For me to live is Christ, to die is gain. Sudden death would be sudden glory. Hallelujah! I believe I am doing my duty to my country, to God and man, and my soul is as happy as it can be this side heaven.”

Strange words for such a scene of blood! Strange work for a Christian man to do! It seems the work of demons rather than of men, and yet godly men have, with an approving conscience, wielded the weapons of carnal warfare. But in this much at least all will agree: An unjust war is the greatest of all crimes, and even a just war is the greatest of all calamities. And all will join in the prayer, Give peace in our time, O Lord, and hasten the day when the nations shall learn war no more!

Neville Trueman, who had a pass from Colonel Vincent to visit the Methodist troops in the fort, felt himself summoned thither, as to a post of duty, at the first sounds of the cannonade. He was soon busily engaged, skilfully helping the surgeon and ministering alike to the bodies and the souls of the wounded soldiers. He also found time to visit the ramparts and speak words of cheer and encouragement to the members of his spiritual flock. Although shot and shell screamed through the air, and fragments and splinters were flying in dangerous proximity, he felt himself sustained by the grace of God. Amid these dreadful scenes he knew no fear, and his calm serenity inspired confidence courage and in others.

The bombardment lasted a large part of the day. Fort George was severely damaged. Several of its guns were

dismounted, and the whole place rendered almost untenable.

The night was one of much anxiety. The force of the enemy was overwhelming. The fate of the fortress seemed certain; but Vincent, with gallant British pluck, resolved to hold it to the last. The wearied troops snatched what refreshment and repose they could amid the confusion and discomfort and danger by which they were surrounded. At intervals during the night the American fort kept up a teasing fire, more for the purpose of causing annoyance and preventing rest than with the object of doing any serious damage. As a mere pyrotechnic spectacle it was certainly a grand sight to watch the graceful curves of the live shells through the air—a parabola of vivid brightness against the black sky, as the burning fuse, fanned by its rapid motion, glowed like a shooting− star. The loud detonation, and explosion of fiery fragments that followed, however, was rather discomposing to the nerves, and unfavourable for restful slumber to the weary warriors.

Another cruel refinement of war was still more disconcerting. In order, if possible, to ignite the barracks, the gunners of Fort Niagara kept firing at intervals red−hot cannon balls. A vigilant look−out for these had to be kept, and a fire brigade was specially organized to drown out any incipient conflagration that might occur.

A similar compliment was paid by the artillerists of Fort George. No little skill was required in handling these heavy red−hot projectiles. In order to prevent a premature explosion of the charge, a wet wad was interposed between the powder and the red− hot ball. In the walls of Fort Mississauga, at Niagara, may still be seen the fire−places for heating the shot for the purpose here described.

But, notwithstanding the tumult, the roar of the cannon near at hand, the explosion of shells, and the thud of the balls striking the casemates, or burying themselves in the earthen ramparts, the weary garrison snatched what repose was possible; for the morrow, it was felt, would tax their energies to the utmost.

The morning of May 27th dawned as bright and beautiful as in Eden's sinless garden—as fair as though such a deadly evil as war were unknown in the world. The American shipping stood in closer to the shore. The bombardment was renewed with intenser fury. It was evident that an attempt was about to be made to laud a hostile force on Canadian ground. Every available man, except those required to work the guns of Fort George, and a guard over the stores, as hurried down to the beach to prevent, if possible, the landing. Boat after boat, filled with armed men, their bayonets gleaming in the morning sunshine, left the ships, and, under cover of a tremendous fire from the American fort and fleet, gained the shore. First Colonel Scott, with eight hundred riflemen, effected a landing. They were promptly met by a body of British regulars and militia, and compelled to take refuge under cover of the steep bank which lined the beach to the north of the town. From this position they kept up a galling fire on the British troops in the open field. The broadsides of the fleet also swept the plain, and wrought great havoc among the brave militia defending their native soil. To escape the deadly sweep of the cannon they were obliged to prostrate themselves in the slight depressions in the plain. Notwithstanding the inequality of numbers, the main body of the enemy were three times repulsed before they could gain a foothold on the beach.

At length, after three hours desperate struggle, a hostile force of six thousand men stood upon the plain. The conflict then was brief but strenuous. Many were the incidents of personal heroism that relieved, as by a gleam of light, the darkness of the tragedy. Jonas Evans was in the foremost files, and, as they lay upon the ground, his comrade on either side was killed by round shot from the ships, but, as if he bore a charmed life, he escaped unhurt. Loker and McKay, while bearing off a wounded militia−man, were captured, as were many others. At length the bugles sounded a retreat. Slowly and reluctantly the British troops fell back through the town. A strong rear−guard halted in the streets, seeking the shelter of the houses, and stubbornly holding the foe at bay while Vincent made his preparations for abandoning Fort George. All that valour and fidelity could do to hold that important post had been done. But how were a few hundred weary and defeated men to withstand a victorious army of six−fold greater strength? [Footnote: The details of the account above given were narrated to the author by the venerable Father Brady, for many years class−leader of the Methodist Church at Niagara, who was an actor in the events described.]

The guns of the fort were spiked and overthrown, and baggage, ammunition, and moveable stores were hastily loaded on teams volunteered for the service, to accompany the retreat of the army. With a bitter pang, Vincent ordered the destruction of the fort which he had so gallantly defended. When the last man had retired, with his own hand he fired the train which caused the explosion of the powder magazine. When the victorious army marched in, they found only the breached and blackened walls, the yawning gates, and dismantled ramparts of the

fort. From the shattered flagstaff, where it still waved defiantly, though rent and seared by shot and shell, the brave red−cross flag was hauled down and replaced by the gaily fluttering stars and stripes.

Many a time has the present writer wandered over the crumbling and grass−grown ramparts of the ruined fort, where the peaceful sheep crop the herbage and the little children play. Some of the old casemates and thick−walled magazines still remain, and are occupied by the families of a few old pensioners. In these low−vaulted chambers, with their deep and narrow embrasures, once the scene of the rude alarum of war, often has he held a quiet religious service with the lowly and unlettered inmates, who knew little of the thrilling history of their strange abode.

Often at the pensive sunset hour, reclining in a crumbling bastion, has he tried to rehabilitate the past, and to summon from their lonely and forgotten graves upon the neighbouring battlefield, or in quiet church−yards, it may be, far beyond the sea, the groups of war−scarred veterans who once peopled the now desolate fort.

Again is heard, in fancy, the quick challenge and reply, the bugle−call, the roll of drums, the sharp rattle of musketry, the deep and deadly thunder of the cannonade. How false and fading is felt to be the glory of arms, and how abiding victories of peace, more glorious than those of war!

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour:
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

But hark! a loud report awakes the dreamer from his reverie. It is the sunset gun from old Fort Niagara; and as stern reality becomes again a presence, the gazer's glance rests on the peaceful beauty of the broad blue Lake Ontario, on which, at this quiet hour, so many eyes, long turned to dust, have rested in the years forever flown.

CHAPTER VIII. THE FORTUNES OF WAR.

On the evening of the evacuation of Fort George, several of the actors in the busy drama of the time were assembled in the great kitchen of Squire Drayton's hospitable house. It was no time for ceremony, so everybody met in the common living room. Captain Villiers called to bid a hasty farewell to the kind family under whose roof he had for several months abode as an invalid soldier, and especially to take leave of the fair young mistress, through whose care he had become convalescent. Neville Trueman had resolved to follow the retreating army, both to avoid the appearance of any complicity or sympathy with the invaders; and that, in the severe conflict which was impending, his spiritual services might be available to the militia, of whom a considerable number were Methodists, and to such others as would accept them. Zenas had obtained his father's consent to volunteer for the militia cavalry service in this time of his country's need, although it left the farm without a single man, except the squire himself.

“The maids and I will plant the corn and cut the wheat, too,” said Kate, with the pluck of a true Canadian girl. “We'll soon learn to wield the sickle, though you seem to doubt it, Captain Villiers,” she went on, looking archly at the gallant captain, who smiled rather incredulously.

“Nay, I am sure you will deserve to be honoured as the goddess Ceres of your Canadian harvest−fields, by the future generations of your country,” politely answered the captain.

“I would rather serve my country in the present, than receive mythical honours in the future,” replied Kate.

“We'll be back before harvest to drive the Yanks across the river, and get Sandy and Loker out of Fort Niagara,” said Zenas. “Tom would gnaw his very fetters off to get free, if he wore any. But Sandy takes everything as it comes, as cool as you please. 'It was all appointed,' he says, and 'all for the best.'“

“They will not keep the prisoners there,” said the squire; “it is too near the border. Chauncey will likely take them off to Sackett's Harbour, and make them work in the dock−yards.”

“They won't make McKay do that,” said the captain; “it would be against his conscience, and he would die first. He is the staunchest specimen of an old stoic philosopher I ever came across. Under the hottest fire to−day he was as cool as I ever saw him on parade. As he stooped to raise a wounded comrade a round shot struck and carried away his cartridge−box. Had he been standing up it would have cut him in two. He never blanched, but just helped the poor fellow off the field, when he was captured himself.”

“It is something more than stoicism,” said Neville. “It is his staunch Scotch Calvinism. It is not my religious philosophy; but I can I honour its effects in others. It made heroic men of the Ironsides, the Puritans, and the Covenanters; but so will a trust in the loving fatherhood of God, without the doctrine of the eternal decrees.”

“We must not delay,” said the captain. “The enemy's scouts will be looking up stragglers,” and after a hasty meal he, with Neville and Zenas, rode away in the darkness, to join the rearguard of Vincent's retreating army.

They had scarcely been gone five minutes when a loud knocking was heard at the front door of the house, and, immediately after, the trampling of feet in the hall. A peremptory summons was followed by the bursting open of the kitchen door, when two flushed and heated American dragoons, one a comet and the other a private, stood on the threshold.

“Beg pardon, miss,” said the officer, somewhat abashed at the attitude of indignant surprise assumed by Katharine. “But is Captain Villiers here? We were told he was.”

“You see he is not,” said the young girl, with a queenly sweep of her arm around the room; “but you may search the house, if you please.”

“Oh, no occasion, as you say he is not here. I'll take the liberty, if you please, to help myself to a slight refreshment,” continued the spokesman, taking a seat at the table and beckoning to his companion to do the same. “You'll excuse the usage of war. We've had a hard day's work on light rations.”

“You might at least ask leave,” spoke up the squire, with a sort of

“An Englishman's house is his castle,
An Englishman's crown is his hat,”

Air,—“We would not refuse a bit and sup, even to an enemy.”

Glad of an excuse to detain the scouts as long as possible Kate placed upon the table a cold meat−pie, of noble

proportions, and a flagon of new milk.

The troopers were valiant trencher−men, whatever else they were, and promptly assaulted the meat−pie fort, as from its size and shape it deserved to be called.

“You know this Captain Villiers, I suppose?” said the dragoon subaltern at length; “I had particular instructions to secure his capture.”

“Oh yes! I know him very well,” answered Kate. “He was here sick for three months last winter.”

“And very good quarters and good fare he had, I'll be bound,” said the fellow, with an air of insolent familiarity. “And when was he here last, pray?”

“About half−an−hour ago,” said Kate, knowing that by this time he must be beyond pursuit.

“Zounds!” cried the trooper, springing to his feet, “why did you not tell me that before?”

“Because you did not ask me, sir,” said the maiden demurely, while her black eyes flashed triumph at her father, who sat in his arm chair stolidly smoking his pipe.

With an angry oath, the fellows hurried out of the house as unceremoniously as they had entered, when Kate and her father had a merry laugh over their discomfiture.

Next morning the troopers appeared again, in angry humour. “That was a scurvy trick you played us last night, old gentleman,” said the elder.

“No trick at all,” said the squire. “I hope you were pleased with your entertainment? Did you catch your prisoner?” he asked, with a somewhat malicious twinkle of his eye towards Kate, who was in the room.

“No, we didn't; but we came upon the enemy's rear−guard, and nearly got captured ourselves. But you'll have to pay for your little game, by liberal supplies for Dearborn's army.”

The staunch old loyalist, who would willingly impoverish himself to aid the King's troops, stoutly refused to give “a single groat or oat,” as he expressed it, to the King's enemies. It was “against his conscience,” he said.

“We'll relieve you of your scruples,” said the officer. “I want some of those horses in your pasture to mount my troop of dragoons,” and going oat of the house he ordered the half−score of troopers without to dismount and capture the horses in the meadow. The men, after a particularly active chase, captured three out of six horses. The others defied every effort to catch them. The troopers threatened to shoot them, but the cornet forbade it, and ordered the squire to send them to head−quarters during the day—a command which he declined to obey. Such were some of the ways in which the loyal Canadians were pillaged of their property by their ruthless invaders.

The squire indeed demanded a receipt from the officer for the property thus “requisitioned.”

“Oh yes! I'll give you a receipt,” said that individual, “and much good may it do you,” and that was all the good it did do him, for he never received a cent of compensation.

Colonel Vincent, in the meantime, had withdrawn the garrisons from the frontier forts on the Niagara river. He retreated with sixteen hundred men toward the head of the lake, and took up a strong position on Burlington Heights, near Hamilton. In the now peaceful Protestant cemetery to the west of the city may still be trace among the graves the mouldering ramparts and trenches of this once warlike camp. Dearborn despatched a force of three thousand men, with two hundred and fifty cavalry and nine field−pieces, under Generals Chandler and Winder, to dislodge the Canadian force. On the 6th of June they encamped at Stony Creek, seven miles from Vincent's lines. The position of the latter was critical. Niagara and York had both been captured. Before him was a victorious foe. His ammunition was reduced to ninety rounds. He was extricated from his peril by a bold blow. Colonel John Harvey, having reconnoitered the enemy's position, proposed a night attack. Vincent heartily co−operated. At midnight, with seven hundred British bayonets, they burst upon the American camp. A fierce fight ensued in which the enemy were utterly routed. The British, unwilling to expose their small number to a still superior force, retired before daybreak, with four guns and a hundred prisoners, including both of the American Generals. The victory, however, was purchased with the loss of two hundred men killed or missing. A venerable old lady, recently deceased, has described to the writer the dreary procession of waggons laden with wounded men that filed past her father's door on their return to the British head− quarters. The battle was fought early on Sunday morning, near the house of “Brother Gage,” a good Methodist, as his appellation indicates. [Footnote: Carroll's “Case and His Cotemporaries,” Vol I., p. 307.] On that sacred day, so desecrated by the havoc of war, he gathered the neighbours together and buried the slain, friend and foe, in one wide, common grave. Among the traditions of the war is one which records that the boys of the Gage family gathered up a peck of bullets which had been intercepted by the stone fence bounding the lane that led to the house.

The Americans, after destroying their camp stores and leaving the dead unburied, retreated to Forty Mile Creek, where they effected a junction with General Lewis, advancing to their aid with two thousand men. At daybreak on the 8th of June, the American camp was shelled by Commodore Yeo's fleet. The enemy retreated to Fort George, abandoning their tents and stores, which were captured by Vincent. Their baggage, shipped by batteaux to the fort, was either taken by the fleet or abandoned on the shore. [Footnote: Withrow's History of Canada, 8vo. ed., chap. xxiii.1.316]

CHAPTER IX. A BRAVE WOMAN'S EXPLOIT.

Neville Trueman, found ample occupation in ministering to the sick and wounded, and in visiting his scattered flock throughout the invaded territory. He was enabled, incidentally, to render important service to his adopted country. It was toward the end of June, that one afternoon he was riding through the forest in the neighbourhood of the Beaver Dams, near the town of Thorold,—a place which received its name from the remarkable constructions of the industrious animal which has been adopted as the national emblem of Upper Canada,—where there was a small force of British troops posted. In the twilight he observed a travel−worn woman approaching upon the forest pathway, with an air of bodily weariness, yet of mental alertness and anxiety. As she drew near, he recognized a worthy Canadian matron, whom he had, more than once, seen in his congregation in the school−house at the village of Chippewa.

“Why, Mrs. Secord!” he exclaimed, reining up his horse as she attempted to pass him, furtively trying to conceal her face, “are not you afraid to be so far from home on foot, when the country is so disturbed?”

“Thank God it is you, Mr. Trueman!” she eagerly replied. “I was afraid it might be one of the American scouts. 'Home,' did you say? I have no home,” she added in a tone of bitterness.

“Can't I be of some service to you? Where is your husband?” Neville asked, wondering at her distraught air.

“Haven't you heard?” she replied. “He was sore wounded at Queenston Heights, and will never be a well man again; and our house was pillaged and burned. But we're wasting time; what reck my private wrongs when the country is overrun by the King's enemies? How far is it to the camp?”

“Farther than you can walk without resting,” he answered.” You seem almost worn out.”

“Nineteen miles I've walked this day, through woods and thicket, without a bit or sup, to warn the King's troops of their danger.”

“What danger?” asked Neville, wondering if her grief had not somewhat affected her mind.

“The enemy are on the move—hundreds of them—with cannon and horses. I saw them marching past my cottage this very morning, and I vowed to warn the King's soldiers or die in the attempt. I slipped unseen into the woods and ran like a deer, through bypaths and, 'cross lots, and I must press on or I may be too late.”

Not for a moment did this American−born youth hesitate as to his duty to his adopted country. Wheeling his horse he exclaimed, “You brave woman, you've nobly done your part, let me take you to the nearest house and then ride on and give the alarm.”

“I hoped to have done it myself,” she said. “But it is best as it is. Never mind me. Every minute is precious.”

Without waiting for more words, Neville waved his hand in encouragement, and putting spurs to his horse was out of sigh in a moment. In a few minutes he galloped up to the post held by the British picket, and flung himself off his reeking steed—incurring imminent risk of being bayoneted by the sentry, because he took no notice of his peremptory challenge. Bursting into the guard−room, he called for the officer of the day, Lieutenant Fitzgibbon. A few words conveyed the startling intelligence—the alarm was promptly given—the bugle sounded the “turn cut”—the guard promptly responded—the men rushed to arms. Messengers were despatched to an outpost where Captain Ker was posted with two hundred Indians, and to Major de Heren, commanding a body of troops in the rear.

Neville, followed by two files of soldiers, returned to meet the brave Canadian matron to whose patriotic heroism was due the rescue of the little post from an unexpected attack by an overwhelming force. They found her almost fainting from fatigue and the reaction from the overstrung tension of her nerves. Leaping from his horse, Neville adjusted his cloak so as to make a temporary side−saddle, and placed the travel−worn woman thereon. Walking by her side, he held the bridle−rein and carefully guarded the horse over the rugged forest path, the two soldiers falling behind as a rear−guard. As they approached the post at Beaver Dams, the redcoats gave a hearty British cheer. The guard turned out, and presented arms as though she were the Queen; and the gallant Lieutenant Fitzgibbon assisted the lady to alight with as dignified a courtesy as he could use to royalty itself. She was committed to the care of the good wife of the farm−house which formed the head−quarters of the post, and every means taken to ensure her comfort. By such heroism as this did the stout−hearted Canadian women of those stern war times serve their country at the risk of their lives.

Vigorous efforts were now made for defence. Trees were hastily felled to blockade the road. A breastwork of logs was thrown up at a commanding position, in front of which was an abattis of young trees and brush piled up to obstruct approach. Lieutenant Fitzgibbon had only some forty−three regulars and two hundred Indiana, to oppose a force of nearly six hundred men, including fifty cavalry and two field−pieces. He must effect by stratagem what he could not effect by force. Every man who could sound a, bugle, and for whom a bugle could be found, was sent into the woods, and these were posted at considerable distances apart. The Indians and thirty−four red−coats, concealed behind trees, lined the road. Before long was heard the tramp of cavalry and rumble of the field−guns. As they came within range the buglers, with all the vigour in their power, sounded a charge, the shrill notes ringing through the leafy forest aisles. The Indians yelled their fearful war−whoop, and the soldiers gave a gallant cheer and opened a sharp fire.

The ruse was as successful as that of Gideon and his three hundred men with their trumpets and pitchers, in the wars of the Philistines. After a spirited attack, the advanced guard fell back upon the main body of the enemy, which was thrown into confusion. Some of the cavalry horses were wounded, and dashed wildly through the ranks, increasing the disorder. The artillery horses caught the infection, and, plunging wildly, overturned one of the gun− carriages in the ditch. At this moment a body of twenty Canadian militia arrived, and Fitzgibbon, to carry out his ruse of affected superiority of numbers, boldly demanded the surrender of the enemy. Colonel Boerstler, the American commander, thinking the British must be strongly supported, to Lieutenant Fitzgibbon's astonishment consented. The latter did not know what to do with his prisoners, who were twice as many as his own force, including the Indians. The opportune arrival of Major de Keren and Captain Villiers, with two hundred men, furnished a sufficient force to guard the prisoners. The chagrin of the latter, on hearing of their deception and capture by a handful of red−coats and red− skins, was intense. The name of the heroic Canadian wife, Mrs. Laura Secord, to whose timely information this brilliant and bloodless victory was due, was honourably mentioned in the military despatches of the day; and her memory should be a perpetual inspiration to patriotic daring to every son and daughter of Canada. [Footnote: A portrait of Mrs. Secord, as a venerable old lady of ninety−two, in a widow's cap and weeds, is given in *Lossing's Pictorial Field Book of the War of 1812*, page 621; also her autograph and a letter describing her exploit. The Prince of Wales, after his return from Canada in 1860, caused the sum of L100 sterling to be presented her for her patriotic service. Lieutenant Fitzgibbon was made a Knight of Windsor Castle.]

This event was one of the turning points of the campaign. Dearborn, whose forces were wasted away by disease, famine, and the fortunes of war, to about four thousand men, was beleaguered in Fort George by Vincent with less than half the number of troops. The British now assumed the offensive, and on the morning of the American national anniversary, the fourth of July, a small force of Canadian militia, under Colonel Clark, crossed at day− break from Chippewa to Fort Schlosser, captured the guard, and carried off a large quantity of provisions and ammunition, of which they were in much need.

A week later, Colonel Bishopp, with two hundred and forty regulars and militia, crossed before day from Fort Erie to the important American post of Black Rock. The enemy were completely taken by surprise, and the block−houses, barracks, dockyard, and one vessel, were destroyed; and seven guns, two hundred stand of arms, and a large quantity of provisions captured.

One day, about the middle of July, a dust−begrimed, sunburnt, yet soldierly−looking young fellow, notwithstanding the weather stained and faded appearance of his dragoon uniform, rode up to The Holms. He cantered familiarly up the lane and, throwing the reins on the neck of his horse, which proceeded of its own accord to the stable, entered, without knocking, the house.

Kate was in the dairy, moulding the golden nuggets of butter with a wooden spatula. Stealing up on tip−toe, our dragoon threw his arms around the girl and gave her a hearty kiss, whose report was as loud as the smack which he instantly received on his cheek from the open palm of the astonished Katharine.

“A pretty reception you give your brother,” exclaimed the young man.

“Why, Zenas!” cried Katharine, throwing her arms ground him, and giving him a kiss that more than made amends for the slap, “how you frightened me; you naughty boy. I thought it was one of those Yankee soldiers. They often come begging for cream or cherries, and get more impudent every day.”

“They won't come again, very soon,” said Zenas, with all his old assurance. “We will lock them up safe enough in Fort George, and soon drive them back to their own side of the river. But give us something to eat. I'm

hungry as a wolf. Where's father?"

"In the ten−acre wheat field. He has to work too hard for his years, and can get no help for love or money," answered Kate, as she set before her brother on the great kitchen table a loaf of homemade bread, a pat of golden butter, a pitcher of rich cream, and a heaped platter of fragrant strawberries just brought in from the garden.

"Didn't I say I'd be back to get in the wheat? And you see I've kept my word," said the lad. "This *is* better than campfare," he went on, as the strawberries and cream rapidly disappeared with the bread and butter. "I have a message for you, Kate. Who do you suppose it is from?" said the rather raw youth, with a look that was intended to be very knowing.

"If it's from the camp," replied Kate, calmly, "I know no one there except Captain Villiers and Mr. Trueman. Is it from either of them?"

"Trueman is a first−rate fellow—a regular brick, you know, even if he *is* a preacher. You ought to have seen how he stood up for them Yankee prisoners, and got our fellows to share their rations with them, although he had helped to bag the game himself. But the message is not from him, but from the captain. He says you saved his life twice,—once nursing him when he was sick, and once by keeping those Yankee scouts here, while we got away. We heard all about your adventure. Well, he's gone to help Proctor in Michigan, and might never come back, he said, and he asked me would I give you this, in case he fell, to show that he was not ungrateful; but I had better give it to you now, or I will be sure to lose it. I can't carry such trumpery in my saddle−bags;" and he handed his sister a small jewel−case. Katharine opened it, and saw an elegant cross, set with gems, lying on a purple velvet cushion.

"He said his mother gave it to him when he was leaving home," continued Zenas. "She was kind of High Church, I guess, and they're most the same as Catholics. He said he had a sort of presentiment that he'd get killed in the war, and he didn't want some wild Indian to snatch it from his body with his scalp, and give to his dusky squaw."

Kate stood looking at the jewel, and knitting her brow in thought. At length she said, "I'll keep it for him till he comes back, as I am sure he will; and if he should not," and her voice quivered a little, for her tender woman's heart could not but shudder at the thought of a violent death,—"I will send it to his mother. I wrote to her for him when he was wounded,—Melton Lodge, Berkshire, is the address. But I will not anticipate his death in battle. I feel certain that he will come back."

As the British lines were drawn firmly around Fort George, in which, having repaired the damage caused by the explosion, the Americans were closely beleaguered, Zenas had no difficulty in obtaining leave of absence to help to harvest the wheat. Other militiamen were also available for that service, which was as important as fighting, Colonel Vincent averred, as he gave permission to considerable numbers of his yeoman soldiery to return to their farms, while the others maintained the leaguer of the fort. Soon after the ingathering of the harvest, however, Vincent was compelled, by the re−enforcement of the enemy, to raise the blockade of Fort George, and again to return to his old position at Burlington Heights.

CHAPTER X. DISASTERS AND TRIUMPHS.

But we must return to trace briefly the general progress of public events. Sir James Yeo and Sir George Prevost, with seven vessels and a thousand men had, early in the season, sailed from Kingston to destroy the American shipping and stores at Sackett's Harbour. This object was only partly achieved in consequence of the impromptitude, not to say incompetence of the commander−in−chief. It was felt that the gallant Brock had not yet found his successor.

In the month of July, Commodore Chauncey again appeared on Lake Ontario, with a largely augmented American fleet. With Colonel Scott and a force of infantry and artillery, he sailed for Burlington Heights, to destroy a quantity of British stores at that place, which was the principal depot of Vincent's army. A body of Glengury Fencibles had been sent from York to protect the depot, thus leaving the capital defenceless. Chauncey therefore sailed for York, and Scott, landing without opposition on the 23rd of July, burned the barracks, and such public buildings as had previously escaped, broke open the jail, and plundered both private and public stores. Chauncey then sailed for the Niagara. On the 8th of August, he came out of the river to give battle to Yeo's fleet of six vessels—less than half his own number. A running fight of two days' duration ensued. In endeavouring to escape from the British, two American vessels, the “Scourge,” of eight, and the “Hamilton,” of nine guns, capsized under press of sail, and went to the bottom with all on board, except sixteen men, who were rescued by the boats of the British fleet. Chauncey lost two other vessels by capture, and was glad again to seek refuge in Sackett's Harbour.

Stirring events were also transpiring in the West. General Harrison, notwithstanding the disastrous defeat of Winchester, was determined, if possible, to drive the British out of Michigan. For this purpose he had, early in the spring, established a rendezvous at Fort Meigs, on the Miami River, near the western extremity of Lake Erie, and formed a depot of stores and provisions. The expense of victualling his army was enormous. It is estimated that every barrel of flour cost the American Government a hundred dollars. Stores of all kinds had to be carried on the backs of pack−horses through an almost pathless wilderness, and few of the animals survived more than one journey. It is estimated that the transport of each cannon to the lakes cost a thousand dollars.

Meanwhile, two squadrons were preparing to contest the supremacy of Lake Erie. Perry, the American commodore, had nine vessels well−manned with experienced seamen, to the number of nearly six hundred, from the now idle merchant marine of the United States. Barclay, the British captain, had only fifty sailors to six vessels, the rest of the crew being made up of two hundred and forty soldiers and eighty Canadians. After alternately blockading each other in the harbours of Presqu' Isle and Amherstburg, the hostile fleets met on the 10th of September in the shock of battle, off Put−in Bay, at the western end of Lake Erie. Perry's flagship soon struck her colours, but Barclay, his own ship a wreck, could not even secure the prize. Through the lack of naval skill of the inexperienced landsmen, the British ships fouled, and were helplessly exposed to the broadside of the enemy. The heavier metal of Perry's guns soon reduced them to unmanageable hulks. The carnage was dreadful. In three hours, all their officers and half of their crews were killed or wounded. Perry dispatched to Washington the sententious message: “We have met the enemy. They are ours.”

The result of this defeat was most disastrous. All the advantages resulting from Brock's victory over Hull in the previous year were forfeited, Michigan was lost to the British, not again to be recovered. Proctor, short of provisions, cut off from supplies, exposed in flank and rear, and attacked in force in front, could only retreat. He dismantled the forts at Detroit and Amherstburg, destroyed the stores and public buildings, and fell back along the Thames with eight hundred and thirty white men, and five hundred Indians under Tecumseh. Harrison followed rapidly with three thousand five hundred men, several hundred of whom were cavalry, of which Proctor had none. He fell upon the British rear−guard at Moraviantown, October 4th, and captured over a hundred prisoners, and all the stores and ammunition. Proctor was forced the following day to fight at a disadvantage, on ill−chosen ground. He had also neglected to break down the bridges behind him, or to defend his position with breastworks, and only six hundred men were brought into action against sixfold odds. The mounted Kentucky riflemen rode through and through the British ranks, dealing, death on every side. The brave Tecumseh was slain at the head of his warriors. He had fought desperately, even against the mounted riflemen. Springing at their leader. Colonel Johnson, he

dragged him to the earth. The dragoons rallied around their chief, and Tecumseh fell, pierced with bullets. The rout was complete. Proctor, with a shattered remnant of his troops, retreated through the forest to

Burlington Heights, where, with two hundred and forty war−wasted men, he effected a junction with Vincent's command, which had been compelled for a time to raise the siege of Fort George, and lake up its old position. Harrison, the American general, assumed the nominal government of the western part of Upper Canada. [Footnote: See Withrow's History of Canada, pp. 318−322.]

In these stirring scenes, Captain Villiers and Zenas Drayton bore an active part. After the harvest Zenas, eager for active service, had volunteered to join Proctor in the west, and had shared his disastrous retreat and defeat. From the camp at Burlington, he forwarded by Neville Trueman a letter to his sister Kate. The writing, grammar, and spelling were not quite as good as they might have been; but the schoolmaster was not abroad in Upper Canada in the early part of the century as he is now. The following is a copy of the letter, *vertatim et literatim*:—

IN CAMP AT BURLINGTON HEIGHTS, October 10.

"I take my pen in hand, leastways the quartermaster's, which he lent me, to let you know that I am well and hope you are enjoying the same blessing, also father and the sorel colt, about which I am mighty particular, as my roan has fallen lame. You will have heard about the fight at Moraviantown. It was a bad bizness. We was dead−beat with marching day after day, from Fort Maiden; and Harrison,—that's the Yankee general,—had a strong body of cavalry and captured nearly all our stores and amunishun. Our kurnel seemed to have kind of lost his head, too; (leastways, that's what I heared Captain Villiers say) and never broke down a single bridge, nor blockaded the road behind us. A few of us Niagara boys could soon have felled some trees that would stop their big guns pretty quick, but we had no axes. Backwoods fighting has to be done in backwoods way, with the axe and spade as much as with the musket. But some of these red coats fit in Spain with Wellington, and think what they don't know about fighting ain't worth knowing.

"Well, at Moraviantown was an Indian church, built by a Dutch missionary from Pennsylvany, and a few houses, and our kurnel gave the word to halt and make a stand against the enemy. But the ground along the River Thames was black and mucky, almost like a swamp, and we was soon fagged out. Afore we knowed it almost, the Kentucky mounted rifles was on us a−shouting like mad. They rid right through our lines, cutting and hacking with their heavy sabres, and then they formed behind us and began firing with their muskets. Our line was completely broken, and badly cut up, and most of our fellows threw down their arms and surrendered on the spot. They could'nt do much else.

"But Tecumseh never showed the white feather a bit. He and his braves was all painted and plumed, and he wore on his naked breast the King George's medal Crock gave him, and they emptied a good many saddles from behind the trees. When they saw it going so hard with our fellows, they yelled their war−whoop and rushed at the dragoons. Tecumseh pulled their kurnel off his horse, and was fighting like a wild cat when a dozen mounted rifles spurred to the spot, and riddled him with bullets. We'll never see his like again, Kate. No white man or red−skin ever was a better soldier. He died for his country like a hero, as he was. He should long be remembered, Captain Villiers says, by every Canadian as the bravest of the brave. [Footnote: An attempt was made in 1877, to identify his grave in order to pay fitting honours to his bones, but without success. His chief memorial has been the giving of his name to a township of that Canada for which he gave his life.

An American poet has thus commemorated Tecumseh's last conflict with Colonel Johnson;

"The moment was fearful; a mightier foe
Had ne'er swung his battle−axe o'er him;
But hope nerved his arm for a desperate blow.
And Tecumseh fell prostrate before him.
He fought in defending his kindred and
With a spirit most loving and loyal,
And long shall the Indian, warrior sing
The deeds of Tecumseh the royal."]

"Captain Villiers rallied a couple of companies and brought us off after a smart skermish. You'd think the Captain was in love with death, he was so reckless of his life. We made forced marches almost day and night, till we got to Ancaster; and, I tell you, glad men we was when we saw Vincent's lines. We're kind of rested now. Trueman was as good as a surgeon at dressing wounds and the like, and he had enough of it to do, besides his

preaching and praying, and writing letters for the men. I got a scratch myself, but I thought I'd try and write to you. But I have to sit on the ground and write on a drum head, and its kind of tiresome.

"No more at present from your loving brother,

"Zenas.

"Captain Villiers has asked me to add a post−scriptum, sending his polite regards."

This was the first letter Kate had ever received in her life, for in these days His Majesty's mails were not heavily burdened with private correspondence; and she had never been further from home than to York once with her father in a schooner, to see the opening of the Parliament. She read her letter eagerly in her room, and then rushed back to the parlour exclaiming,

"O Mr. Trueman, is he badly hurt?"

"Zenas, do you mean?" asked the young preacher. "Well nothing dangerous if he keeps quiet; but he has a pretty severe sabre cut on his sword arm. But he's well cared for. Captain Villiers looks after him like a brother."

"How kind of him," said Kate, with tears of gratitude in her eyes.

"It is only paying a debt he owes you, I am sure," replied Neville; but as if unwilling to detract a particle from his merit, he added, "He behaved very bravely in the late action, and his praise is in every body's mouth at Vincent's camp."

"Who? Zenas? I am sure of that," replied Kate proudly.

"Zenas played a gallant part too. His wound is proof of that," answered Mr. Trueman, "but I was speaking of the Captain."

"Of course," said Kate, somewhat coldly, "but he is not my brother you know," and the conversation turned in another channel.

We now proceed to notice briefly the progress of the war elsewhere. The Americans having overrun so large a part of Upper Canada, were free to concentrate their efforts on the reduction of Kingston and Montreal. Wilkinson, Commander−in−Chief of the forces on the Niagara and Upper St. Lawrence frontiers, received instructions to effect a junction with the "Army of the North" about to advance from Lake Champlain for the subjugation of Lower Canada. There were comparatively few British troops in the lower province, and only three thousand active militia, under General Sheaffe, for the protection of a thousand miles of frontier.

In pursuance of the American plan of invasion, on the 24th of October, an army of nine thousand men, with ample artillery, under General Wilkinson, rendezvoused at Grenadier Island, near Sackett's Harbour; but the stone forts of Kingston, garrisoned by two thousand men under De Rottenburg, protected that important naval station from attack even by a fourfold force. Wilkinson, therefore, embarking his army in three hundred batteaux, protected by twelve gun−boats, in the bleak November weather threaded the watery mazes of the Thousand Islands in his menacing advance on Montreal. A British "corps of observation," eight hundred strong, under Colonel Morrison, followed the enemy along the river bank. A number of gun−boats also hung on the rear of the American flotilla, and kept up a teasing fire, to their great annoyance and injury. Wilkinson slowly made his way down the St. Lawrence, halting his army from time to time, to repel attack. Near Prescott, his flotilla of batteaux suffered considerably by a cannonade from the British batteries, as they were passing that place on a moonlight night. The molestation that he received from Morrison's corps and from the loyal local militia was so great that he was forced to land strong brigades on the Canadian shore in order to secure a passage for his boats. At the head of the Long Sault Rapids, Wilkinson detached General Boyd with a force of over two thousand men, to crush the opposing British corps. The collision took place at Chrysler's Farm,—a name thenceforth of potent memory. The battle−ground was an open field, with the river on the right, the woods on the left. For two hours the conflict raged. But Canadian valour and discipline prevailed over twofold odds, and the Americans retreated to their boats, leaving behind one of their guns captured by the British. Their loss in this engagement was over three hundred killed and wounded,—more than twice that of their opponents. Wilkinson's disorganized force precipitately descended the Long Sault Rapids, and awaited at St. Regis the approach of Hampton's army. It was destined to wait in vain.

The invasion of Lower Canada by way of Lake Champlain had also been attended with serious disasters. Early in September, General Hampton, with a well appointed army of five thousand men, advanced from Plattsburg on that lake, with a view to a junction with Wilkinson's army, and a combined attack on Montreal. On the 21st of October he crossed the border, and pushed forward his forces along both sides of the Chateauguay

River. Sir George Prevost called for a levy of the sedentary militia, who rallied loyally for the defence of their country. Colonel De Salaberry, with four hundred Voltigeurs,—sharpshooters every one,—took up a strong position at the junction of the Chateanguay with the Outarde, defended by a breastwork of logs and abattis. General Izzard, with a column three thousand five hundred strong, attempted to dislodge him. The Voltigeurs held the enemy well in check till they were in danger of being surrounded by sheer force of numbers. By a clever ruse, De Salaberry distributed his buglers widely through the woods in his rear, and ordered them to sound the charge. The enemy, thinking themselves assailed in force, everywhere gave way, and retreated precipitately from the field. Hampton soon retired across the borders to his entrenched camp at Plattsburg. Wilkinson, sick in body and chagrined in mind, learning the shameful defeat of the “Grand Army of the North,” abandoned the idea of further advance on Montreal, scuttled his boats and batteaux, and retired into winter quarters on the Salmon River, within the United States boundary. Here he formed an entrenched camp, and sheltered his defeated army in wooden huts all the following spring.

Thus the patriotism and valour of some fifteen hundred Canadian troops hurled hack from our country's soil two invading armies of tenfold strength, and made the names of Chrysler's Farm and Chateanguay memories of thrilling power, and pledges of the inviolable liberty of our land. [Footnote: See Withrow's History of Canada, 8vo. ed, pp. 322−325.]

CHAPTER XI. ELDER CASE IN WAR TIME.

We now return to trace the progress of events in Upper Canada. After the British disasters on Lake Erie, and at Moravian Town, Sir George Prevost instructed Vincent to fall back on Kingston, abandoning the western peninsula to the enemy—a desperate resolve, only to be adopted in the last extremity. At a council of war held at Burlington Heights, however, it was wisely decided by Vincent and his officers to stand their ground as long as possible. Colonel McClure, the commandant of the American force, was strongly posted at Twenty Mile Creek, and his foraging parties ravaged the country, and pillaged the inhabitants.

The season for active operations in the field having now passed, the Canadian militia were dismissed to their homes with instructions to hold themselves in readiness for immediate action should necessity demand their aid. Zenas Drayton had returned to The Holms, quite recovered of his wound and covered with glory by the distinction it had conferred upon him. He strode about with a martial air, to the undisguised admiration of the maids of the household and of all the damsels of the neighbourhood. His father's eyes followed him sometimes with a look of pride, but oftener with one of glistening wistfulness, for in these troublous times pre−eminence of merit was pre−eminence of peril. But Kate lavished all the love and homage of her woman's heart upon her brother, as the ideal hero of her dreams. The lad was in a fair way to be spoiled, if he was not also pretty sure to have the conceit taken, out of him in the stern school of adversity.

One evening, early in December, the family were sitting around their kitchen fire, which snapped and roared up the wide chimney throat as merrily as though such a thing as war had never been known. The squire and Zenas sat on opposite sides of the hearth comparing the old soldier's reminiscences of the Revolutionary War with the boy's recent military experiences. Between them sat Kate as she had sat on that memorable evening, more than a year before, on the eve of the fatal fight of Queenston Heights. How much she had lived in that short time! The outbreak of the war had found her a light−hearted girl; she had now the graver mien and sometimes the thought−weighted expression of a woman. But to− night, a look of happy contentment rested on her face an she gazed musingly on the glowing embers, or occasionally took part in the conversation of her father and brother.

Suddenly was heard without the fierce harking of the mastiff watch−dog, which as suddenly subsided and was followed by a quick, joyous yelp of recognition. Shuffling feet were then heard in the outer kitchen, stamping off the snow.

“Who can that he?” asked the squire.

“Some of the neighbours, I suppose,” said Kate, for the hospitable hearth presented rare attractions to the rustic swains of the vicinity.

“Some of Kate's admirers I should say,” laughed Zenas, as he rose to open the door, “only they don't hunt in couples.”

Two snow−besprinkled, travel−stained men, came in out of the darkness and stood revealed in the glowing fire−light as Sandy McKay and Tom Loker.

“Welcome home! However did you get here?” asked the squire warmly shaking their hands, and making room for them at the fire. “We thought you were prisoners in the hulks at Sackett's Harbour.”

“So we were,” replied Tom Loker with all his old *sang froid,* “longer than we wanted.”

“How did you like picking oakum for the Yankees, Sandy?” asked Zenas.

“Nae oakum picked I,” said Sandy with an air of grim determination. “It was clean against ma conscience to gi' aid or comfort to the King's enemies in ony way.”

“What did they say to that?” asked the squire. “I thought they had a way of overcoming scruple's of that sort.”

“They could na owercome mine,” said Sandy.

“They jest clapped him in the bilboes and kept him there for one while,” interjected Tom. “For me, I'd rather pick all day at the tarred rope though it *was* hard on the fingers.”

“Did they use you well otherwise?” asked Kate with commiseration in her voice.

“Prisoners can na be choosers, Miss Katharine,” responded Sandy. “I suppose our treatment was naithing by ordinair. We hadna thae oaten bannocks and hot kale ye aftens gave us. But warst o' a' was bein' pent in the close hot hulks 'tween decks, whaur ye couldna stan' upricht wi'out knocking your heid again the timmers, and whaur ye

gat na a sough o' the blessed air o' heaven save what stole in through the wee port−holes. How we tholed it sae lang I dinna ken. We faured better after yon Methody parson came."

"Ay, he wor a good un, he wor," said Tom.

"Who was he?" asked Kate with much interest.

"He wuzzn't much to look at," continued Tom; "that is, there wuzzn't much of him. But he had a heart big as a mountain; ther wuz nothin he wouldn't do for them poor prisoners. 'He wuz come to preach salvation,' he said, 'to them that wuz bound.' Case wuz his name,—a leettle man, but worth mor'n a dozen ornary men. I remember one day he came 'long side with a boat load of tea, coffee, sugar, and several jars of milk for the prisoners; and he preached, and prayed, and exhorted so long that it seemed as if he couldn't tear hisself away."

We may be allowed here to quote, in illustration of the labours of that heroic man, Elder Case, to whom Canadian Methodism owes such a debt of gratitude, extracts of two of his letters written about this period:

"I was present," he says, "a few hours after the battle of Sackett's Harbour, where I witnessed a scene of death and carnage more moving than ever I saw before. Numbers lay cold in death. Many were groaning with their wounds and bleeding in their gore. Myself and two preachers were in Rutland, about ten miles from the Harbour, and were about to commence clearing off a camp−ground, but on hearing the cannon and constant roll of small arms we gave up the idea of work and betook ourselves to prayer. Such sensations I never realized before. We knew many of our acquaintances were there, among whom were brethren in the Lord. We thought on the condition of the women whose husbands and sons were exposed; the welfare of the country, where so much was at stake, and the honour of the nation concerned; but more than this a thousand times—the immortal interests of the thousands who were engaged in the contest, Americans and Englishmen, all of one creation—alike the subjects of redeeming blood, all accountable to the King of kings, and deserving the same condemnation. With these reflections we immediately called the household and fell upon our knees in prayer, and the Lord poured on us the spirit of supplication. We wept aloud and prayed most fervently to the Ruler of nations and Saviour of men that He would pardon our national crimes, save men from death, and have mercy on the souls of those constantly falling in battle. You may suppose that the constant sound of the instruments of death gave weight to our concern, and ardency to our petitions, with all that grace could inspire.

"We then mounted our horses and set out for the scene of action, that, if possible, we might afford some assistance as ministers, and administer consolation to the wounded and dying. When we reached the Harbour the British had retreated to their shipping, leaving part of the dead and wounded upon the field of battle. These, with the others, were brought in from the field; the dead were stretched side by side in rows, and the wounded on beds and straw in as comfortable a condition as could be expected. We were conducted by a friend to the several hospitals, where I saw the distress of about eighty wounded. I cannot describe my feelings to hear the groans of the wounded and dying, some pierced through the body, others through the head, some bruised by the falling of timbers, others with broken bones, and one whose face was shot away (save his under jaw) by a grape−shot. He was yet breathing strong. This was a shocking view. Some were in such pain they could not be conversed with; others being fatigued and broken of their rest were asleep, but we conversed with many who manifested seriousness, whom we pointed to the suffering, bleeding Saviour, and exhorted them to look to Him for mercy. Here I saw how useful a faithful and feeling chaplain might be. The best opportunity would present itself in alleviating the miseries of men in some degree, by procuring such things as the distressed most needed, and by comforting them in their afflictions; and here he might be heard though at another time his counsel might be slighted.

"Having been without bread for a long time, many of the militia were very hungry. Some wanted coffee, some milk, some bread. We gave them the biscuits we carried down, but could procure no milk for them. I really desired to stay with them; my heart thirsted to do them good.

"On leaving the Harbour, we called on some brethren, who, with their neighbours, carried down several gallons of milk, and distributed it among the wounded. We also represented their case to the congregation at the close of the camp−meeting, when twenty− five dollars were contributed and put into proper hands, who purchased coffee, sugar, and other delicacies which they much needed, and from time to time distributed among them. For this they were very thankful, and both English and American blessed me with many good wishes when I again visited the hospital, four weeks ago.

"Our preachers on the lines have frequent opportunities of preaching to the soldiers, who are very fond of

hearing. We find it necessary to avoid all political discussions, both in public and in private.

"Having been kindly indulged by Col. Larned, commandant to the prisoners, we most joyfully embraced the privilege of proclaiming to them the sweet liberty of the Gospel. They were called together by their officers, and a more attentive congregation I never expect to address again. As soon as we began to sing there was weeping; and immediately on our kneeling to prayer they all knelt down, and here and there we heard the voice of 'Amen' to our petition for their salvation. I could not solve this till after the service. To my great surprise and mingled grief and joy, several brethren and acquaintances from Canada came and made themselves known unto us; they were militia in arms, and were taken near Fort George. Among these were Messrs. George Lawrence, leader at Four−Mile Creek; William Clinton, from the head of the lake, and Russel Hawley, brother of David Hawley, of the Bay of Quinte. Their captivity was an affliction which made friends more consoling." [Footnote: Carroll's Case and his Cotemporaries. Vol. I., pp. 316−20.]

On this statement, Dr. Carroll thus comments:

"Mr. Case says the Canadian prisoners 'were militia in arms,' but Mr. Lawrence was an exception. The reader will remember that he was one of the Methodist Palatine stock, and brother of John Lawrence, the second husband of Mrs. Philip Embury. In the war− time he was so advanced in years as to be exempt from militia duty, although his sons bore arms, and one of them was wounded the day his father was taken prisoner. Mr. Lawrence, senior, kept about the peaceful avocations of his farm, and continued to meet his little class in his own house in those stormy times. He was made a prisoner at his own door at Cross−Roads. [Footnote: About four miles west of Niagara.] The writer, though only a child of four years, was there, and remembers well his arrest, as he does, all events consecutively since the battle of Niagara. The Americans were then in the occupancy of Fort George, and a portion of the British army were entrenched at the Cross−Roads, about half a mile from Mr. Lawrence's residence. A general skirmish Lad taken place all that morning between the pickets and advanced guards of the two armies. A body of only ten American Indians, or white men disguised like Indians, advanced toward Mr. Lawrence's, where an officer's mess was kept and a guard of thirty soldiers posted.

"The cowardly officer of the guard, one *McLeod* (let his name go down to posterity), threatened to 'cut off the first man's head who fired a shot;' and they fled to the camp, leaving the women and children to the mercy of the savages. These latter, when they came up, shot a corporal of the Glengaries, a Mr. Smith, who chanced to be there, and who boldly stood on his defence. Mr. Lawrence thinking the matter some *emeute* between the soldiers and our own Indians, passed through the front gate into the road and gave one of the savages his hand, who took and held it, while another came up with an angry countenance and grasped the old gentleman by the neck−cloth, and made him a prisoner. He and poor Smith, whom only the courage of a woman, Mrs. Cassaily, kept the savages from killing outright in the house, whither he had crawled, were led; away from our sight. Smith died on the road. The alarm was given before any one had broken last. We all fled. The writer's mother and her four youngest children, passing the camp, found the army preparing for march, and an elder son and brother just mounting his horse with a view to coming to our rescue. We followed the retreating army through the Black Swamp road all that weary day, and broke a twenty−four hours' fast at sunset. We had the supreme felicity of extending the hospitalities of our humble house in York to Mr. Lawrence, whom we all revered and loved as a father, towards the close of the war, on his way back from captivity." [Footnote: Case and his Cotemporaries. pp. 320−22.]

We return from this digression to the group at the fire−side of the Holms.

"How did you get away?" asked Zenas.

"Tam here gied 'em French leave," replied Sandy, "He just droppit oot o' a port−hole into the water after the guard made his rounds and got awa in the mirk; I wonner he was na droonded."

"So I wuz e'en a'most. But wuss still was that villian of a sentry blazing away at me. It's lucky the night wuz so dark. But I thought I'd have to give up afore I got to land. I had to lie on the beach panting like a dying mackerel. Well, I walked all night to Cape Vincent, and at daybreak I just borrowed one of Uncle Sam's boats and paddled across to Wolfe's Island, and soon after got to Kingston."

"How much longer did *you* stay, Sandy?" asked the squire, who said the story reminded him of the adventures of the Yankee prisoners in the *Jersey* hulk during the old war.

"Weel Tam here helped me tae win oot, as I may say," replied Sandy. "He hadna eneuch of fechtin', sae he mun join thae yoemanry corps that followed Wilkinson's army doun the St Lawrence, and took part in the battle o'

Windmill Point. They took a hantle o' preesoners there, and sune cam a' cartel' they ca' it, offering an exchange. We did garrison duty at Fort Henry awhile, and learned the big gun drill; it may come in useful yet."

"How got you here?" asked the squire. "you never marched from Kingston at this time of year, surely."

"No," said Tom Loker, "the ten−gun brig *William and Mary*, Captain Richardson, master, wuz a−carrying stores to Colonel Vincent at Burlington, and we got leave to take passage in her. We reached there last night and walked all day to get here, and glad we are to get back to our old quarters, the best we've seen since we left them." [Footnote: Captain Richardson afterwards became a distinguished minister and bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada, and was for many years Agent of the Upper Canada Bible Society. He was under fire at the taking of Oswego, and while engaged rigging a pump, a round shot carried away his arm. We have heard him say in his own parlor, picking up a carpet ball, "It was a ball like this that took off my arm." He became, on recovery from his wound, sailing master of Sir James Yoe's flag ship the *St Lawrence*, a position requiring much nautical skill, as the huge kraken drew twenty−three feet of water, and carried something like a hundred guns. Few men were better known or more esteemed in Canada than Bishop Richardson. He died in 1875, full of years and full of honours, beloved and regretted by all classes of the community.] By this time Kate had a hearty supper ready for the wanderers, to which they did ample justice before returning with grateful hearts to their old lodgings in the capacious attic. By such privations and sufferings on the part of her faithful yeomanry, were the liberties of Canada maintained in those stormy days of war and conflict.

CHAPTER XII. A DARK TRAGEDY—THE BURNING OF NIAGARA.

The victory of the British arms in Lower Canada led to vigorous efforts to drive the American invaders out of the upper province. Lieutenant−General Drummond assumed command, and at once resolved to regain possession of Fort George. Early in December he despatched Colonel Murray from Burlington Heights with a force of five hundred regulars and Indians to drive in the marauding bands of the enemy that were pillaging the country. McClure, the American general, fell back on Niagara and Fort George, and, fearing an attack in force, and his garrison being much reduced, resolved to evacuate the fort and abandon the country. But before doing so he resolved, in obedience to instructions from the War Department at Washington, to perpetrate an act of inhuman barbarity which shall hand down his name to infamy so long as the story shall be told. In order to deprive the British troops of winter quarters he determined to burn the town of Niagara, leaving the innocent and non−combatant inhabitants, helpless women and little children, the sick and infirm, homeless and shelterless amid the rigours of a Canadian winter.

It is one of the dread results of international conflict that the inhabitants of the hostile frontiers, who may have previously dwelt in good fellowship and neighbourly helpfulness, are often changed to deadly enemies, and even claim for their bitter hostility the sanctions of duty. There was one conspicuous exception on the banks of the Niagara. Mary Lawson, the daughter of the village miller and merchant of the little hamlet of Youngstown, that nestled under the wing of Fort Niagara on the American side of the river, was as blithe and bonnie a lass of eighteen summers as ever gladdened a father's heart. Admirers Mary had in plenty, but the must eligible of them all, in the opinion of the village gossips, was young Ensign Roberts, attached to the American forces at the Fort.

Not so, however, thought Mary. The favoured of her heart was a smart young Canadian, who for some time had acted as clerk in her father's store, and had shortly before opened a small establishment of his own on the opposite side of the river, in the thriving village of Niagara. Every Sunday young Morton crossed in his own light skiff to attend church with Mary; and on summer evenings many were the pleasant sails they had upon the shining reaches of the river, watching the sun go down in golden glory in the bosom of blue Ontario, and the silver moon bathe in its pale light the bosky foliage of the shores, beneath which, dark and heavy, crouched the stealthy shadows, while the river rippled calmly by.

With the outbreak of the war, however, these pleasant sails and visits ceased. George Morton naturally espoused the cause of his native country, with which, too, all his commercial interests were identified. This brought him at once under the ban of Mary's father, and his visits were interdicted. Ensign Roberts took advantage of the absence of his rival to press his suit, which Squire Lawson favoured as being likely, he thought, to wean Mary from her forbidden attachment to one who was now her country's foe. But he little knew the depth and the strength of a woman's affection. The more her royalist lover was aspersed and maligned, the more warmly glowed her love, the more firm was her resolve to be faithful unto death.

In the action which led to the British evacuation of Fort George, young Morton took an active part in endeavouring to repel the invasion of his country. As barge after barge transferred to the shore, under cover of a heavy fire, the hostile force from the crescent−shaped fleet that lay moored on the blue bosom of the lake before the town, he with the militia company to which he was attached, was lying in a hollow near the beach, to check if possible the advance of the foe. A round shot from the fleet struck the ground in front of him, covering him with earth and breaking the arm with which he was loading his musket. At the same moment a bullet from the enemy struck his nearest comrade, passing right through his body as he lay upon the ground. A slight quiver convulsed his frame, and then it was at rest forever. As the foe advanced in force, driving back the British, George, unable to retreat as rapidly as the rest, was taken prisoner and with others sent across to the American fort.

Personally, George Morton received every kindness from the officer and surgeons of the American hospital; and in the gentle ministrations of Mary Lawson, which he shared with the rest of the wounded, he found a compensation for all his sufferings. Upon his partial convalescence he was released on parole, and returned to Niagara to look after his disorganized and partially ruined business. By his skill and industry, aided by the fictitious prosperity caused by the presence of a numerous army, before the winter it had become again exceedingly flourishing, but only to be ruthlessly and completely destroyed.

Amid the active preparations made for the transfer of the American forces and *materiel* of war across the river, preparatory to the destruction of Niagara, intelligence of the atrocious design came to the knowledge of Mary Lawson, chiefly through the indignant dissent and remonstrance of some of McClure's own officers against the unsoldier−like cruelty. The intrepid girl's resolve was taken on the instant. She determined under cover of the night to give the alarm to Morton, and through him to the inhabitants, that they might, if possible, frustrate the infamous design, or at least rescue their moveable property from destruction.

It required no small courage to carry out her purpose. The winter had set in early and severe. The river was running full of ice, which rendered crossing, especially by night, exceedingly perilous. To this was added the danger of being challenged, and it might be shot, by the sentries of the American camp. But when did true love in man or woman stop to calculate chances, or hesitate to encounter danger or even death for the beloved one?

It was on the 9th of December—a bleak, cold, cloudy night—that Mary, having secured the aid of her father's faithful servant, Michael O'Brian, a jolly but rather stupid Irishman, who knew no fear, escaped through the window of her room after the family had retired to rest, which was not till near midnight, and set forth on her perilous mission of mercy. In order to avoid the American sentries they attempted to cross about a mile above the camp, and in the murky darkness, fearlessly launched their little boat, steering by the lights in the town, slumbering unconscious of its fate, where some patient watcher kept her vigil beside a sick bed.

The dark water eddied and gurgled amid the ice−floes, from which a ghastly gleam was reflected, like that from the face of a corpse dimly seen amid the dark. Occasionally a huge fragment of ice would grate, and crash, and crunch against the frail ribs of the boat, as if eager to crush it and frustrate the generous purpose of its passengers. But the strong arm of O'Brian pushed a way through the ice, while Mary sat wrapped in her cloak and in busy meditation in the bottom of the boat.

But they had not calculated on the strength, of the current, and the resistance of the ice. In spite of every effort they were being rapidly borne down the stream. Another danger stared them in the face. Should they be carried into the lake with the floating ice, they might before morning be drifted out of sight of land and perish miserably of cold or hunger; or be dashed upon the ice− bound shore, where they could hear the waves roar harshly, like sea−beasts howling for their prey.

But the bitter north wind, which had been such a source of discomfort, now proved their salvation from this imminent danger. Blowing fresher every moment it arrested the ice−drift, and formed a solid barrier from shore to shore and extending far up the river. But this in turn effectually prevented the progress of the little boat which had almost readied the Canadian shore; and worse still, the dim grey light of morning began to dawn.

Suddenly the sight of a black object in the middle of a white field of now dense ice, and the sound of O'Brian's oar striving to force a passage through, caught the watchful eye and ear of the sentry near whose beat they had unfortunately drifted.

“Halt!” rang out sharp and clear on the frosty air the challenge of the sentry.

“Faith an' it's halted fast enough I am,” answered Mickey.

“Who goes there?” repeated the sentry's voice.

“Sure I don't go at all, that's what's the matther,” said the boatman, unconsciously anticipating a slang phrase of later times.

“Advance and give the countersign,” exclaimed the enraged soldier, who in martinet obedience to discipline, would challenge a drowning man before trying to save him.

“It's that same I would if I could,” replied the bewildered Irishman, “but I can't walk on wather, and this ice−slush isn't much betther.” “Unless you answer, I'll fire,” shouted the sentry, to whom Mickey's maunderings, half drowned by the crashing ice and gusty wind, were unintelligible.

“Au' that same is the very thing I want, for it's starved wid the cowld I am,” said the shivering creature, who with characteristic ingenuity had failed to apprehend the meaning of the menace addressed to him. But a sudden flash and the dull thud of a bullet against the ice beside him interpreted to his sluggish brain the danger in which he stood.

“The saints be betune us an' harm,” he exclaimed, devoutly crossing himself. “Oh, sure ye won't murder a body in cowld blood who's kilt entirely already. It's half drownded and froze I am, without being riddled like a cullender wid your bullets as well.”

“Why, Mickey O'Brian!” exclaimed the astonished soldier, who had by the gun−flash recognized the familiar

features of a quondam friend; “why on earth didn't you tell your name, man? I might have killed you as dead as a door−nail.”

“An' a purty thrickit 'ud be for ye, too, Tommy Daily. It's not ashamed of my name I am, an' if I'd know'd it was you, I'd tould ye before. But help us out of this an' I'll bear ye no malice whativer.”

The guard had turned out at the report of the gun, and getting such planks as were available laid them on the floating ice; but still they could not reach the boat. Tommy Daily with fertile ingenuity tying some twine to his ramrod fired it over the skiff, when it was easy to send out a strong fisherman's line, which Mick tied to the thwarts, and a dozen strong arms drew the boat ashore. [Footnote: The present writer witnessed the rescue of a shipwrecked crew, in the manner here described, near this very spot.]

The benumbed form of Mary was borne to the guard−room, and Ensign Roberts, the officer of the night, immediately sent for.

“Why, Miss Lawson!” he exclaimed with astonishment, “to what can we owe your presence at such a time and place as this?”

“To the inhumanity of your commander, and to my desire to rescue an innocent people from its consequences.”

“I regret, Miss Lawson, that my military duty prevents my permitting you to carry out your generous purpose. You will be entertained hero as comfortably as our rude accommodation will allow till the river clears, when you will be sent safely home.”

“Is this your generosity to a fallen foe, Mr. Roberts?” she exclaimed; but, too proud to ask a favour from a discarded suitor, she relapsed into haughty silence.

But Colonel McClure was not without plain−spoken remonstrance against his contemplated act of inhumanity. In the prosecution of his spiritual functions Neville Trueman had free access to the people of the town of Niagara, many of whom were members, of his church or congregation. Among these a large number of American soldiers were billeted, and very burdensome and unwelcome guests they were. From the unusual commotion and covert threats and hints dropped by the soldiers on the eve of the evacuation, Trueman apprehended some serious disaster to the towns−people. With the prompt energy by which he was characterized, he resolved to proceed to head−quarters and to intercede for the devoted town. He was received by Colonel McClure with a cold and repellent dignity, and obtained only evasive answers. As he was about to leave the presence of that officer, the Colonel said in a constrained manner,—

“Mr. Trueman, I respect your calling, and respect your character; I therefore advise you if you have any personal effects in the town to secure them at once, or I will not be answerable for the results.”

“I have only a few books and clothes,” said Neville, “but there are families here who have much at stake. Surely no evil can be intended those innocent and non−combatant people.”

“There exist reasons of military necessity which I cannot expect you to appreciate,” said the Colonel, stiffly.

“There are no reasons that can justify inhumanity,” replied Neville, stoutly,” and inhumanity of the gravest character it would be to injure the persons or the property of these defenceless people.”

The gallant Colonel seemed rather to wince under these words, but, as if anxious to exculpate himself, he replied, “An officer has no option in carrying out the instructions received from the military authorities.”

“That will not remove from you, sir, the responsibility of the act, if, as I infer, the wanton destruction of this town is intended,” replied Neville, with significant emphasis. “I make bold to affirm that the act will be as unwise as it will be cruel. It will provoke bitter retaliation. It will tenfold intensify hostile feeling. I know these people. I have travelled largely through this province, and mingled with all classes. They are intensely loyal to their sovereign. They would die rather than forswear their allegiance. They will fight to the last man and last gun before they will yield. If wanton outrage be inflicted on this frontier, I predict that fire and sword shall visit your cities, and a heritage of hatred shall be bequeathed to posterity, that all good men, for all time, will deplore.”

“Young man, I admire your zeal, although I may not appreciate your sympathy for a country which I understand is not your own,” answered the officer, haughtily. “I am, however, responsible for my acts not to you, but to the War Department at Washington. This interview is fruitless. I see no advantage to be gained by prolonging it.”

“Sir,” said Neville, solemnly, as he rose to leave, “you are responsible to a higher tribunal than that at Washington. I have not learned to limit my sympathies and my instincts of humanity by a boundary line. You are

a scholar, sir, and perhaps you remember the words of the Latin poet: 'Homo sum; humani nihil a me alien um puto.' I have the honour to wish you good day," and he bowed himself out.

As he returned to the town he beheld soldiers going from house to house warning the people to turn out and remove their property, and proceeding, with inhuman alacrity, to set the buildings on fire. Then might be seen the women—most of the men were away with the troops—hastily gathering together their own and their children's clothing and a few treasured heirlooms, and with tears and bitter lamentation leaving their sheltering roof, going forth like the patriarch, not knowing whither they went The frost had set in early and severe. The snow lay deep upon the ground. Yet at thirty minutes' warning, of a hundred and fifty houses in Niagara, all were fired save one. There was scarce time to rescue the nursling babe, and the aged and infirm, from the doomed dwellings. The wife of Counsellor Dickson lay on a sick bed. Her husband was a prisoner on the American side of the river. The unfortunate lady "was carried, bed and all, and placed in the snow before her own door, where, shivering with cold, she beheld her house and all that was in it consumed to ashes."[Footnote: Jaines. Quoted by Auchinleck.] Of the valuable library, which had cost between five and six hundred pounds sterling, scarcely a book escaped.

Late into the night burned the fires, reddening the midnight heavens with the lurid flames of comfortable homesteads, well− filled barns and is stacks of grain. Herds of affrighted cattle rushed wildly over the adjacent meadows, the kine lowing piteously with distended udders for the accustomed hands of their milkers at eventide. Of the hundred and fifty dwellings fired, only two or three escaped by accident, one of which still remains; and four hundred women and children were left to wander in the snow or seek the temporary shelter of some remote farm−house or Indian wigwam in the woods. Some wandered for days in the adjacent dismal "Black Swamp," feeding on frost−bitten cranberries, or on a casual rabbit or ground−hog.

But a swift avenging followed the dastardly outrage. In two days the British re−occupied the site of the smouldering town, now but a waste; of blackened embers, which the Americans had, evacuated— horse, foot, and artillery—not a hoof being left behind. So precipitate had been their retreat, however, that a large quantity of stores, together with the barracks and tents, were left, which fell into the hands of the British. As the old red−cross flag was run again on the flag−staff of Fort George, an exultant cheer went up to heaven, and not a few eyes of those hardy militiamen were filled with tears. Their homes were but heaps of ashes, it was true; but their country remained; its soil was relieved from the foot of the invader, and their loyal allegiance to their sovereign had been shown by their costly sacrifice.

CHAPTER XIII. A STERN NEMESIS—A RAVAGED FRONTIER.

On the evening of that eventful day, again a family gathering took place at The Holms—for so closely had trial, adventure, and suffering for a common cause knit together the guests and inmates, that they seemed like a family group. The sword of the grandfather, above the mantel, was now crossed by the cavalry sabre of Zenas, and the old Brown Bess was flanked by the dragoon's carbine. Good cheer in abundance spread the board, for the broad acres of the farm and the kindly ministries of nature had not stinted their yield on account of the red battle−year. But an air of pensiveness, almost of dejection, broken by sharp outbursts of indignation marked the social converse. Many incidents of privation and suffering, in consequence of the burning of the town, were told. Indeed the resources of the household had been taxed to the utmost to relieve the pressing distress, and every room and guest−chamber was filled with houseless refugees from the inclemency of the weather.

“There will be a grim revenge for this, before long,” said Captain Villiers, who had embraced the earliest opportunity to renew his homage at a shrine that had almost unconsciously become very dear.

“In which I hope to take part,” interjected Zenas, with a fierce gesture.

“We must carry war into Africa,” continued the Captain. “Hitherto, for the most part, we have acted on the defensive. The time has come when we must repay invasion by invasion, and outrage by retaliation.” So does the cruel war−spirit grow by that on which it feeds.

“That 'ere fort with its big guns a−grinnin' an' growlin' like mastiffs in their kennels, has bullied us long enough,” said Tom Loker, who availed himself of the democratic simplicity of the times to express his opinion.

“It wadna be sae muckle a job to tak it, I'm thinkin',” said Sandy McKay, looking up from his musket that he was oiling and cleaning; “it's no sae strang as it luiks. I ken its rayelins and demilunes unco weel, bein' sax weeks a prisoner wi'in thae walls. Gin your ance ower thae brig and inside the outworks it wad be easy eneuch tae win au' haud the fort.”

“That's the rub,” said the squire, “to gain a footing and win the outworks. If they keep a vigilant watch it would be a difficult task. The only way would be to surprise the garrison. A few stout− hearted men, well supported, might overpower the guard. That's the way Ethan Allen took Ticonderoga, in the old war.”

“Father,” said Zenas, with enthusiasm, “It can be done, and must be done, and I must help do it. I claim a place in the forlorn hope. I'd like to be the first man in.”

The old man winced a little at the awful contingency of death and danger for his soldier boy, so close at hand; and Kate gazed at him, with tears of sympathy filling her eyes and the blood mantling her cheek.

“As God wills, my son,” answered the sire. “I said the time might come when you should bear the battle's brunt. If your heart calls you I will not say nay. I gave you to your country, and dare not hold you back.”

“Young maister,” said McKay, with Scottish fidelity, “whaur ye gae, I'll gae. I'm an auld mon, noo, an' how better could I gi' ma life, gin sae it's written, than for my King? Forbye I ken weel the place, an' sae God wills, I can guide ye intill it by nicht as weel as ithers could by day.”

“I'm not the man to shirk the call to arms when the bugle sounds,” remarked Tom Loker, “but I must say I've no stomach for this going before I'm sent. It's a sheer temptin' o' Providence, seems to me.”

“Hoot, mon,” said Sandy, “what is to be, is to be. Gin ye're to fa', ye'll fa' at the rear o' thae column as sune as at the heid o' it, an' I'm gey sure the first is the mair honourable place.” “Had I two score gallant fellows like you and Zenas,” broke in Captain Villiers, grasping the hilt of his sword, “with a couple of companies to support us, I'd guarantee the fort would he taken before a week. Something more will come of this, I warrant”

Full of this daring scheme, the very next day he proposed to Colonel Murray the bold plan. That officer sent for McKay, questioned him thoroughly as to the fort and its defences, and had him draw a rude plan of its approaches, curtains, and bastions. He heartily fell in with the idea and made immediate preparation for its execution.

The night of the eighteenth of December was moonless and dark. A column of five hundred men of the Forty−First and Hundredth regiments, a grenadier company of the First Royals, and fifty militia, filed out of the portals of Fort George, bearing scaling ladders and other implements of assault, as silent, as ghosts. At the head marched the forlorn hope of twenty men, among whom were Captain Villiers, Zenas, and McKay. But each man,

though he bore his life in his hand, walked proudly erect, as if with the assurance of victory, or of a reward more glorious than even victory. They marched several miles up the river to a spot where a crossing could safely be effected without discovery or interruption.

Now began the stealthy march on the devoted fort. Like an avenging Nemesis, shod with silence, the column approached the unconscious garrison. Every order was conveyed in a whisper. No clink of sabre, nor clatter of muskets was heard. The snow, which had begun to fall, muffled the tread and deadened each sound. The column wound on in the hush of midnight over the wintry waste, stealing like a tiger on its prey. The piquets, lulled into security by the storm, were avoided by a *detour*. Now amid the blackness of night, the deeper blackness of the fort loomed up. McKay and Zenas moved to the front beside Captain Villiers who whispered his commands. McKay silently led the way to the sally−port. A huge grenadier grasped the sentry by the throat to prevent his giving the alarm. The forlorn hope glided through the small opening of the sally−port, and, well instructed beforehand, rushed to the main gateway, overpowered the guard, and flung open the huge iron−studded gates. The British column now poured in, and before drum had rolled or bugle rung had reached the central quadrangle. The garrison awoke from slumber only to a futile struggle with an exasperated foe, and after a short resistance were compelled to surrender. In this assault the loss of the victors was only six men—a circumstance almost unparalleled in military annals—that of the vanquished unhappily was considerably greater.

Three hundred prisoners, three thousand stand of arms, and an immense quantity of stores were captured—the latter a great boon to the well−nigh famished people of the devastated town of Niagara. [Footnote: The writer was intimately acquainted with an old resident on the Niagara River, who in his youth had been a prisoner in the American fort, and formed part of the forlorn hope which aided in its capture. From him many interesting incidents of the war were learned.]

We would fain here close this record of retaliation. Enough had been done for British honour and for the punishment of the enemy. But when dread Bellona cries “Havoc,” and slips the leashes of the hellish dogs of war, the instincts of humanity seem lost, and baptized men seem in danger of reverting to unredeemed savagery. Trueman expostulated, and pleaded, and prayed for a mitigation of the penalty inflicted on the vanquished, but in vain. In ruthless retaliation for the burning of Niagara, the British ravaged the American frontier, and gave to the flames the thriving towns of Lewiston, Manchester, Black Rock, and Buffalo. At the latter place, an American force, two thousand strong, made a stout resistance, but was defeated, with the loss of four hundred men, by the British, with only one−third the number of troops, December 30.

Thus the holy Christmas−tide, God's pledge of peace and good−will toward men, rose upon a fair and fertile frontier scathed and blackened by wasting and rapine, and the year went out in “tears and misery, in hatred and flames and blood.”

The marks of recent conflict were everywhere visible, and—saddest evidence of all—was the multitude of soldiers' graves whose silent sleepers no morning drum−beat should arouse forever. The peaceful parish church of Niagara had been turned into a hospital, where, instead of praise and prayer, were heard the groans of wounded and dying men. Everything in fact gave indications of military occupation and the prevalence of the awful reign of war.

Seldom has the frightful destructiveness of war been more strikingly illustrated. The commerce of the United States was completely crippled by the blockade of her ports, her revenue falling from $24,000,000 to $8,000,000. Admiral Cockburn, of the British Navy, swept the Atlantic coast with his fleet, destroying arsenals and naval stores wherever his gun−boats could penetrate. Great Britain also recovered her old prestige in more than one stubborn sea−fight with a not unworthy foe. On a lovely morning in June, the United States frigate “Chesapeake,” of forty−nine guns, stood out of Boston harbour amid the holiday cheers of a sympathizing multitude, to answer the challenge to a naval duel of H. M. S. “Shannon,” of fifty−two guns. They were soon locked muzzle to muzzle in deadly embrace, belching shot and grape through each other's sides, while the streaming gore incarnadined the waves. The British boarders swarmed on the “Chesapeake's” deck, and soon, with nearly half his crew killed or wounded, she struck her colours to the red−cross flag. In five days the shattered and blood−stained vessels crept together into Halifax harbour, the American captain, the gallant Lawrence, lying in his cabin cold in death; the British commander, the chivalric Broke, raving in the delirium of a desperate wound. The slain captain was borne to his grave amid the highest honours paid to his valour by a generous foe. Amid the roar of Broadway's living tide, beneath the shadow of old Trinity Church, a costly monument commemorates his heroic and untimely death.

A few days later, the British brig “Boxer,” of fourteen guns, surrendered to the U. S. brig “Enterprise,” of sixteen guns. In one quiet grave, overlooking Casco Bay, beside which the writer, one sunny summer day, meditated on the vanity of earthly strife, their rival captains lie buried side by side. Some kindly hand had decked their graves with tiny flags, which in sun and shower had become dimmed and faded; and planted fair and innocent flowers which breathed their beauty and fragrance amid the shadows of death. So fade and pass away the false and transient glory of arms. So bloom and flourish in immortal beauty the supernal loveliness of virtue and piety.

It is a relief to turn away from these scenes of war and bloodshed to the record of human affection and heroic self−sacrifice and devotion.

George Morton, the faithful Canadian patriot, crippled, impoverished, sick at heart, and despairing of ever claiming Mary Lawson as his bride, returned after the burning of his native town to the ashes of his ruined home to begin life over again. A partial indemnity from the Government enabled him to resume business on a modest scale, which, by thrift and industry, grew and increased with the gradual growth of the town. Ensign Roberts was among the slain at the taking of the Fort, and Mr. Lawson's property was destroyed by the conflagration that followed. The old man, broken by his losses and by exposure, gradually sunk, and died, Mary nursing him devotedly to the last. After years of delay the love of the no longer youthful pair found its consummation in a happy marriage, followed by a calmly tranquil wedded life.

“Although this cruel war,” whispered George to his bride upon their wedding−day, “has robbed us of all our own worldly wealth, has cost you your father, and has left me a cripple for life, yet it could not take from us the priceless wealth of our affection.”

“Nay, dear heart,” she replied, “the long trial of our love has purified it from earthly dross, and proved it the type of love immortal in the skies.”

In after years, to children and to children's children on his knees, George Horton used often to recount the perils of those fearful scenes of war and wasting; but no theme was more pleasing to himself and to his youthful auditory, while the comely matron in her mature beauty blushed at the praise of her own heroism, than the episode of the fair Mary Lawson's midnight adventure in the ice on the Niagara, in the terrible winter of the war.

CHAPTER XIV. TORONTO OF OLD.

The state of religion in Canada could not be expected to be prosperous during the prevalence of the demoralizing influences of war. The Methodist circuit work, as well as the work of other denominations, was very much disorganized. It was, from the interruption of intercourse caused by the unnatural conflict, without any supervision of the American Conference by which the Canadian preachers had been stationed. They were consequently left to their own resources to carry on their work as best they could, and most of them struggled bravely, like Neville Trueman, the example we have selected for illustration, against the various obstacles in their way—the recklessness and spiritual indifference begotten by the war—and the unjust and cruel suspicions and aspersions to which they were themselves subject.

The Rev. Henry Ryan, as Presiding Elder of the Upper Canada District—extending from the banks of the St. Lawrence to the banks of the St. Clair—endeavoured, by frequent journeyings throughout the vast field, to encourage both preachers and people in carrying on the work of God, amid the disheartenments and difficulties of the times. The Rev. Ezra Adams, in his recollections of the period, says, “He used to travel from Montreal to Sandwich, holding Quarterly Meetings: to accomplish which, he kept two horses at his home at the Twenty Mile Creek, and used one on his trip from the Niagara Circuit on his down country route; the other he used on his Sandwich route.”

Supplementing this statement with additional facts, the Rev. Dr. Carroll, in his invaluable “History of Canadian Methodism,” further remarks: “As his income was very small and precarious, he eked out the sum necessary to support his family by selling a manufacture of his own in his extensive journeys, and by hauling, with his double team in winter time, on his return route from Lower Canada, loads of Government stores or general merchandise.” Such were the shifts to which Methodist preachers had to resort in order to sustain themselves in a work which they would not desert. Mr. Ryan, by his loyalty, gained the confidence and admiration of all friends of British supremacy, and, by his abundant and heroic labours, the affections of the God−fearing part of the community. During the progress of the war he held three Conferences, one as we have seen at St. David's; another, in 1813, at Matilda; and a third, the following year, at the old Methodist settlement of the Bay of Quinte.

After the burning of Niagara, and the complete disorganization of his circuit by the border strife, Neville Trueman sought an interview with his Presiding Elder during one of his periodical visits to the town of York. In consequence of the military exigencies of the times, navigation was maintained across the lake by armed brigs and schooners during the greater part of the winter. Taking advantage of one of these trips, Neville obtained permission from the military authorities to take passage in the armed schooner *Princess Charlotte* to York. The voyage was tedious and the weather bleak, so he suffered severely from the cold. As York harbour was frozen over, he landed on the ice and made his way to the twice−captured capital. It presented anything but a striking appearance, unless for dreariness and ruin. The half−burned timbers of the Parliament Building, Jail, and Court−House, showed in all their hideous blackness through the snow that failed to conceal beneath its mantle of white the desolation of the scene. In its most flourishing estate before the war, the town hardly numbered some nine hundred inhabitants, whose residences, for the most part humble wooden structures, were grouped along the loyally−named King Street, near the river Don. At the western extremity of the straggling town were the ruin−mounds of the fort, rent and torn by the terrific explosion of its magazine. On the banks of the Don, and commanding the bridge across that sluggish stream, as though the enemy thought it not worth the trouble of destroying, stood a rude log blockhouse, loop−holed for musketry, the upper story projecting over the lower, after the manner of such structures. [Footnote: A cut of this is given in “Lossing's Field Book of the War.”]

Neville proceeded to the hospitable house of Dr. Stoyles, on King Street, near the intersection of the little−used road leading to the country,—Yonge Street, now the great artery of the circulation of the city. Till the erection of the first humble meeting−house, the Methodist preaching was often held in Dr. Stoyles' house. That gentleman also gave a cordial welcome to the travelling preachers of the day, and here Trueman found, as he expected, Presiding Elder Henry Ryan.

The following is the account given by Dr. Scadding, our Canadian historiographer and antiquarian, in his

charming book “Toronto of Old,” of the mother Church of Methodism in this goodly city, the parent of the fair sisterhood which now adorn its streets: “The first place of public worship of the Methodists was a long, low, wooden building, running north and south, and placed a little way back from the street. Its dimensions were forty by sixty feet. In the gable end towards the street were two doors, one for each sex. Within, the custom obtained of dividing the men from the women; the former sitting on the right hand on entering the building, the latter on the left.”

The learned Doctor then goes on to illustrate historically the separation of the sexes in places of public worship, from the time of the Jews and the primitive church down to the modern Greek Church, so that at least the early Methodists had good precedent for their usage.

This old church was situated on the south side of King Street, on the corner of Jordan Street, so named from Mr. Jordan Post, the pioneer goldsmith of the capital, while the street in the rear commemorates the name of Melinda, his wife. When the Adelaide Street Church, which, for the time, was a very imposing brick structure, was built on what was then the public square, the old mother church was converted into a “Theatre Royal,”—to what base uses must we come!

All this, however, at the time of which we write, was still in the future; and Elder Ryan preached and prayed and exhorted to a little company in the worthy Dr. Stoyles' great kitchen, which was employed for that purpose as being the most commodious room in the house. It was the day of small things for Methodism in the capital of Upper Canada. But of the religious zeal of the little company of believers, we may judge from the fact that several of the members of the society came from two to eight miles, through the proverbially wretched roads of “Muddy York,” to the class meeting. [Footnote: Carroll's “Case and his Cotemporaries,” Vol. II., p. 167.]

CHAPTER XV. A QUARTERLY MEETING IN THE OLDEN TIME.

Having enjoyed the counsels and encouragements of his Presiding Elder, Neville gladly embraced the invitation to ride with him in his substantial sleigh, well filled with wheat straw, on which they sat, to the village of Ancaster, where a grand Quarterly Meeting was to be held, to which the people came for many miles around. Religious privileges at that time were few, and these occasions were made the most of by the Methodists of the day. There was preaching on the Saturday; then a business meeting, when the contributions of the several classes were received. Of money there was very little; but promises of contributions of flour, pork, potatoes, hay and oats were gladly received instead.

On Saturday night a rousing prayer−meeting was held in the log meeting−house. Fervent exhortations were given, for the preachers looked for immediate results of their labours, and they were not disappointed Several of the brethren and sisters “got happy,” and expressed their religions enjoyment in hymns and spiritual songs often of rugged rhythm, but, sung with fervour as they were, they seemed to bear up the soul as on wings to the very gate of heaven. Most of these hymns had a refrain of simple yet striking melody, in which every one in the house took part. A great favourite was the following:

“O the house of the Lord shall be filled
With glory, hallelujah!
With glory, hallelujah!
With glory, hallelujah! Amen
“Let the preachers be filled with thy love.
Sing glory, hallelujah! etc.
“Let the members be filled with thy love,
Sing glory, hallelujah! etc.
“And the work of the Lord shall revive,
Sing glory, hallelujah! Amen!”

The tide of religious feeling rose higher and higher. The standing invitation of Methodism to weary souls seeking the forgiveness of their sins, was given. Several persons presented themselves at the “penitent bench,” most of whom were enabled to rejoice in a sense of conscious pardon.

Sunday was indeed a “high day” at the old Ancaster log meeting−house. From near and far, in sleighs, on horseback, and on foot, came methodist worshippers, and found hospitable welcome with the families of the neighbourhood. First there was love−feast at nine o'clock. The cruel war had not left unscathed that rustic congregation. There were rusty weeds of woe,—a black ribbon, a bit of crape, or a widow's cap,—that bore witness to the loss of husband or son in the sad conflict. The empty sleeve, pinned across the breast of one stout young fellow, showed that the strong right arm with which he had hoped to fight his battle of life, and hew out a home in the wilderness, had been buried in a gory trench with the bodies of his slain friends and neighbours.

But their temporal sufferings seemed to have driven these simple−minded people nearer to the source of all comfort and consolation. Many of the experiences and hymns had quite a martial ring. One of the latter was as follows:

“Ye soldiers of Jesus, pray stand to your arms.
Prepare for the battle, the Gospel alarms.
The signal of victory, hark! hark! from the sky;
Shout, shout, ye brave armies, the watchmen all cry,
Come with us, come with us,
Come with us in love,
Let us all march together to Heaven above.
“To battle, to battle, the trumpets do sound,
The watchmen are crying fair Zion around;
Some shouting, some singing, salvation they cry,
In the strength of King Jesus, all hell we defy.

Come with us," etc.

As this was taken up by one after another and welled into a grand chorus, it was impossible not to share the enthusiasm that it created. Another prime favourite was the following:

"Jesus, my king, proclaims the war;
I want to die in the army;
Awake, the powers of hell are near,
I want to die in the army.
"'To arms! to arms!' I hear the cry,
'Tis yours to conquer or to die,'
O the army, the army, the army of the Lord!
I want to die in the army."

The god−fearing Canadian yeomanry, as they sang these strains, nourished at once their religious feelings and their patriotic enthusiasm. They felt in their hearts that love of King and country, and their valiant defence and self−sacrifice on their behalf, were also an acceptable service to God.

After the love−feast was a short intermission, during which a luncheon of seed−cakes, comfits and doughnuts were eaten as a preparation for the after service. Elder Ryan, whose warm, emotional Irish nature had been deeply affected by the experiences of the love−feast, preached one of his most spirit−stirring sermons. It was like the peal of a clarion calling to the battle of Armageddon the warriors of God against the powers of darkness. He was interrupted, but not the least disconcerted, by exclamations of "Amen!" "Hallelujah!" "Praise the Lord!" They seemed rather to give wings to his eloquence, for soaring in still loftier flights of eloquence.

After the sermon the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered to those devout worshippers. By these sacred ordinances, amid the carking cares and tribulations of the present life, were kept in view the far more important realities of the life that is to come, and the souls of the people were enbraved and strengthened for the conflicts, both literal and figurative, to which they were called.

CHAPTER XVI. THE PROTRACTED MEETING.

The day after the Quarterly Meeting, Elder Ryan drove to his home if home it could be called, where he spent not one−tenth part of his time—at the Twenty Mile Creek. Neville who travelled thus far with him, thought nothing of the twenty miles walk to the Holms, where he had left his horse.

One of his plans for the spiritual welfare of his scattered flock, was the holding of a series of protracted meetings at the various settlements. One of these was held at the wooden school−house of the little hamlet of Queenston. An old pensioner of the Revolutionary War had gathered a few children together and taught them their catechism, and as much of "the Three R's" as he knew. He was a staunch Churchman, but had a friendly feeling to the Methodists, because Mr. Wesley had been himself a clergyman of the Established Church.

The meeting awakened a deep and wide−spread interest. The awful scenes of carnage and death, of which the little village and its immediate vicinity had been the theatre, seemed to have brought the realities of another world more vividly before the moral consciousness of the community. Moreover there were few families that had not lost some friend or acquaintance, or perchance—

A nearer
One atill, and a dearer
One yet than all other.

Under these chastening influences many hearts were peculiarly open to the reception of divine truth. The gracious invitations of the Gospel, and the warnings and admonitions of the Law, were alike faithfully and affectionately urged by the young preacher. It was a characteristic of the preaching of the times that it had in it a strong back−bone of doctrine. It was very different from the boneless jelly−fish−like preaching we sometimes hear,—vague and indefinite, without a single clear conception from beginning to end.

A very profound impression was made by one sermon especially, on a subject on which Neville seldom preached, but which on this occasion was strangely impressed upon his mind. The text was that sublime Scripture and its context: "And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them."

The solemn impression of the sermon was greatly deepened by the singing, to a weird wailing sort of tune, of the hymn which followed. The hymn, whose majesty of imagery—a majesty derived from the Scriptures themselves—and whose resonant cadence gave it much of the character, in English, of the sublime *Dies Irae*, in Latin, was as follows:—

"The chariot! the chariot!—its wheels roll in fire,
As the Lord cometh down in the pomp of His ire;
Lo! self−moving, it drives on its pathway of cloud,
And the heavens with the glory of God−head are bowed.

"The trumpet! the trumpet! the dead all have heard,
Lo! the depths of the stone−covered charnel are stirred!
From the sea, from the earth, from the south, from the north,
All the vast generations of men are come forth.

"The judgment! the judgment!—the thrones are all set,
Where the Lamb and the white−vested elders are met!
There all flesh is at once in the sight of the Lord,
And the doom of eternity hangs on His word."

A picket of soldiers was billeted in the village, several of whom attended the meeting ostensibly for the purpose of making game of the "Yankee preacher." But such was the intense earnestness of the man and the spiritual power that attended his message, that all attempts to "make game" of the services were soon abandoned, and not a few who "came to mock remained to pray."

A deep seriousness pervaded the entire neighbourhood. The usual winter amusements and dancing parties were, to a great extent, forgone—and even the utilitarian paring bees in the great farm kitchens were shorn of much of the fun and frolic and divinings of the future by means of apple−parings thrown over the left shoulders,

or apple−seeds roasted on the hearth. The present was felt to be too sad, and the future too full of foreboding to encourage fore−readings of the book of fate. The great revival was the subject of fireside conversation at many hearths, and of deep questionings in many hearts. Some of the most notorious ill−livers of the neighbourhood had experienced the emancipating spell of the Truth that maketh free, and were no longer the slaves of vice and drunkenness.

Katharine Drayton pondered these things in her heart. She was conscious of many good impulses, and her life had been marked by many generous and noble traits. But she felt in her inmost soul that these alone would not suffice. She could not from her heart repeat the words which she often sang in the congregation with her lips,—

"Jesus, thy Blood and Righteousness,
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
'Midst flaming worlds in these array'd.
With joy shall I lift up my head.

"Bold shall I stand in thy great day,
For who aught to my charge shall lay?
Fully absolved through these I am,
From sin and fear, from guilt and shame."

She still felt an aching yearning of her soul for a perfect sympathy that she had never known since her mother died. Often as a little child, in some childish grief or trouble, she had flung herself on that loving mother's bosom and wept out her sorrow there. And now, with the burden of the dreadful war impending like a hideous night−mare on her soul; with her constant foreboding and solicitude for her brother, so thoughtless—nay reckless in his daring—a yearning for his soul's immortal welfare, if he should be stricken down untimely, even more than for his body, she felt a deep soul−longing for—she knew not what—but for some support and succour for her filtering spirit. She knew not that it was the wooing of the Celestial Bridegroom for the young love of her soul; that it was the voice of the Heavenly Father, saying, "Daughter, give me thy heart."

One night, heavy with a weight of care, and full of vague yet terrible apprehensions of the future, she flung herself upon her pillow and bursting into tears, sobbed out the pitiful cry, "O mother, mother! see thy sorrowing child." As she lay sobbing on the pillow, she seemed to hear a voice of ineffable sweetness, whispering to her soul the words of a familiar Scripture: "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort thee."

The holy words inspired a sense of hope and confidence in her soul, and led her to lift up her heart in prayer to that loving Saviour who hath promised to send the Comforter to them that mourn. As she knelt in prayer in her little chamber, the moonlight flooding with radiance her white−robed form like the exquisite picture described in Keats' St. Agnes' Eve, and pound out her whole soul to God, she felt the sweet assurance of acceptance filling her heart as the Master said once more: "Daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are all forgiven thee."

She felt, however, that if she would experience the fulness of that Divine comfort she must not seek to hide it in her heart, but confess it before men. And from this she experienced an involuntary shrinking. Her nature was one susceptible of great depth and tenderness of feeling, but it was also one constitutionally reserved and sensitive. She knew, moreover, that such an act as joining the Methodists would be exceedingly distasteful to her father, whom she loved with a deep and impassioned affection. He had made the Methodist preachers welcome to his house with the characteristic hospitality of a Virginia gentleman, and because he respected their character and work; but he himself retained his allegiance to the Church of England, which he seemed to think identified with his fealty to the King.

Almost unconsciously the thought of Captain Villiers obtruded itself into Katharine's mind, not without some misgivings as to his opinion of the course which she felt to be her duty. Not that for a moment she entertained the thought of any right on his part to influence her performance of duty, or of any purpose on hers to be influenced by him.

Accompanied by her brother Zenas, Kate, on the next evening, attended the protracted meeting. The school−house was crowded. Towards the close of the service, those who had, since the last meeting, accepted the yoke of Christ, were asked to confess Him. "That," thought Kate, "means me; but how can I do it?" She had never even dreamt of speaking in public. It seemed impossible. But she heard the words sounding in her ears, "Whosoever will confess Me before men, him will I also confess before My Father which is heaven." Necessity

seemed laid upon her; yet she shrank from the ordeal.

At this moment a pure, sweet, contralto voice began to sing with great fervour of expression, which gave assurance of the deep feeling with which the words were uttered, a hymn of rather uncouth rhythm, with an oft−repeated refrain which, however, thrilled many a heart. It ran as follows:—

"Come, ye that love the Lord,
Unto me, unto me;
Come, ye that love the Lord,
Unto me;
I've something good to say
About the narrow way,
For Christ the other day
Saved my soul, saved my soul—
For Christ the other day saved my soul."

"He gave me first to see
What I was, what I was;
He gave me first to see
What I was.
He gave me first to see
My guilt and misery
And then He set me free.
Bless His name, bless His name,
And then He set me free, bless His name!"

As if constrained by a spell−like influence, Kate rose to her feet, and in a modest but clear and concise manner made her confession of filial trust in the Saviour, and of conscious adoption as His child. When this young and timid girl had thus taken up the cross of confession, others were emboldened to follow her example. One after another paid their tribute of thanksgiving, while at intervals glad songs of praise welled forth from greatful hearts. Some of these, great favourites at the time, are now almost unknown. A general characteristic of these songs was a simple refrain, first sung as a solo, but gradually taken up by one after another, till a grand chorus rose and swelled like the organ chant of the winds among the neighbouring pines. One of these, sung to an exultant measure, ran thus:—

"O brothers, will you meet us
On Canaan's heavenly shore?
O brothers, will you meet us
Where parting is no more?"
CHORUS.—"Then we'll march around Jerusalem,
We'll march around Jerusalem,
We'll march around Jerusalem,
When we arrive at home."

Another, of touching pathos—with tears, as it were, in every line, and often bringing tears of greatful emotion to many an eye, sung as it was to a sweet plaintive air—ran thus:—

"Saw ye my Saviour? Saw ye my Saviour?
Saw ye my Saviour and God?
Oh! He died on Calvary,
To atone for you and me,
And to purchase our pardon with blood.
"There interceding, there interceding?
Pleading that Burners might live—
Crying, 'Father! I have died!
Oh! behold My hands and side!
O forgive them, I pray Thee, forgive."

Another, of similar strain, thus set forth in a sort of recitative the story of the resurrection of our Lord:—

“Oh, they crucified my Saviour,
They crucified my Saviour,
They crucified my Saviour,
And they nailed Him to the cross.
“Then Joseph begged His body, etc.,
And he laid it in the tomb.
“Oh, the grave it could not hold Him, etc.,
For He burst the bars of death.
“Then Mary came a−running, etc.,
A−looking for her Lord.
“Oh, where have you laid Him, etc.,
For He is not in the tomb.
“Oh, why stand ye gazing? etc.,
Oh, ye men of Galilee?
“Don't you see Him now ascending! etc.,
There to plead for you and me.
“By−and−by we'll go to meet Him, etc.,
Where pleasures never fade.”

While the incomparably superior lyrics of Wesley and Watts were generally sung in the public service of the Sabbath, when the preacher gave out the hymns from the book; yet these simpler and ruder strains were the greater favourites at the revival meeting. By these the godly forefather's of Methodism in Canada nourished their souls and enbraved their spirits for the heroic work in which they were engaged, of consecrating the virgin wilderness to God.

CHAPTER XVII. HEART TRIALS.

“Well, Kate,” said Zenas, as he and his sister rode homeward through the solemn moonlight and starlight, “You have burned your boats and broken down the bridge. There is no going back.”

“I hope not, Zenas,” she replied, “but I feel very much the need of going forward. I have only made the first step yet.”

“Well, you've started on the right line, anyhow. It was a plucky thing to do. I did not think it was in you. You are naturally so shy. I wish I could do the same myself, but I haven't the courage.”

“Don't think of yourself, Zenas, nor of your comrades; but of the loving Saviour who died for you and longs to save you.”

“Upon my word, Kate, it made me feel more what a coward I am to see you standing before the whole meeting than all the preaching I ever heard.”

“I felt that I ought, that I must,” said Kate, “but after I rose I forgot every one there and spoke because my heart was full. O Zenas, just give up everything for Jesus; be willing to endure anything for Jesus; and you'll feel a joy and gladness you never felt before. Why, the very world seems changed, the stars and the trees, and the moonlight on the river were never so beautiful; and my heart is as light as a bird.”

“I wish I could, Kate. I remember I used to feel something like that about Brock. I could follow him anywhere. I could have died for him.”

“Well, that feeling is ennobling. But much nobler is it to enlist under the Great Captain, the grandest teacher and leader the world ever knew; and what is better far, the most loving Saviour and Friend.”

With such loving converse, the brother and sister beguiled the homeward way. As Kate retired to her room a sweet peace flooded her soul as the moonlight flooded with a heavenly radiance the snowy world without. Zenas, on the contrary, was ill at ease, and tossed restlessly, his soul disturbed with deep questionings of the hereafter, during much of the night.

As Kate sat at the head of the table next morning, where her mother had been wont to sit, some of her dead mother's holy calm and peace seemed to rest upon her countenance. So thought her father as he looked upon her.

“How like your mother you grow, child,” ha said when all the rest had left the table.

“Do I, father? I hope I shall grow like her in everything. I have learned the secret of her noble life. I have found her best friend,” and she modestly recounted her recent experiences.

Little more then passed, but a few days afterwards, the Squire took occasion, when he was alone with his daughter, to say, “I hope you are not going to join those Methodists, Kate. I respect religion as much as any one; but I think the Church of your father ought to be good enough for you. You've always been a good girl. I don't see the need of this fuss, as if you had been doing something awful. Besides,” he went on, a little hesitatingly, as if he were not quite sure of his ground, “besides it will mar your prospects in life, if you only knew it.”

“I don't understand you, father,” replied Kate, with an expression of perplexity. “You have always thought too well of me. I know my life has been very far from right in the eyes of God. I feel I need pardon as much as the worst of sinners.”

“Of course we're all sinners,” went on the old man. “The Prayer Book says that. But then Christ died to save sinners, you know; and I'm sure you never did any thing very bad. But what I mean is this: You must be aware that you have made a deep impression upon Captain Villiers, and no blame to him either. He is an honourable gentleman, and he has asked my permission to pay his addresses. I asked him to wait till this cruel war is over, because while it lasts a soldier's life is very uncertain, and I did not wish to harrow up your feelings by cultivating affections which might be blighted in their bloom. Nay, hear me out, child,” he continued, as Kate was about to reply,” I did not intend to speak of this now, but the Captain is a strict Churchman, and so were his ancestors, he says, for three hundred years, and he would not, I am sure, like one for whom he entertains such sentiments as he does toward you, to cast in her lot with those ranting Methodists.”

Kate had at first blushed deeply, and then grew very pale. She however listened to her father patiently, and then said quietly, but with much firmness, “I respect Captain Villiers very highly, father; and am very grateful for his kindness to us all, and especially to Zenas when he was wounded. I feel, too, the honour he has done me in

entertaining the sentiments of which you speak. But something more than respect is due to the man to whom I shall entrust my life's keeping. Where my heart goes, there will go my hand; there, and not elsewhere."

"Pooh! pooh, child. Girls are always romantic, and never know their own mind. You will think better of it. I'm getting to be an old man, Kate, and would not like to leave you unsettled in life in these troublous times. You owe me your obedience as a daughter, remember?"

"I owe you my love, my life, father, but I owe something to myself, and more to God. I feel that my taste and disposition end that of Captain Villiers are very different, and more different than ever since the recent change in my religious feelings. It would be at the peril of my soul, were I to encourage what you wish."

"Nonsense, girl. You are growing fanatical. You never disobeyed me before. You must not disobey me now."

Kate smiled a wan and flickering smile of dissent; but to say more she felt would be fruitless. A heavy burden was laid upon her young life. She knew the iron will that slumbered beneath her father's kind exterior; but she felt in her soul a will as resolute, and with a woman's queenly dignity she resolved to keep that soul−realm free. In her outward conduct she was more dutiful and attentive to her father's comfort than ever; but she felt poignantly that for the first time in her life an injunction was laid upon her by one who she so passionately loved which she could not obey. She found much comfort in softly singing to herself in that inviolate domain, the solitude of her own room, a recent poem which she had clipped from the *York Gazette*, and which, in part, expressed her own emotions:—

"Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow Thee;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou, from hence, my all shalt be;
Perish every fond ambition,
All I've sought and hoped and known,
Yet how rich is my condition!
God and heaven are still my own!

"And while Thou shalt smile upon me,
God of wisdom, love, and might,
Foes may hate, and friends may shun me
Show Thy face and all is bright.
Go, then, earthly fame and treasure!
Come disaster, acorn, and pain!
In Thy service, pain is pleasure;
With Thy favour, loss is gain.

"Man may trouble and distress me,
'Twill but drive me to Thy breast;
Life with trials hard may press me,
Heaven will bring me sweeter rest.
O 'tis not in grief to harm me,
While Thy love is left to me;
O 'twere not in joy to charm me,
Were that joy unmixed with Thee."

CHAPTER XVIII. CHIPPEWA AND LUNDY'S LANE.

During the remainder of the winter the domestic history of the household at The Holms was unmarked by any incidents. The discharge of her homely duties and kindly charities to the people of the devastated village of Niagara who still lingered in the neighbourhood engrossed all the time and energies of Katharine Drayton. These wholesome activities prevented any morbid breedings or introspections, and furnished the best possible tonic for the strengthening of her moral purposes. Captain Villiers found frequent opportunities of visiting The Holms. His manner to Kate was one of chivalric courtesy; but, with a self−imposed restraint, he studiously endeavoured to repress any manifestation of tender feelings. Kate was cordial and kind, but as studiously avoided giving an opportunity for the manipulation of such feelings had it been contemplated.

Neville Trueman was engaged in special religious services night after night for nearly the whole winter at several appointments of his circuit. The revival influence seemed to widen and deepen as the weeks went by. He often called to invite Zenas to these meetings. At times the young man seemed strangely subdued and docile, and Neville rejoiced over what he considered the yielding of his will to the hallowed influences of the good Spirit of God. At other times he seemed wilful and wayward, or even petulant and testy, giving evidence of the resistance of his human will to the Divine drawings of which he was the subject. At such times the faith of Neville was sorely tried; but his patience and forbearance were never exhausted, and the sisterly affection and tenderness of Katharine were redoubled. Zenas would then break out into self−upbraidings and self−reproaches; and Kate, not knowing what to say, said little, but, in the solitude of her chamber, prayed for him all the more.

“Kate, you're an angel and I'm a brute,” he said one day after one of these exacerbations of temper; “I don't see how you can bear with me.”

“Bear with you, Zenas!” she replied, tears of sympathy rilling her eyes, “I could give my life for you. Alas! my brother, very far from an angel am I; I am a poor weak sinner, and I need the grace of God every day to cleanse my heart and keep it clean.”

“If you, who are a saint, need that, what do I need, who am viler, than a beast?” he exclaimed with an impassioned gesture.

“You need the same, Zenas, dear; and it is for you if you only will seek it,” she replied laying her hand gently on his arm.

He snatched her hand, kissed it passionately, then dropped it and turned abruptly away. She looked after him wistfully; but felt a glad assurance spring up in her heart that the object of so many prayers could not be finally lost.

Thus matters went on for several weeks. At last one day Kate was sewing alone in her little room, when through the window she saw Zenas approaching with long elastic strides from the barn. Bursting into her presence, he exclaimed, with joyous exaltation of manner, “I've done it, Kate! Thank God, at last I've done it!”

She had no need to ask, as she looked into his transfigured countenance, an explanation of his words. She flung herself upon his breast, and throwing her arms about his neck said, “Dear Zenas, I knew you would;—I felt sure of it. Thank God I Thank God!”

In loving communion the brother and sister sat, as Zenas told how he could not bear the struggle between his conscience and his stubborn will any longer. So, after doing his “chores” at the barn, he went on, he had climbed into the hay−loft, resolved not to leave it till the conflict was over and he had the consciousness of his acceptance with God and of the forgiveness of his sins. “I envied the very horses in the stalls,” he said, in describing his emotions; “they were fulfilling their destiny; they had no burden of sin; while I was tortured with a damning sense of guilt. I flung myself on the straw,” he went on; “and groaned in the bitterness of my spirit, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death.' At that moment,” he exclaimed, “I seemed to hear spoken in my ears, the exultant answer from the apostle: 'I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' I sprang up, and before I knew began to sing—

“'Tis done, the great transaction's done!
I am my God's and He is mine.'“

Kate took up the refrain, and brother and sister sang together the joyous song,—

"O happy day! O happy day!
When Jesus washed my sins away!"

We must turn now to the more stormy public events of the time. Preparations for the campaign of 1814 were made on both sides with unabated energy. The legislature of Lower Canada increased the issue of army bills to the amount of L1,500,000, and that of the upper province voted a liberal appropriation for military expenditure, and increased the efficiency of the militia system. Stores of every kind, and in vast quantities, were forwarded from Quebec and Montreal by brigades of sleighs to Kingston as a centre of distribution for western Canada. A deputation of Indian chiefs from the West was received at the castle of St. Louis, and sent home laden with presents and confirmed in their allegiance to the British.

Early in the year, the Emperor of Russia offered to mediate between the belligerents in the interests of peace. Great Britain declined his interference, but proposed direct negotiations with the United States. The commissioners appointed, however, did not meet till August, and, meanwhile, the war became more deadly and mutually destructive than ever.

The campaign opened in Lower Canada. General Wilkinson, who had removed his headquarters from Salmon River to Plattsburg, advanced with five thousand men from the latter place, crossed the Canadian frontier at Odelltown, and pushed on to Lacolle, about ten miles from the border. Here a large two−storey stone mill, with eighteen−inch walls, barricaded and loop−holed for musketry, was held by the British who numbered, in regulars and militia, about five hundred men, under the command of Major Handcock. Shortly after midday, on the 13th of March, General Wilkinson, with his entire force, surrounded the mill, being partially covered by neighbouring woods, with the design of taking it by assault. As they advanced with a cheer to the attack, they were met by such a hot and steady fire that they were obliged to fall back to the shelter of the woods. The guns were now brought up (an eighteen, a twelve, and a six−pounder), for the purpose of battering, at short range, a breach in the walls of the mill. Their fire, however, was singularly ineffective. The British sharpshooters picked off the gunners, so that it was exceedingly difficult to get the range or to fire the pieces. In a cannonade of two hours and a half, only four shots struck the mill. Major Handcock, however, determined to attempt the capture of the guns, and a detachment of regulars, supported by a company of voltigeurs and fencibles, was ordered to charge. In the face of desperate odds they twice advanced to the attack on the guns, but were repulsed by sheer weight of opposing numbers. The day wore on. The ammunition of the beleaguered garrison was almost exhausted. Yet no man spoke of surrender. For five hours this gallant band of five hundred men withstood an army of tenfold numbers. At length, incapable of forcing the British position, the enemy fell back, baffled and defeated, to Plattsburg, and for a time the tide of war ebbed away from the frontier of Lower Canada.

With the opening of navigation hostilities were resumed on Lake Ontario. During the winter, two new vessels had been built at Kingston.

Strengthened by the addition of these, the British fleet, under the command of Sir James Yeo, early in May, sailed for Oswego in order to destroy a large quantity of naval stores there collected. A military force of a thousand men, under General Drummond, accompanied the expedition. An assaulting party of three hundred and forty soldiers and sailors, in the face of a heavy fire of grape, stormed the strong and well−defended fort. In half an hour it was in their hands. The fort and barracks were destroyed, and some shipping, and an immense amount of stores were taken.

Sir James Yeo, now blockaded Chauncey's fleet in Sackett's Harbour. On the morning of the last day of May a flotilla of sixteen barges, laden with naval stores, was discovered seeking refuge amid the windings of Sandy Creek. A boat−party from the fleet, attempting pursuit, became entangled in the narrow creek, and was attacked by a strong force of the enemy, including two hundred Indians. After a desperate resistance, in which eighteen were killed and fifty wounded, the British force was overpowered, and a hundred and forty made prisoners. These were with difficulty saved from massacre by the enraged Iroquois, by the vigorous interposition of their generous captors.

The course of political events in Europe intimately affected the conflict in America. Napoleon was now a prisoner in Elba, and England was enabled to throw greater vigour into her transatlantic war. In the month of June, several regiments of the veteran troops of Wellington landed at Quebec, and strong re−enforcements were rapidly despatched westward.

The most sanguinary events of the campaign occurred on the Niagara frontier. On the 3rd of July,

Brigadier−Generals Scott and Ripley, with a force of four thousand men, crossed the Niagara River at Buffalo. Fort Erie was garrisoned by only a hundred and seventy men, and the commandant, considering that it would be a needless effusion of blood to oppose an army with his scanty forces, surrendered at discretion. The next day, General Brown, the American Commander−in−Chief, advanced down the river to Chippewa. Here he was met by Major−General Riall, whose scanty force was strengthened by the opportune arrival of six hundred of the 3rd Buffs from Toronto, making his entire strength fifteen hundred regulars, six hundred militia, and three hundred Indians. The engagement that ensued was one of extreme severity, a greater number of combatants being brought under fire than in any previous action of the war.

Instead of prudently remaining on the defensive, Riall, about four o'clock on the afternoon of the fifth, boldly attacked the enemy, who had taken up a good position, partly covered by some buildings and orchards, and were well supported by artillery. The battle was fierce and bloody, but the Americans were well officered, and their steadiness in action gave evidence of improved drill. After an obstinate engagement and the exhibition of unavailing valour, the British were forced to retreat, with the heavy loss of a hundred and fifty killed and three hundred and twenty wounded, among whom was Lieutenant−Colonel the Marquis of Tweedall. The loss of the Americans was seventy killed and two hundred and fifty wounded. Riall retired in good order without losing a man or gun, though pursued by the cavalry of the enemy. Having thrown re− enforcements into the forts at Niagara, on both sides of the river, fearing lest his communication with the west should be cut off by the Americana, Riall retreated to Twenty Mile Creek. General Brown advanced to Queenston Heights, ravaged the country, burned the village of St. David's, and made a reconnoissance toward Niagara. Being disappointed in the promised co−operation of Chauncey's fleet in an attack on the forts at the mouth of the river, he returned to Chippewa, followed again by Riall as far as Lundy's Lane. In the meanwhile, General Drummond, hearing at Kingston of the invasion, hastened with what troops he could collect to strengthen the British force on the frontier. Reaching Niagara on the 25th of July, he advanced with eight hundred men to support Riall. At the same time, he pushed forward a column from Fort Niagara to Lewiston, to disperse a body of the enemy collected at that place. General Brown now advanced in force from Chippewa against the British position at Lundy's Lane. Riall was compelled to fall back before the immensely superior American force, and the head of his column was already on the way to Queenston. General Drummond coming up with his re−enforcements about five o'clock, countermanded the movement of retreat, and immediately formed the order of battle. He occupied the gently swelling acclivity of Lundy's Lane, placing his guns in the centre, on its crest. His entire force was sixteen hundred men, that of the enemy was five thousand. The attack began at six o'clock in the evening, Drummond's troops having that hot July day marched from Queenston landing. The American infantry made desperate efforts in successive charges to capture the British battery; but the gunners stuck to their pieces, and swept, with a deadly fire, the advancing lines of the enemy, till some of them were bayoneted at their post. The carnage on both sides was terrible.

At length the long summer twilight closed, and the pitying night drew her veil over the horrors of the scene. Still, amid the darkness, the stubborn contest raged. The American and British guns were almost muzzle to muzzle. Some of each were captured and re−captured in fierce hand−to−hand fights, the gunners being bayoneted while serving their pieces. About nine o'clock, a lull occurred. The moon rose upon the tragic scene, lighting up the ghastly staring faces of the dead and the writhing forms of the dying; the groans of the wounded mingling awfully with the deep eternal roar of the neighbouring cataract.

The retreating van of Riall's army now returned, with a body of militia—twelve hundred in all. The Americans also brought up fresh reserves, and the combat was renewed with increased fury. Thin lines of fire, marked the position of the infantry, while from the hot lips of the cannon flashed red volleys of flame, revealing in brief gleams the disordered ranks struggling in the gloom. By midnight, after six hours of mortal conflict, seventeen hundred men lay dead or wounded on the field, when the Americans abandoned the hopeless contest, their loss being nine hundred and thirty, besides three hundred taken prisoners. The British loss was seven hundred and seventy. To−day the peaceful wheat−fields wave upon the sunny slopes fertilized by the bodies of so many brave men, and the ploughshare upturns rusted bullets, regimental buttons, and other relics of this most sanguinary battle of the war. Throwing their heavy baggage and tents into the rushing rapids of the Niagara, and breaking down the bridges behind them, the fugitives retreated to Fort Erie, where they formed an entrenched camp. [Footnote: Withrow's “History of Canada,” 8vo. Ed., pp. 323−333.]

We must now return to trace the individual adventures in this bloody drama of the personages of our story. Every possible provision that wise foresight could suggest had been made for the defence of the Niagara Frontier. Fort George had been strengthened and revictualled. A new fort—Fort Mississauga—with star−shaped ramparts, moat and stockade, had been constructed at the mouth of the river. Its citadel is a very solid structure, with walls eight feet thick, built of the bricks of the devastated town of Niagara. A narrow portal with a double iron door admits one to the vaulted interior of the citadel, and a stairway, constructed in the thickness of the wall, conducts to the second storey or platform, which is open to the sky. Here were formerly mounted several heavy guns, and the fire−place for heating the cannon−balls may still be seen.

On the morning of July fourth, a courier, on a foam−flecked steed, dashed into Fort George and announced to the officer of the day the startling intelligence of the invasion by the enemy in force and the surrender of Fort Erie. Soon all was activity, knapsacks were packed, extra rations cooked and served out, ammunition waggons loaded, cartridge−boxes filled, and the whole garrison, except a small guard, were under orders to march to meet the enemy at dawn the following morning.

That evening—the eve of the fatal fight at Chippewa—Captain Villiers snatched an hour to pay a farewell visit to The Holms, as had become his habit when ordered on active service. He seemed strangely distraught in manner, at times relapsing for several minutes into absolute silence. Before taking his leave, he asked Kate to walk with him on the river bank in the late summer sunset. The lengthening shadows of the chestnuts stretched over the greensward slopes, and were flung far out on the river which swept by in its silent majesty, far−gleaming in the last rays of the sinking sun. The Captain spoke much and tenderly of his mother and sisters in their far−off Berkshire home.

“I sometimes think,” he said, as they stood looking at the shining reaches of the river, “that I shall never see them again; and to−night, I know not why, I seem to feel that presentiment more strongly than ever.”

“We are all in the care, Captain Villiers,” said Kate, “of a loving Heavenly Father. Not even one of these twittering sparrows falls to the ground without His notice; and we, who are redeemed by the death of His Son, are of more value than they.”

“I wish I had your faith. Miss Drayton,” said the Captain with a sigh.

“I am sure I wish you had, Captain Villiers,” replied Kate earnestly. “I would not be without it, weak as it often is, for worlds. But you *may* have it. You have the strongest grounds for having it. But alas! I lived without it myself till very recently.”

“I have not been unobservant, Miss Drayton,” continued the Captain, “of the—what shall I say?—the moral transfiguration of your character. It has been an argument as to the spiritual reality of religion that I could not gainsay. I have always observed its outward forms. I was duly baptized and confirmed, and have regularly taken the sacrament. But I feel the need of something more—something which I am sure my mother had, for if there ever was a saint on earth she is one.”

“I can only send you,” said Kate, “to the Great Teacher, who says 'Come unto Me and I will give you rest.' I am trying to sit at His feet and learn of Him. *He* will guide you into all truth.”

“Amen!” solemnly answered the young man. After a pause he went on, “Miss Drayton, I make bold to ask a favour. Perhaps it may be a last one. Those hymns I have heard you sing come strangely home to my own heart. They awaken yearnings I never felt, and reveal truths I never saw before. May I take the liberty of asking the loan of your hymn−book? Even my mother, with her horror of dissent, would not object to the writings of so staunch a Churchman as the Rev. Charles Wesley.”

“If you will do me the favour to accept it, I shall be most happy to give it you,” replied Kate. “May it be a great help to you as it has been to me.”

“You greatly honour me by your kindness,” said the Captain. Drawing his small gold−clasped Prayer Book, on which was engraven his crest—a cross raguled with a wyvern volant—from the breast−pocket of his coat, he said, “Will you do me the further honour of accepting this book. The prayers I know by heart, and I think that, even though a dissenter,” he added with a smile, “you will admire them.”

“Thanks. I do admire them, very much,” said Kate, who was quite familiar with the beautiful service of her father's Church.

The Captain stooped as they were walking through the little garden, which they had now reached, and plucking a few leaves and flowers, placed them in the book, saying in the words of the fair distraught Ophelia,—

“There is rosemary, that's for rememberance;
And there is pansies, that's for thoughts.”

Then placing the hook in her hand with a reverent respect, he raised her fingers to his lips. In a moment more he had vaulted on his steed, which stood champing its bit at the garden gate and was soon out of sight.

As, in the deepening twilight, Kate watched his retreating form, a feeling of vague apprehension, of she knew not what, filled her gentle breast. Was it a premonition of his impending doom?—a prescience that she should never behold him again.

CHAPTER XIX. THE TRAGEDY OF WAR.

With the early dawn, Zenas rode off to join his militia company; which was summoned to repel the invasion. Loker and McKay were already in the field. They were all in the severe action at Chippewa. Captain Villiers distinguished himself by his heroic daring, and while heading a gallant charge, whereby he covered the retreat of the British, received a rather severe bayonet thrust in his leg. Binding his military scarf around the wound, he remained in his saddle till night, performing the arduous duties of commander of the rear−guard.

The three weeks following were weeks of toilsome marching and counter−marching beneath the burning July sun. More than once Zenas was within an hour's ride of home; but the pressing exigencies of a soldier's life prevented his making even a passing call on those whom he so much loved. He was forced to content himself with messages sent through Neville Trueman, whose sacred calling made him free of the lines of both armies. These messages were full of praise and admiration of the gallant Captain Villiers; and, accompanied by no stinted praise of his own, they were faithfully delivered by the young preacher.

“He will be Colonel before the war is over, I expect,” said Neville, “and I am sure no man deserves it better. He is as gentle as he is brave. His treatment of the prisoners is kindness itself.”

The Captain, although once at Fort George, commanding a re−enforcement of the garrison, was prevented by his military duties from riding the short three miles that lay between it and The Holms.

One day toward the latter part of July,—it was the twenty−fifth of the month, a day for ever memorable in the annals of Canada,— early in the morning a convoy of schooners and barges, filled with armed men, was seen by Katharine gliding up the Niagara River, their snowy sails gleaming beyond the fringe of chestnuts that bordered the stream. The Union Jack floating gaily at the peak, and the inspiring strains of “Britannia Rules the Waves” swelling on the breeze as the fleet approached, gave the assurance of welcome re−enforcements to the struggling army in the field. Running down to the bank, Katharine exultantly waved her handkerchief in welcome. The redcoats, who thronged the bulwarks, gave a rousing cheer in reply; and an officer in gold lace, with a white plume in his General's hat—who was no other than Sir George Gordon Drummond himself—gaily waved his handkerchief in return.

And right welcome those re−enforcements were that day. Disembarking at Queenston landing, and climbing the steep hill, they marched through smiling orchards and green country roads to the bloody field of Lundy's Lane, where many of them ended life's march for ever.

We shall depend for the further record of that eventful day on the narrative of Zenas, as subsequently reported, with all the vivid touches of personal experience and eye−witness. With bandaged head and one arm in a sling he sat at the kitchen table at The Holms, explaining to his father and some neighbours the fortunes of the fight. His story, disentangled from the interruptions of his auditors, was as follows: “You see,” he said, making a rude diagram of the battle on the supper−table with the knives and forks, “General Riall took up a strong position on Lundy's Lane early in the day, with the regulars and the Glengary militia; and Lieutenant−Colonel Robinson [Footnote: Subsequently better known as Sir John Beverly Robinson, Chief Justice of Upper Canada.] commanded the sedentary militia. The enemy lay on the other side of Chippewa Creek, and didn't move till late in the afternoon. If they had come on in the morning, they could have crushed us like an egg−shell,” and he suited the action to the word, by crushing into fragments one that lay upon the table.

“But we got it hard enough as it was. General Winfield Scott, [Footnote: Afterwards Commander−in−chief of the United States armies.] began pounding away at us with his artillery just before sundown. We expected to be re−enforced before long, so we determined to hold the hill where our own battery was planted at any cost. The sun went down; it got darker and darker; still the cannon flashed their tongues of flame, and the deadly rattle of the musketry went on without a minute's pause for three mortal hours. The Yankee sharp−shooters crept up in the darkness behind a screen of barberry bushes growing in the panels of a rail fence, and at a volley picked off all the gunners of our battery but three. Then, with a cheer, they rushed forward with the bayonet, and wrestled in fierce hand−to−hand fight with our infantry for the guns, which were alternately taken and re−taken on either side, till the hill−slope was slippery with blood.

“Our troop of dragoons was ordered to charge up the hill and re−capture the guns. I had only time to lift up

my heart in prayer, and say 'Lord have mercy upon us,' when a roundshot struck my horse. He reared straight up and fell backward, partly falling upon me. All at once everything got black, and I heard not a sound of the din of battle that was raging around me. After a while, I don't know how long, it seemed like hours, I became aware of a deep thunderous sound that seemed to fill the air and cause the very earth to tremble, and I knew it was the roar of the Falls. Then I felt an intolerable aching, as if every bone in my body was broken. I opened my eyes and saw the moon shining through the drifting clouds. I was parched with thirst and raging with fever, and felt a sharp pain piercing my temple. Raising my arm to my head, I found my hair all clotted with blood from a scalp wound.

"Just then I heard a rattle and a cheer, and galloping down hill full in the moonlight, right toward the spot where I lay, a brass field−gun fully horsed, the drivers lashing the horses with all their might. I was afraid they would gallop over me, and raised my arm to warn them aside. But they either didn't see or couldn't heed, and on came the heavy cannon, lurching from side to side, the polished brass gleaming in the moonlight like gold. I heard a deep shuddering groan as the heavy wheels rolled over a wounded man beside me, crushing the bones of his legs like pipe stems. As the plunging horses galloped past, one iron−shod hoof struck fire against a stone just beside my head. In the momentary flash I could see the hoof poised just above my face. I remember I noticed that it had been badly shod, and one of the nails was bent over the edge of the shoe. By a merciful Providence, instead of dashing my brains out he stepped on one side, and I received no further hurt. After the roar of the battle had ceased, while the solemn stars looked down like eyes of pitying angels on the field of slaughter, I managed to crawl to the road−side and wet my parched lips with some muddy water that lay in a cattle track. In the morning Trueman found me and brought me off the field, and here I am laid up for one while. I pray God I may never see another battle. It is a sight to make angels weep and devils rejoice, to see men thus mangling each other like beasts of prey."

"Amen!" said his father. "Even when it is just, war is the greatest of calamities; and when unjust, it is the greatest of crimes."

Sadder still was the story told by Neville Trueman to Katharine Drayton, as he conveyed to her the dying message of Captain Villiers. The Captain was gallantly cheering on his company, when a bullet pierced his lungs. He fell from his horse and was bore to the rear, and carried into the little Methodist Church, which had been turned into a temporary hospital. Here Neville Trueman was busily engaged in far different ministrations from those which were the wont of that consecrated spot. The seats had been removed, and beds of unthrashed wheat sheaves from the neighbouring harvest−fields were strewn upon the floor.

As the bleeding form of Captain Villiers was brought in, Neville saw by his deathly pallor and his laboured breathing that he had not many hours to live. He sat down beside him on the floor and took the hand of the dying man, which he softly caressed as it lay passive in his grasp. Opening his eyes, a wan smile of recognition flickered over the pallid countenance. He tried to speak, but in vain. Then he pointed to his breast pocket, and made signs which Neville interpreted as a wish that he should take something out. He obeyed the suggestion, and found the copy of Wesley's Hymns given him by Katharine Drayton, but now, alas! dyed with the life− blood of a loyal heart.

"Tell her," said the dying man, but he faltered in his speech. Then, with difficulty opening the book, he turned to a passage where the leaf was turned down and a hymn was marked with the letters "H.V.," the initials of Herbert Villiers. The hymn was that sublime one beginning—

"Now I have found the ground wherein
Sure my soul's anchor may remain:
The wounds of Jesus, for my sin
Before the world's foundation slain;
Whose mercy shall unshaken stay,
When heaven and earth are fled away."

The dying eyes looked eagerly at Neville as the latter read the words; but when he replied, "Yes, I will tell her, and give her hack her book enriched with such a sacred recollection," a look of infinite content rested on the pallid face.

"I bless God I ever met her," faltered the failing voice. "Tell her," it continued with a final effort, "Tell her—we shall meet again—where they neither marry—nor are given in marriage—but are as the angels of God in heaven!" And with a smile of ineffable peace the happy spirit departed from the carnage of earth's battles to the

everlasting peace of the skies.

Tears of pity fell fast from the eyes of the tender−hearted Katharine as she listened to the touching narration. As soon as she could sufficiently command her feelings she wrote a sympathetic letter to the now doubly−bereaved widow of the stately Melton Hall, amid the broad ancestral acres of Berkshire. She enclosed therewith the jewelled cross, which had been committed to her keeping; but the blood−stained hymn−book she placed in her little cabinet, beside the Prayer−Book with its leaves of rosemary for remembrance and pansies for thoughts.

The fellow−officers of Captain Villiers erected over the grave in which their comrade was buried, beneath the walls of the humble Methodist Church, a marble slab commemorating his valour and his heroic death. With the lapse of five−and−sixty years, however, its brief inscription has become well nigh illegible through the weathering of the elements, and the grave has become indistinguishable from the mouldering mounds on every side around it. But beneath the funeral hatchment of his father, on the chancel walls of Melton−Mowbray Church, is a marble shield charged with a cross enguled and a wyvern volant; and a record of the untimely death of the hope and last scion of the house on the banks of the far−off Niagara.

CHAPTER XX. CLOSING SCENES OF THE WAR.

We return now to retrace the fortunes of the war of which the culminating acts, at least in Upper Canada, had now taken place. After the fatal fight of Lundy's Lane, as we have seen, the American force retreated precipitately on Fort Erie, of which they retained possession, and, working night and day, formed an entrenched camp for their protection, strengthening a line of abattis along the front. The victorious British columns closely followed, and for three weeks the camp and fort occupied by the American army were closely besieged by a force only two−thirds as numerous. Two American armed vessels, which supported the fort on the lake side, were very cleverly captured in a night attack by Captain Dobbs, of the Royal Navy, by means of boats conveyed by sheer force of human muscles twenty miles across the country in the rear of the American lines, from the Niagara to Lake Erie.

The British forces also threw up strong entrenchments and planted batteries; and the two armies lay watching each other like couchant lions, waiting the opportunity to make the fatal spring. The guns on the batteries were kept double shotted, and through the long nights dark lanterns were kept burning, and linstocks ready for firing lay beside every gun. Ever and anon a live shell screamed through the air, one of which penetrating an American magazine, caused it to explode with fearful violence.

On the 14th of August, after a vigorous bombardment, a night attack, in three columns, was made upon the fort. At two o'clock in the morning, the columns moved out of the trenches, with the utmost silence, bearing scaling ladders, and crept stealthily over the plain toward the apparently slumbering fort. Dark clouds hung low, and the only sounds heard were the melancholy cry of the loon and the measured dash of the waves upon the shore. At length the American picket discovered the approach of the British columns and gave the alarm. The bugles rang shrill in the ear of night. Every embrasure of the seemingly sleeping fort flashed forth its tongue of flame, revealing the position of the assailants, and the gloom settled heavier than ever, deepened still further by the sulphureous clouds of smoke from the cannon. The British van hacked with their swords at the abattis, and tried, by wading through a marsh, to enter the curtain of the fore by a flank movement. Rent and torn by a fire of canister and grape, five times the assailing columns were hurled back, and five times, undaunted, they returned to the charge.

At length the wall was reached, the ladders were planted, and Lieutenant−Colonel Drummond, with a hundred men of the Royal Artillery, gained a footing in a bastion. The parole by which they recognized each other in the dark was “steel”—an omen of the desperate means used to insure their victory. With pike and bayonet they rushed upon the garrison. Their comrades swarmed up the scaling ladders and filled the bastion. Suddenly the ground heaved and trembled as with the throes of an earthquake. There came a burst of thunder sound; a volcano of fire and timber; stones and living men were hurled two hundred feet in the air; and the night settled down on the scene of chaos. The British columns, utterly demoralized by this appalling disaster, fell back precipitately on their entrenchments, leaving the mangled bodies of two hundred of their comrades, among them the gallant leader, Lieutenant−Colonel Drummond, in the fatal fosse and bastion.

The Americans, being strongly re−enforced, a month later made a vigorous sally from the fort, but were driven back, with a loss on the part of both assailants and assailed of about four hundred men. Shortly after, General Izzard blew up the works and re− crossed the river to United States territory. The fortress, constructed at such a cost, and assailed and defended with such valour, soon fell to utter ruin. Where earth−shaking war achieved such vast exploits, to−day the peaceful waters of the placid lake kiss the deserted strand, and a few grass−grown and mouldering ram−mounds alone mark the grave of so much military pomp, power, and unavailing valour. [Footnote: Engravings of these are given in Lossing's “Field Book of the War.”]

Nor were the ravages of the war confined alone to the Niagara frontier. Far otherwise. They extended from the upper waters of the Mississippi to the Atlantic seaboard, and to the Gulf of Mexico. In the West, Michilimackinac was re−enforced, and Prairie du Chien, a fort on the Mississippi, was captured by a body of six hundred and fifty Canadians and Indians, without the loss of a single man. An American attempt to recapture Michilimackinac, by a force of a thousand men, was a total failure, the only exploit of the expedition being the inglorious pillage and destruction of the undefended trading−post of Ste. Marie.

Meanwhile, Sir John Sherbrooke, the Governor of Nova Scotia, despatched several hostile expeditions from

Halifax against the coast of Maine.

Eastport, Castine, Bangor, Machias, and the whole region from the Penobscot to the St. Croix, surrendered to the British, and were held by them to the close of the war.

The arrival, in August, of sixteen thousand of Wellington's Peninsular troops, the heroes of so many Spanish victories, placed at the command of Sir George Prevost the means of vigorously undertaking offensive operations. A well−appointed force of eleven thousand men advanced from Canada to Lake Champlain. Captain Downie, with a fleet on which the ship carpenters were still at work as he went into action, was to co−operate with the army in an attack on Plattsburg, which was defended by five well−armed vessels and by fifteen hundred regulars and as many militia, under General Macomb. The British fleet gallantly attacked the enemy, but after a desperate battle, in which Captain Downie was slain, and nine of the ill−manned gunboats fled, it was compelled to surrender to a superior force. Prevost, notwithstanding that his strength was ten times greater than that of the enemy, had awaited the assistance of the fleet. As he tardily advanced his storming columns, the cheers from the fort announced its capture. Although on the verge of an easy victory, Prevost, fearing the fate of Burgoyne, and humanely averse to the shedding of blood, to the intense chagrin of his soldiers gave the signal to retreat. Many of his officers for very shame broke their swords, and vowed that they would never serve again. While an able civil governor, Prevost was an incompetent military commander. He was summoned home by the Horse Guards to stand a court−martial, but he died the following year, before the court sat.

The launch at Kingston of the “St. Lawrence,” an “oak leviathan” of a hundred guns, gave the British complete naval supremacy of Lake Ontario, and enabled them strongly to re−enforce General Drummond with troops and stores.

We will now trace very briefly the further events of the war, which lay altogether outside of Canada. Along the Atlantic seaboard the British maintained a harassing blockade. The close of the Continental war enabled Great Britain to throw more vigour into the conflict with the United States. Her giant navy was, therefore, free from service in European waters, and Admiral Cockburn, with a fleet of fifty vessels, about the middle of August, arrived in Chesapeake Bay with troops destined for the attack on the American capital. Tangier Island was seized and fortified, and fifteen hundred negroes of the neighbouring plantations were armed and drilled for military service. They proved useful but very costly allies, as, at the conclusion of the war, the Emperor of Russia, who was the referee in the matter, awarded their owners an indemnity of a million and a quarter of dollars, or over eight hundred dollars each for raw recruits for a six weeks' campaign.

There are two rivers by which Washington may be approached—the Potomac, on which it is situated, and the Patuxent, which flows in its rear. The British commander chose the latter, both on account of the facility of access, and for the purpose of destroying the powerful fleet of gunboats which had taken refuge in its creeks. This object was successfully accomplished on the 20th of August— thirteen of the gunboats being destroyed and one captured, together with fourteen merchant vessels. The army, under the command of General Ross, on the following day disembarked. It numbered, including some marines, three thousand five hundred men, with two hundred sailors to drag the guns—two small three− pounders.

For the defence of Washington, General Winder had been assigned a force of sixteen thousand six hundred regulars, and a levy of ninety−three thousand militia had been ordered. Of the latter, not one appeared; of the former, only about one−half mustered. The Americans had, however, twenty−six guns against two small pieces possessed by the British. General Winder took post at Bladensburg, a few miles from Washington. His batteries commanded the only bridge across the East Potomac. Ross determined to storm the bridge in two columns. Not for a moment did the war−bronzed veterans of the Peninsular war hesitate. Amid a storm of shot and shell, they dashed across the bridge, carried a fortified house, and charged on the batteries before the second column could come to their aid. Ten guns were captured. The American army was utterly routed, and fled through and beyond the city it was to defend. The lack of cavalry and the intense heat of the day prevented the pursuit by the British. The brilliant action was saddened to the victors by the loss of sixty−one gallant men slain and one hundred and eighty−five wounded.

Towards evening the victorious army occupied the city. The destruction of the public buildings had been decreed, in retaliation for the pillage of Toronto and the wanton burning of Niagara. An offer was made to the American authorities to accept a money payment by way of ransom, but it was refused. The next day, the torch was ruthlessly applied to the Capitol, with its valuable library, the President's house, treasury, war office, arsenal,

dockyard, and the long bridge across the Potomac. The enemy had already destroyed a fine frigate, a twenty−gun sloop, twenty thousand stand of arms, and immense magazines of powder. Even if justifiable as a military retaliation, this act was unworthy of a great and generous nation.

The town of Alexandria was saved from destruction only by the surrender of twenty−one vessels, sixteen hundred barrels of flour, and a thousand hogsheads of tobacco.

The city of Baltimore redeemed itself more bravely. Against that place General Ross now proceeded with his army and the fleet. In attacking the enemy's outposts, General Ross was slain, and the command devolved on Colonel Brooke. Six thousand infantry, four hundred horse, and four guns, protected by a wooden palisade, disputed the passage of the British. With a shout and a cheer Wellington's veterans attacked the obstructions, and, in fifteen minutes, were masters of the field. The American army fled, leaving behind them six hundred killed or wounded, and three hundred prisoners, September 13. The next morning, the British were within a mile and a half of Baltimore, but they found fifteen thousand men, with a large train of artillery, in possession of the heights commanding the city. Colonel Brooke, not willing to incur the risk of attacking in daylight, with three thousand men, a fivefold number, resolved on attempting a surprise by night. He learned, however, that the enemy, by sinking twenty vessels in the river, had prevented all naval co−operation. The inevitable loss of life in an assault far counter−balancing any prospective advantage, Brooke wisely abandoned the design, and withdrew unmolested to his ships.

The fleet and army which had been baffled at Baltimore sailed for New Orleans, with the object of capturing the chief cotton port of the United States, then a city of seventeen thousand inhabitants. The fleet arrived off the mouth of the Mississippi on the 8th of December. It was opposed by a flotilla of gunboats, but they were all soon captured and destroyed. Amid very great difficulties and hardships, resulting from the severity of the weather and the wretched condition of the roads, the army under General Packenham advanced to within six miles of New Orleans. Here General Jackson, the American commander, had constructed a deep ditch and an entrenchment of earthworks, strengthened by sand−bags and cotton− bales, a thousand yards long, stretching from the Mississippi to an impassable swamp in the rear. Flanking batteries enfiladed the front. Behind these formidable works was posted an army of twelve thousand men.

Packenham resolved to send Colonel Thornton, with fourteen hundred men, across the river by night, to storm a battery which swept the front of the earthworks, and to menace the city of New Orleans. At the same time, the main attack was to be made on Jackson's lines, in two columns, under Generals Gibbs and Keane. Packenham had only six thousand men, including seamen and marines, “to attack twice the number, entrenched to the teeth in works bristling with bayonets and loaded with heavy artillery.” [Footnote: Allison's “History of Europe,” Chap. lxxvi., American ed., vol. iv., p. 480.] The rapid fall of the river retarded the crossing of the troops, and prevented a simultaneous attack on the right and left banks.

Impatient at the delay, Packenham ordered the assault on Jackson's lines, January 6, 1815; the columns moved steadily forward, but the dawn of day revealed their approach, and they were met by a concentrated and murderous fire from the batteries. Without flinching, they advanced to the ditch, when it was found that the fascines and scaling−ladders had been forgotten. The head of the column, thus brought to a halt under the enemy's guns, was crushed by the tremendous fire. Packenham now fell mortally wounded, and Generals Gibbs and Keane were shortly after struck down.

The gallant Ninety−third Highlanders, however, undaunted by the carnage, rushed forward, and many of them fairly climbed their way into the works, mounting on each other's shoulders. But their rash valour brought upon them the concentrated fire of grape, by which the successful assailants were cut down to a man. General Lambert, on whom the command now devolved, finding it impossible to carry the works, and the slaughter being appalling, drew off his troops. In this sanguinary repulse, the British lost two thousand men killed, wounded, and prisoners. The Americans claim that their loss was only eight killed and thirteen wounded.

Meanwhile, Colonel Thornton, on the left bank of the river, had achieved a brilliant success. With only one−third of his command, or less than five hundred men, he had stormed a redoubt of twenty guns, defended by seventeen hundred men. The defeat of the main body, however, rendered the position untenable. Lambert successfully retreated to his ships, bringing off all his stores, ammunition, and field artillery. On the 27th the army re−embarked, and found a partial consolation for its defeat in the capture of Fort Boyer, a strong fortification at the mouth of the river.

Peace had already been concluded at Ghent on the 24th of December, and was hailed with delight by the kindred peoples, wearied with mutual and unavailing slaughter. The calm verdict of history finds much ground of extenuation for the revolt of 1776; but for the American declaration of war in 1812, little or none. A reckless Democratic majority wantonly invaded the country of an unoffending neighbouring people, to seduce them from their lawful allegiance and annex their territory. The long and costly conflict was alike bloody and barren. The Americans annexed not a single foot of territory. They gained not a single permanent advantage. Their seaboard was insulted, their capital destroyed. Their annual exports were reduced from L22,000,000 to L1,500,000. Three thousand of their vessels were captured. Two−thirds of their commercial class became insolvent A vast war−tax was incurred, and the very existence of the Union imperilled by the menaced secession of the New England States. The “right of search” and the rights of neutrals—the ostensible but not the real causes of the war—were not even mentioned in the treaty of peace. The adjustment of unsettled boundaries was referred to a commission, and an agreement was made for a combined effort for the suppression of the slave−trade. The United States, however, continued its internal slave−traffic, of a character even more obnoxious than that which it engaged to suppress.

On Canada, too, the burden of the war fell heavily. Great Britain, exhausted by nearly twenty years of conflict, and still engaged in a strenuous struggle against the European despot, Napoleon, could only, till near the close of the war, furnish scanty military aid. It was Canadian militia, with little help from British regulars, who won the brilliant victories of Chrysler's Farm and Chateauguay; and throughout the entire conflict they were the principal defence of their country. In many a Canadian home, bitter tears were shed for son or sire left cold and stark upon the bloody plain at Queenston Heights, or Chippewa, or Lundy's Lane, or other hard−fought field of battle.

The lavish expenditure of the Imperial authorities, for ship−building, transport service, and army supplies, and the free circulation of the paper money issued by the Canadian Government, greatly stimulated the material prosperity of the country. [Footnote: The paper money of the United States was not redeemed till it had greatly depreciated in value, to the often ruinous loss of the holders.] Its peaceful industries, agriculture, and the legitimate development of its natural resources, however, were very much interrupted, and vast amounts of public and private property were relentlessly confiscated or destroyed by the enemy. [Footnote: See Withrow's “History of Canada;” 8vo. ed., pp., 234−340.]

CHAPTER XXI. CLOSING SCENES.

After the stubborn and sanguinary battles of Chippewa, Lundy's Lane, and Fort Erie, the Niagara frontier had exemption from invasion, and a sort of armed truce prevailed to the end of the war. It was long, however, before the exasperation of feeling excited on either side by the unhappy conflict had died away. Now, thank God, the ameliorating influence of time, of commercial intercourse, and, let us hope, of Christian amity, has almost entirely obliterated the bitter memories of that unnatural strife. A continual exchange of international courtesies and friendly amenities, marks the intercourse of the kindred peoples who dwell upon opposite sides of the Niagara River. At the narrowest part of that river, two miles below the Falls, it is now spanned by the fairy−like railway Suspension Bridge—a life−artery along which throbs a ceaseless pulse of commerce between the Dominion of Canada and the United States of America, the two fairest and noblest daughters of brave Old England, the great mother of nations. As the deep and gloomy gorge beneath that bridge, with its wrathful and tumultuous torrent, seemed to forbid all intercourse between its opposite banks, so, unhappily, a deep and gloomy chasm has too long yawned between these neighbouring peoples, through which has raged a brawling torrent of estrangement, bitterness, and even of fratricidal strife. But as wire by wire that wondrous bridge was woven between the two countries, so social, religious, and commercial intercourse has been weaving subtile cords of fellowship between the adjacent communities; and now, let us hope, by the late Treaty of Washington, a golden bridge of amity and peace has spanned the gulf, and made them one in brotherhood for ever. As treason against humanity is that spirit to be deprecated that would sever one strand of those ties of friendship, or stir up strife between two great nations of one blood, one faith, one tongue. May this peaceful arbitration be the inauguration of the happy era told by the poet and seer,

“When the war−drum throbs no longer, and the battle−flags
are furled
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world!”

While musing on this theme, the following fancies wove themselves into verse, in whose aspiration all true patriots of either land will devoutly join:

As the great bridge which spans Niagara'a flood
Was deftly woven, subtile strand by strand
Into a strong and stable iron band,
Which heaviest stress and strain has long withstood;
So the bright golden strands of friendship strong,
Knitting the Mother and the Daughter land
In bonds of love—as grasp of kindly hand
May bind together hearts estranged long—
Is deftly woven now, in that firm gage
Of mutual plight and troth, which, let us pray,
May still endure unshamed from age to age—
The pledge of peace and concord true alway:
Perish the hand and palsied be the arm
That would one fibre of that fabric harm!

Neville Trueman held on the even tenor of his way, through the period during which the tide of war was ebbing away on the Atlantic coast and on the lower Mississippi. Notwithstanding the tried and true character of his loyalty, he was not free from ungenerous and unjust aspersions by those prejudiced and bigoted against his American birth. He had, however, one friend who never swerved from her generous admiration of his character and respect for his conduct. Katharine Drayton never failed to defend both the one and the other when unkindly criticised in her presence. Yet to himself she was, while uniformly kind and courteous, yet unusually reserved in the expression of her personal feelings. The words of high appreciation which were spoken, in his defence to others, and which would to him have been a guerdon compensating a hundredfold all his trials and troubles, were to him unuttered. A sense of maiden modesty, if not a deeper and tenderer feeling, sealed her lips and made her,

on this subject, dumb in his presence.

If the enthusiastic friendship of her brother could have made amends for this reserve Neville had, indeed, ample compensation. Nevertheless a sense of loneliness and isolation were at times oppressively felt by the young man. Almost unconsciously to himself the character and person of Katharine Drayton had become to him very dear. They occupied much of his thought, and mingled even with his morning and evening orisons. Yet he sedulously avoided giving expression, even to himself, to his desires and aspirations. The sad uncertainties of the times forbade the thought of marrying or giving in marriage. His own anomalous position as having, apparently, an allegiance divided between the two countries unhappily at war, was also felt to be a great embarrassment in all his personal relations. Above all he was not without the apprehension that the heart of Katharine Drayton might have been won by the brave soldier whose untimely death she deplored with a sorrow deep and unfeigned. Her lacerated affections he felt to be too tender and too sacred a subject to be lightly approached. Moreover, what had he, a poor Methodist itinerant, without a home, without a country, dependent for his daily food and nightly shelter upon the Providence of God and the generosity of an alien people, themselves impoverished by a long and cruel conflict with his own countrymen, to offer in exchange for her love! For himself he had no fears, no forebodings for the future, no feeling of humiliation in accepting the generous hospitality of his kind congregations. But, he questioned, how could he ask the delicately−nurtured Katharine Drayton, the heiress of many acres, whose lightest wish had been gladly gratified by loving hands,—how could he ask her to leave the sheltering roof and cheerful hearth, where she reigned a queen, to share the privations, discomforts, and it might be poverty, of his migratory existence? The question smote with appalling emphasis upon his heart. So he continued to nourish in his soul a vague hope, menaced by a vague fear that sorely tried his courage and his faith.

Meanwhile the fratricidal strife between the kindred nations came to an end—never, let us hope, while the world stands, to be renewed. The Treaty of Paris brought repose to the two war−wearied people. The Angel of Peace waved her branch of olive over the ravaged fields and desolated homes, and the kindly hand of Nature veiled with her gentle ministries the devastations of war. One evening, in the leafy month of June, shortly after the tidings of the peace had arrived, Neville Trueman was walking with Miss Drayton on the banks of the noble river where, three years before, he had gazed upon the summer sunset and sung the song of Jerusalem the Golden. They had been on a visit of charity to a sick member of Neville's flock, and were now returning through the after−glow of a golden sunset. The breath of the peach and apple blossoms filled the air with fragrance, and their pink and white bloom clothed the orchard trees with beauty. Swift swallows clove with their scythe−like wings the sky, and skimmed the surface of the dimpling wave, and the whip−poor−will's plaint of tender melancholy was borne faintly on the breeze. At a point of vantage commanding a broad view of the river, which, wimpling and dimpling in its beauty, flowed, a sapphire set in emerald, between its verdurous banks, Kate stood to gaze upon the lovely scene—fair as the storied Bay of Naples or the far−famed Riviera of Genoa.

“It was here,” she said, as she gazed wistfully at the setting sun, “that I had my last conversation with Captain Villiers, and an eventful conversation it was,” and a tear glistened in her eyes as she remembered his parting words.

Neville listened in an embarrassed manner.

He thought that she referred to a declaration of his passion, so knowing not what reply to make he kept silent.

“I believe,” continued Kate, “that that conversation had a very important influence, under God, on his destiny.”

“His life,” said Neville, “was unfortunately too short for him to enjoy his happiness.”

“True,” replied Kate; “but all the sooner he reached its consummation.”

“How do you mean? I do not understand,” said Neville, in a bewildered manner. “You would have been married had he lived.”

“Married! Who spoke of marriage?” exclaimed Kate, flushing rosy red over brow and cheek, as she turned with an air and tone of surprise to her companion.

“Pardon me, I thought you were engaged,” said Neville. “I have grounds to know that he cherished a deep devotion for you.”

“He never declared it, then,” replied Kate; “and I am glad he did not. I had a great esteem and respect for Captain Villiers, but I could not have given him my hand.”

“Could not!” exclaimed Neville, in a dazed sort of manner. “Then I have been under a great mistake,” and he

walked on for a few minutes in silence.

"Miss Drayton," he said, after a pause, impelled by a sudden impulse and determined to know his fate, "I have long honoured and revered your character and person. This feeling has grown into a deep and ardent affection. Dare I hope that it is reciprocated? May I ask you to share the trials and, thank God, the triumphs of a Methodist preacher's life?" and he clasped her hand earnestly.

"Mr. Trueman," she faltered—but she withdrew not her hand—then, in a tenderer tone, "Neville, let me say, my heart has long been yours. Did you not know it? I fear not the trials if I may share the joys of service for the Master by your side," and she frankly placed her other hand in his.

Soft as fall the dews at even fell the holy kiss that sealed the plighted vows of these two young and loving hearts. Long they sat there on a mossy trunk beside the river's brink, in the golden twilight, beguiling the flying moments with sacred lovers' talk— to which it were sacrilege to listen and a crime to coldly report. At length, in the soft light of the crescent moon, they sauntered, she leaning confidingly upon his arm, slowly up the garden alley between the sweet June roses, breathing forth their souls in fragrance on the summer air.

Plucking a rich red rose, Neville placed it in her hair, saying, "So may the immortal roses that the angel brought to St. Cecilia—the virtues and the graces of the bride of Christ—bloom forever in your garland of beauty and crown of rejoicing."

Then she, glowing with fairer loveliness beneath his fond caress, plucked a white rose from its stem and fastened it upon his breast with the words, "So, O beloved, wear thou the white flower of blameless life, breathing the fragrance of purity and holiness throughout the world."

Arm in arm the lovers passed on to the house and into the presence of the squire, who sat beneath the grape vine of the broad piazza enjoying his evening pipe.

"Squire Drayton," said Neville, in a tone of manly confidence, "I have come to ask your daughter's hand in marriage," and he put his arm protectingly around her, as she stood blushing at his side.

"Well, young man," said the old gentleman, taking his long "churchwarden" pipe from his mouth, "you ask that as coolly as though girls like Kate grew as plentifully as the grape clusters on this vine. There's not a man living good enough for my Kate— I'd have you know."

"I quite agree with you in that, squire," said the young man. "So much the greater my prize in winning her affection."

"I believe you have, my lad," said the old man, relenting, and then went on with a good deal of natural pathos, "An old thorn like me can't expect to keep such a sweet rose ungathered on its stem. Take her, Neville. Love and cherish her as you would have God be good to you. Kiss me, Kate. You must still keep room in your heart for your poor old father. Ton have been my greatest solace since your mother died. Be as good a wife as you have been a daughter, and God's blessing on you both."

Kate flung her arms around her father's neck and covered his brow and cheek with kisses. And Neville, taking his hand, said solemnly, "God do so to me and more also, if I cherish not your daughter as my life; if I cherish her not as Christ loved His Bride the Church, and gave Himself for it."

"I have one regret," said Neville, sometime afterward, when Kate had gone out of the room, "and that is, that I have not brighter worldly prospects and more assured support to offer Kate."

"The time has been, my son," said the squire, adopting him at once into the family, "when I would have thought so too; when I would have sought, as conditions for her future,—position, wealth, and ease. But I have lived to see that these are not the great essentials of life, that these alone cannot give happiness. With true love and God's blessing you can never be poor. Without these, though you roll in riches, you are poor indeed. Not but that it would grieve me to see Kate want, as many a preacher's wife whom I have known has wanted. But by God's goodness I am able to secure her against that, and to do so shall be the greatest pleasure of my life."

"I accept on her behalf your generous offer," replied Neville, "but with this condition, that your bounty shall be settled exclusively on her. No man shall say that I married your daughter for anything but herself."

"I dare say you are right," said the squire. "Better get a fortune in a wife than with a wife. Often when a wife brings a fortune she spends a fortune."

"I would never submit," remarked Neville, "to the humiliation of being a pensioner upon a wife's bounty. My self−respect demands that, as the head of the house, I be able to depend on myself alone."

"You must not push your principles too far," interrupted the squire, "A husband and wife should have one

purse, one purpose, common interests, perfect mutual confidence, and, above all, no secrets from each other."

In such sage counsels and confidences the evening, fraught with such eventful consequences to the household of The Holms and to the hero of our little story, passed away.

A few weeks later, shortly after the Conference by which Neville was appointed to the superintendence of a circuit in the western part of Canada, his marriage took place. The Holms for days before was a ferment of excitement with the baking of cakes and pastry and confections of every kind and degree, including the construction of a three−story iced wedding−cake, on which the skill of Kate herself, as mistress of ceremonies, was exhausted. The best parlour too was a scene of unwonted anarchy under the distracting reign of the village dressmaker constructing the bridal trousseau. Billows of tulle, illusion, lace, and other feminine finery, which the male mind cannot be expected to understand, far less to describe foamed over tables, chairs, and floor. The result of all this confusion was apparent on the morning of the happy day, in the sumptuous wedding−breakfast that covered the ample board, set out with the best plate and china, and, above all, in as fair a vision of bridal beauty as ever gladdened the heart of youthful bridegroom.

Good Elder Ryan travelled many miles to perform the wedding service. Merry were his laugh and jest and wit and playful badinage, for the early Methodist preachers were no stern ascetics or grim anchorites. Like their Master, who graced the marriage feast of Cana of Galilee with His presence, they could rejoice with those that did rejoice, as well as weep with those that wept. Long was the prayer he uttered, but to the youthful happy pair it seemed not so, for in their hearts they prayed with him, [Footnote: See Longfellow's "River Charles".] and solemnly dedicated themselves to the new life of consecrated usefulness that invited them forward to sweet ministries of mercy and of grace in the service of the Master.

The squire looked rubicund and patriarchal, with his broad physique and snow−white hair. He wore, in honour of the occasion, his coat of brightest blue, with large gilt buttons, a buff waistcoat and an ample ruffled shirt−bosom and frilled sleeves. His manner was a singular blending of paternal joy and pride in the beauty and happiness of the fair Katharine, and of wistful tenderness and regret at the loss of her gladsome presence from his home.

Zenas was jubilant and boisterous, full of quips and pranks, overflowing with fun, like a boy let loose from school. He evidently felt, not that he was losing a sister, but that he was gaining a brother who was already knit to his soul by bonds of friendship strong as those between Jonathan and David—between Damon and Pythias.

Our old friends, Tom Loker and Sandy McKay, also, in accordance with early colonial etiquette, graced the occasion with their presence, and added their honest and heartfelt congratulations to those which greeted the happy pair. And never was there happier pair than that which rode away in the wedding−coach to their new home on the forest mission of the western wilds of Canada. Not much of this world's goods had they, but they were rich in love, and hope, and faith, compared with which all earthly riches are but dross.

The old house at The Holms seemed very lone and desolate, now that its fair mistress had departed. The squire missed her much, and, in his loneliness and isolation, turned more and more toward those religious consolations which had been the inspiration of the life of his wife and daughter, and, there is ground to hope, found that solace which can be found nowhere else.

He sought a diversion from his solitude in frequent visits to the village parsonage, where Katharine reigned in her small home− kingdom with blooming matron dignity. Nor were these visits unprofitable to the larder, if we might judge from the stout hampers which went full and returned empty. But a still greater joy was the visit of Katharine to the old homestead at Christmas− time; and at midsummer, when Neville was absent at Conference. The old man never enjoyed his pipe so much as when it was filled and lighted by the deft fingers of his fair matron daughter. In after years these visits were made not unattended. Children's happy laughter filled the old house with glee, and strange riot ruled in the long−quiet parlour and great wide hall and echoing stairs. Another sturdy Neville, and little Kate, and baby Zenas began to play their parts in the momentous and often tragic drama of life. The old man seemed to renew his youth in sharing the gleeful gambols of his grandchildren, and in telling to little Neville, on his knee, the story of the terrible years of the war, and of the heroism of his father and his uncle Zenas, and the brave Captain Villiers, whose memorial tablet they had seen in the village church at Niagara, with the strange quartering—on a field azure a cross enguled and a wyvern volant.

Our brief story now is done. The bitter memories of the war have passed away. The long reign of peace has effaced its scars alike from the face of nature and from the hearts of the kindred peoples who dwell side by side in

kindly intercourse and friendship. The broad Niagara sweeps on as ever in its might and majesty to mingle its flood with the blue waters of Ontario. The banks, in steep escarpments, crowned with oak and elm and giant walnuts, or in gentle turfclad slopes, sweep in graceful curves around the windings of the stream. The weeping birch trails its tresses in the waters like a wood nymph admiring her own loveliness. The comfortable farmsteads nestle amid their embowering peach and apple orchards, the very types of peace and plenty. The mighty river, after its dizzy plunge at the great cataract, and mad tumultuous rush and eddy at the rapids and whirlpool, smoothes its rugged front and restrains its impetuous stream to the semblance of a placid old age after a wild and stormy life.

The slumberous old town of Niagara has also an air of calm repose. No vulgar din of trade disturbs its quiet grass−grown streets. The dismantled fort, the broken stockade, the empty fosse, and the crumbling ramparts, where wandering sheep crop the herbage and the swallows build their nests in the months of the overturned and rusty cannon, are all the evidence of the long reign of an unbroken peace. *Esto perpetua*—so may it ever be.

A few words in conclusion as to the construction of this story of the War. The historical statements here given have been carefully verified by the consultation of the best published authorities, and by personal researches on the scene of the conflict, and frequent conversations with surviving actors in the stirring events which then took place. In portraying the minor characters, filling up details and reported conversations, some licence had to be given the imagination. In this connection I may adopt the language of the distinguished philosopher, Isaac Taylor, author of “Aids to Faith,” with reference to a somewhat similar work of imagination of his own: “Let me say, and I say it in candour—that if, in a dramatic sense, I report conversations uttered longer ago than the Battle of Waterloo, it is the dramatic import only of such conversations I vouch for, not the *ipsissima verba*; and likewise as to the descriptions I give, I must be understood to describe things in an artistic sense, not as if I were giving evidence in a court of justice.”

And now my task is ended. Much of this simple story has been written hastily, amid the pressing occupations of a busy life, and a considerable portion of it was written at sea, when the steamship was reeling and rolling with the motion of the waves, so that I had to hold on by the table at which I sat. These circumstances must be pleaded in extenuation of its shortcomings and demerits. If this retrospect of one of the most stirring episodes in our country's history shall kindle warmer fires of patriotism in the hearts of any of its readers; if the records of the trials and triumphs, the moral heroism and brave achievements of our Canadian forefathers shall inspire a stronger sympathy with their sufferings, and admiration of their character; and, above all, if the religious teachings of this story shall lead any to seek the same solace and succour which sustained our fathers in tribulation, and enbraved their souls for conflict with the evils of the time—it shall not have been written in vain.

[Illustration]