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The Valley People

STELLA COLBY MEEKER

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Mrs STELLA COLBY MEEKER

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DEDICATED

*To my daughter Stella Katherine Meeker
who inspired the story.*

THE VALLEY PEOPLE

CHAPTER I

The Woman's Home Missionary Societies of the different churches have established industrial schools in different parts of our country where the need for them is great. The girls who attend these schools are taught Home Economics, music and agriculture, when their homes are in the country, and last and most important of all the religion of Jesus Christ. The far-reaching results of this work with limited means is almost unbelievable. These could never be attained if it were not for the blessing of the Master upon the fragments that are left from the loaves and fishes after the multitudes have been fed. These crumbs from the tables are the Bread of Life as well as food and raiment. How many more fragments they would receive if those who are wasting them thought of the good they would do if given to the Master for His use.

Come with me far enough south to be called in the Southland, to a valley settled by people whose intelligence and ambitions were as great as that of our northern ancestors. The descendants of these people went backward instead of advancing with the rest of the nation, because they had spent their little all in coming to new homes in this country. Slavery was king of the South. Slaveholders would not give these white settlers any work. They could not live near them, but were driven back from these wealthy settlers into the highlands and valleys remote from other settlements. They could not buy machinery to use in clearing the land and putting in the crops. Isolated from the world of helpful people, who would have given them work if they had settled in different states, they did the best they could with rifles, traps, hoes, spades and other small tools. Primitive tools these to wrest homes and comforts from the wilderness. Far from railroads, those who settled in this valley, were shut

off by themselves. They did the best they could with their resources. Quite as well as you and I could have done under similar circumstances; Perhaps, as well as their Scotch, Irish and English ancestors could have done.

Sometimes they grew discouraged and felt like plodding along, but received inspiration from a family by the name of McDonald. They were as poor as the others, but young McDonald had walked from the valley to a school in Indiana, that he had heard of from a tourist who walked through the valley one summer. He worked his way through public school and college. He met a young lady there, who was paying her way by tutoring, and working for her board and room. They married at the end of college days, and commenced their married life on the farm his parents had left him. It was nearly covered by timber. Through the years the struggle to clear and cultivate the land, and feed and clothe the little children that came, left little time for improvement, but the mother made good use of that little time, for the desire to educate the children, and help the other settlers to educate theirs was the incentive to prepare them for the school life that would surely be theirs if they were ready when the opportunity came.

At last an opportunity came to send Tersa, the oldest daughter, to an industrial school. The lady who gave the money to pay her expenses wished her to go back to her community and give the years of her girlhood to teaching not only the children but their parents.

Time flew by until Tersa had attended school more than two years. You can imagine the consternation that filled the minds of the principal and this loved pupil when a letter from the North crashed their plans to the ground in what seemed a total wreck.

The girls in the sewing class were working on their graduation gowns one morning, when Mary Dean entered the room with the startling announcement: "Tersa McDonald is going home at commencement time and is not coming back to school any more."

"Why, she is too!" "Of course, she is coming back!" "She is a four-year girl." "What makes you say that she is not coming back?" These, with other exclamations, that

were drowned in the flood of noise that swept over the room, stopped any explanation the speaker was about to make. Jennie Barr was the first to receive an answer to her question, "Why isn't she coming back?"

"Miss Love received a letter from Teresa's lady. She said that circumstances have changed with her, so that, deeply as she regrets it, she cannot pay Tersa's expenses any longer."

"Oh!" It was a long-drawn out exclamation of sympathy from every girl.

"Tersa was crying when I went into her room before class time," volunteered another girl.

"Miss Love was crying, too. I wanted to ask her a question but when I opened the office door she was crying so hard that she never noticed me. I never saw her cry before."

Neither had the others. It was almost unbelievable that she had done so for she always wore a sunny smile.

Finally Betty Colton voiced the thoughts of all after different opinions had been freely expressed: "It is just this way: Tersa was taking the longer course; if she had been taking the shorter one she would be ready for the work she can do, and not partly ready for that and for advanced work. Some way she will make good anyway. She is the most resourceful girl in school. Give her some of those stones that mark red and yellow and the top of a stump, and she could teach the common branches without any apparatus."

"She could do all of that, but this disappointment will be hard on her. We must do all we can to help her get all she can out of this last month of school," contributed Mary Dean.

Help her? Surely they would. It never entered their minds that there was any other way to do. The days were crowded, but they would always be. One of the great lessons they had learned at school was that of unselfish helpfulness.

They smiled a welcome when the principal and Tersa entered the room. No questions were asked for they possessed the fine courtesy that would not allow them to disturb their friend when she was striving for self-control. Any lingering hope that it was not true was dispelled when Miss Love took out the treasured bolt of fine white goods and measured off enough for a dress and handed it to Tersa.

This was the school's parting gift to each girl. It was made possible through the kindness of a manufacturer, who gave a bolt of cloth to the school each year so that the girls could have a sheer soft dress for commencement and to take home with them.

It was hard for the girls to keep from crying for Miss Love's voice quivered in spite of her efforts to keep it steady, while Tersa seemed stunned, and her face had lost the look that had made them call her "the Shining One."

The memory of that morning and the talk the principal gave them lived with the girls throughout the years. She tried to conduct the class as usual, but the blow had fallen so suddenly that she could not recover her habitual poise. Tersa's loss and her brave attempt to go on with her duties when her little world had suddenly swung out of its orbit; and the loss to the valley people, who were trying their best to reach a higher plane, seemed overwhelming. The work would fail. If they had known this was coming, and prepared her to be a primary and intermediate teacher, in place of preparing her partially for that and more advanced work. Depression gripped firmly. Yes, Tersa would probably get discouraged and marry young, and what was the use of trying to do any more for her anyway. Into this murky gloom flashed the words: "The Angel of His Presence saved them." Impatiently she flashed back an S. O. S.: "I think the Angel will have his hands full." We who have had quite as impatient thoughts when not half as much was involved, can understand and sympathize with her, and feel ready to cry for the loss of the other two years that meant so much to this pioneer girl. The Heavenly Father knew how sorely she was tried, and sent a vision to her mind of Tersa walking among her people with the Angel guiding and leading her. God was going with her, and it seemed that He wanted her to go back now. Returning courage brightened her face. She turned to her pupils:

"Dear girls, let us kneel and ask Our Father for faith to believe this is His will, and for courage to go on with His work. We need special help this morning and He has it for us." Everything was better after that prayer for "its just like Jesus to roll the clouds away." They listened again

to the story of the Angel who would go with them through life, and sang as they sewed: "Content whatever lot I see since 'tis God's hand that leadeth me." They talked about the pillar of cloud that departed not from over the Israelites by day, and the pillar of fire to show them the light, and the way wherein they should go by night." This teacher knew they loved her, but did not realize the feeling of reverence her girls had for her. Every word of her stories would be reproduced by them, with her every inflection, when they in turn became teachers. She asked as a favor, if they would do a little extra work each day, so that she could have time to write letters to people in the North, asking for a little help. She wanted to give Tersa more instruction in the theory of teaching. The promise of two days in the fields and woods with picnic dinners were offered as a compensation for their extra work. Outings were a treat and each was anxious to learn more about the birds and flowers for they knew the folks at home would be glad to learn all they could teach them.

The flock of letters that went flying to the North "like doves to the windows," pleaded for things that would help equip them for better service. Some of them were answered; others tossed aside until God compels an answer at the judgment. Parcels received, furnished outfits that would have looked pitifully inadequate to you or me, but to these girls they were an abundance to be carefully conserved for the Master's use. If you could have seen their delight in the used textbooks, pieces of pencils, crayons, remnants from sewing-bags, needles, pins, scissors, paper patterns and odds and ends of leftovers you would be more careful what you burn or throw away. You would save and send more and the Master would bless the fragments and multiply them in results. He would bless you for your thoughtfulness, and give you the hundredfold in peace and joy in this life.

CHAPTER II.

Commencement passed. In each memory chest its events were cherished wrapped in loving thoughts, the pansies of the soul. While it was the first great event in these young lives it would not be the last for they were following the Angel toward others. The last month had been strangely happy in the atmosphere of unselfish deeds.

Jennie Barr, Bettie Colton, Mary Dean and Torsa were to leave together. Mr. and Mrs. Barr came to attend the exercises. They arrived in a wagon drawn by a team of mules. This was the way they were expected to come, but their appearance surprised the girls for the mules were well groomed, and wore whole harnesses. Furthermore their arrival almost passed unnoticed for the wagon did not creak and groan, as if it had rheumatism. These differences were a delightful surprise. The girls dreaded trying to get their men folks to fix things up the way the people who lived around the school kept their belongings. Now, the makeshift of harnesses tied with pieces of rope was gone, perhaps it would be easier than they had hoped. Jennie was as proud of that team and harness as her mother and father's faces said they were, though they never mentioned it until the girls' exclamations drew forth the remark that it looked right nice.

When the time to start for home came the girls and their boxes filled all but the front seat of the wagon. They were used to crowding and had a jolly time until they had to say good by. They talked of their work with enthusiasm as they admired the fields and woods. They enjoyed this their first ride in over two years. No college graduates whirling homeward in Pullmans, or expensive touring cars could have been more hopefully confident of success. They were enthusiastic about using pawpaw seeds to teach numbers, and teaching domestic science over fireplaces with stumps for tables. The first stop was at the Barr home, where all spent the night. The guests saw improvements in the home, but

as nothing was said about them, they asked no questions. Their work was the absorbing topic. Parents were interested in finding out more about what the girls had learned than in anything else, before the early bedtime came.

The next morning Tom Dean came, and surprise followed surprise for he drove a team of good horses and realized the impression they made. He smiled at the girls' admiration, and finally chuckled as he saw their puzzled expressions when he remarked in an offhand way: "Some class to them." The expression and the ease with which he used it were a wonder. There was some joke that the Barr's and Tom enjoyed together, but the girls paid little attention to it for it was so hard to say good by. They comforted each other with the promise of the Divine Comforter, and the Angel who would lead each of them, while God would be back of them as He always had been. Jennie and Tersa would be alone as far as school friends were concerned, but Betty and Mary lived quite near each other. They looked forward to friendly visits. Betty was the next to reach home, and five miles farther on at the Dean farm Tom McDonald was waiting for Tersa. He had a new wagon.

"Quite smart," Mary Dean told him, determined that one boy should not get the start of them.

"They'll do," he remarked laconically, "though I prefer a gas wagon for larger loads."

"What next? What does it all mean?" they asked each other, and agreed that the sooner they found out the mystery the better they would be pleased, though the folks would have to do the explaining. Changes in the Dean home were for the better. All were in good spirits during dinner for the family were so glad to have Mary back, and pleased to have their guests that each minute was filled with fun and laughter.

Parting from the last one of the girls was almost more than Tersa could stand. She would be so far away from all of them, not in actual distance, but with the slow ways of travel, it would be impossible to see them often, if at all. She felt like walking back to school and begging to stay. She looked longingly toward the trail over which they had come, then bravely turned her young face away. The school

was not her home any longer, and she could never go back for poverty would shut her in with her people as the mountains separated their valley from the outside world. She banished sad thoughts and left smiling. Little was said by brother and sister for some time for Tom felt a little uncertain about her feelings, and she was striving to keep the tears back. She did not want any of her folks to know how sorry she was to leave. Finally Tom commenced to tell her little items about the neighbors, and she asked questions about the children.

"Hetty must go to school as soon as we can arrange it," she said.

"Reckon she can, but you can teach her this year."

"I will teach her all that I can this year, but there may be no scholarship money next year."

"She has kept on studying since you have been away. We study at home like we used to. Did you bring any more of those magazines? We hoped you would."

"A bundle of them. Miss Love sent four to you. She said you were interested in subjects in them." Torsa's old sunny smile flashed forth. If the family was so anxious for these, her work was well started. They chatted about a series of articles that had been in the Sunday school paper until they reached home shortly after dark. It was a comfortable log house, none too large for the eager family that crowded around the wagon giving Torsa such a loving welcome that she was glad to be with them.

What a good supper they had! Mother always made the meals taste right, even if there was little variety, but tonight there seemed to be a variety. Stranger still the table was covered with a white cloth. The plates, knives and forks were in neat array, and a glass of milk stood in the proper place beside each plate. This was a surprise for a bare table with few dishes had been what she was accustomed to at home.

They were watching her to see how she liked it. At her exclamation: "How fine you are! How did you learn to set a table like this?" They knew that everything pleased her.

"You told us how in a letter and sent a little drawing of a table you set. We sold berries to some people who camped

near here last summer, and bought these things. Does it look as nice as yours?" asked Hetty.

"A little nicer for we are all here," answered Torsa, beginning to realize how dear the home folks were.

"We are glad that you feel that way," approved her father.

Little Rose explained: "We always say the grace that you said at school every evening at supper time."

Reverently the family repeated in unison the little poem of Thanksgiving:

"We put our trust in Thee and give to Thee our praise,
For Thou hast been our help through all our busy days.
Our song shall be of Thee when evening hours draw near.
While through the night till morning light
Thy love will keep and cheer."

Soon after supper a tired and happy Torsa was sent to bed for she had dropped to sleep as she was listening to the conversation. She could scarcely keep awake long enough for the prayer of Thanksgiving for the pleasant homecoming.

The sun was shining when she heard little Rose singing:

"When I wake with morning light, thank you for your
care all night.
Help me to be good and strong and to serve you all day
long."

Sunrise of the first day at home. As Torsa glanced across the room she noticed the furniture.

"Where did you get this furniture? It is beautiful. Whose is it? It is all curly." Hetty enjoyed her sister's mystification quite as well as Rose who was laughing roguishly as she watched her.

"It is ours," Hetty answered. "Knowing the traditions and rules of the House of McDonald you surely did not think we would borrow our neighbors' goods to make the house attractive for the daughter's return from college. The wood is curly maple. It grew in our woods. The trees were felled by son Bob, made into lumber suitable for its present use by the combined efforts of different members of the fam-

ily, and last and most beautiful process of all, it became furniture under the skilled hands of the aforesaid Bob."

"Bob make this? He couldn't! There is no more beautiful furniture in this country. The finish is like satin. There were a few pieces of elegant furniture in the reception room at school. It was given to Miss Love by an old lady who had been very wealthy. It is rare and costly. This is as well made as that and the finish is newer and smoother. Where did you get it, Hetty?"

Hetty had enjoyed the surprise quite as well as she had thought she would. She answered sedately: "It is all true, though it reads like a story. I shall go down and tell the maker the nice things you have said about it, but omit the remark discrediting his ability to do the work. Some of the members of this family do not properly appreciate his ability, so please say something kind to him about it when you come down to breakfast."

"That dressing table is for you to use," Rose told her before she followed Hetty. She did want to stay and hear what was said when she read the card attached to it, but her share of the work was waiting and she could not stay.

As Tersa looked at the dressing table she read a little home-made card attached to it: "From the family to Tersa." She could scarcely believe that her family could give her this elegant gift for when she had expressed a wish for a chair like the ones at school, Miss Love had explained how rare and costly such furniture is, and told her of Henry Ward Beecher, who once said that he could enjoy all the beautiful things he saw with no anxiety about them. The owners had the care and worry while he enjoyed them as much, or more, than they did. Tersa had accepted the implied lesson and made up her mind to do the same. Now, her wish had come true when she had given up expecting its fulfillment. It was just the way the northern people had things. A cousin of one of the teachers had received a beautiful writing desk when she graduated. It was just like other folks did. She ran down stairs and told the folks about it after she had thanked them heartily.

"I was going to coax you boys to help us girls make some kind of a one for our room, and we have one fit for a palace."

“Or the White House,” remarked Jim, who thought the White House better than any palace.

“Please tell me all about it, Bob,” coaxed Tersa.

“There isn’t time,” reminded her mother, “there is a busy day ahead of all of us.”

The family separated after family devotions and Tersa’s first task was to help her mother with the poultry. It was a treat to be out of doors, and she stepped gaily onto a large porch that was something new. It was as large as a living room should be, and shaded by grapevines.

“This is where we do all of our work that we can in warm weather and store wood in winter,” explained her mother in as matter of fact a way as if she were explaining arrangements to a guest who had never seen the place. She knew this was the best way to speak of the changes and improvements that had been made, for she wanted her daughter to take the surprises easily, without much excitement.

Tersa stared at the yard when she started for the poultry house.

“Pretty nearly as good as the school grounds?” called Jim as he passed with a team on the way to the field.

“Wait till I can find words to tell you about it,” she answered whirling around trying to see in every direction at once.

Everything was changed. The garden was well kept. Flower beds along one side bordered row after row of vegetables in a space much larger than the old garden had covered. A fence made of branches of trees fastened like pickets to a framework of larger limbs surrounded it. Beyond this was the grove where the pigs used to be supposed to stay, though it had kept the children busy chasing them out of the garden into it. Now it was fenced with a fence so tight that the littlest pig could not slip through it. She looked to see what else was new, and saw a large barn and cow stable. Beside these large poultry yards with neat houses scattered over them attracted her attention. The buildings were of planks. The old sheds were gone, and these well-kept yards and buildings surrounded by trees luxuriant in summer green were even better than the ones she had visualized when she lay at night looking out into the darkness and planning the

improvements she hoped to have made on the farm. And the orchard! Such an orchard left nothing to be desired. The old trees had been whitewashed and trimmed; new ones had been set out. Everyone was loaded with fruit. Cherries, ready to be picked, while peaches, pears, plums and apples covered other trees.

“Why, mother, that is the best orchard I ever saw. This is the prettiest place in the world. There couldn’t be another as pretty. Such buildings! It is an up-to-date farm. How have you done it in so short a time?”

We always looked forward to the day when we could have our farm like those back in Indiana. When you children were little the land had to be cleared. It was slow work, but the boys were doing their share before you went away. They cut and piled all the fencing up, and planned it as a surprise for you when you came home. There were no other definite plans, for it had taken all we could raise to feed and clothe the family. Miss Love gave Tom a large bundle of Sunday school papers and another of magazines when he took you to school. Some of them were agricultural papers. The seeds you sent from time to time and those papers revolutionized our ideas. There is not anything about the farm that something in some paper has not helped us to improve, or make over. The dear Lord must have put it into someone’s head to send them to Miss Love. I ask Him to bless and help the one who did it every day. It would have taken years to accomplish all of this without this help.

“It seems like magic. Everything is done that I hoped to persuade you to do.”

“You helped. You always described the new ways you were learning, and we followed your directions. I think Miss Love had more than one object in view when she had you write such careful directions about your work. Composition, spelling and those things were important, but she saw the value of giving us help through your monthly letters.”

“She must have. She is such a wise woman. I wish she could visit us some time.”

“I think we can arrange for that later. She would enjoy seeing how her plans have worked out. The vacation would do her good and it would benefit the valley. It is a help to meet the best people.”

"Turkeys!" No wonder the exclamation popped from Tersa's mouth like a shot from a gun, for the grove they had reached seemed covered with turkeys, large and small. "Where did you get all these turkeys?"

"Your father and the boys found two flocks of wild ones two years ago. They read an article that told how to domesticate wild fowl. In place of shooting them, they caught and brought them home. They have increased to nearly a hundred and more are hatching now." Turning to another yard, her mother explained that the geese and ducks had been raised from settings of eggs of the wild fowls that the children had brought home from the woods. "They read about woodcraft in the Sunday school papers, and no one had a better wood than they to practice in. They asked us not to eat the eggs, but to set them. Most of them hatched, and our flocks are large."

"Whatsoever He doeth shall prosper," repeated Tersa.

"Yes, the blessing of the Lord has been upon the work of our hands and brains."

"We can help the neighbors to learn your ways, can't we? Or won't they care to do better?"

"They all care a great deal about doing better. We have helped them as much as we could and they have helped us. They are helping themselves now. You can help us for we have much to learn. Money is rather scarce, but there is a strong spirit of neighborliness. The old easy going, dispirited way has left the valley. Do you know that verse in the Bible: "Then helped everyone his neighbor?" That is what the people are doing now. All of us are journeying toward the Heavenly Promised Land through our earthly Promised Land with the Pillar and Cloud leading us."

"Mother, I am so glad. You won't think I wanted to shirk if I tell you that I felt as if the work here was too hard for me, as if I needed more education and experience to do my part."

"Dear child, no. It has been all that the rest of us could do to carry the load with the Lord carrying His half. Don't think for a minute that the Heavenly Father was going to put work on you that you could never do. It looks as if He did that sometimes with people, but He doesn't. It is

the shirkers who will not do the share of the work He apportions to them, who place 'burdens grievous to be born' on the shoulders of tired workers in His harvest field."

"How could you do so much in the time I have been away?" questioned Tersa, accepting her mother's views unquestioningly.

"With God's help. When He finds people willing to be lead He leads them rapidly. When people are like the Israelites and try to work crooked politics and frivol their time aping the heathen round about them, they don't make progress in the right direction. Selfseeking is not known. All of us have worked for the good of the whole."

"When did you start the big changes in your way of doing things?"

"Right after you left. We missed you so that your father had his mind made up to go and bring you back the first Sunday. He changed it for we wanted all of you children to go to school, and felt that if we took away the chance God had sent, He would not send another. The other children must be provided with a way to go. We did not want other people to pay their ways. We should have preferred to pay your way, but we could not at the time and dared not refuse the offer."

"You felt as if it was charity to have some one else pay my way?"

"Yes, till Mrs. Braisdale convinced me that we are sisters in Christ Jesus. Then I felt better about it, but I am glad we can help the others ourselves."

"Tell me more about the way you started to do these things."

"Come and help pick the strawberries. There will be a good canning of them today."

"Enough berries of our own to can?"

"Yes, and plenty to have at meals two or three times a day now, with an abundance to sun preserve. We can by the cold process method."

"I should think we have," gasped Tersa, as she looked over the big patch, "sun preserve and cold process! Wherever did you learn to do those things?"

"Where we learned everything that we did not learn from the Bible, or your letters, in those blessed papers and maga-

zines. They explained the way so clearly and illustrated each with pictures, so that we couldn't fail. You will not see any preserves cooked down the way we used to cook them."

"Please tell me more," coaxed Tersa, picking berries rapidly. As that was what her mother had brought her out there for she lost no time starting the story.

"The Sunday afternoon after you left I took the Bible out on the porch to read to the others. I opened it at the lesson on the fragments. Others speak of it as the loaves and fishes, but the fragments mean so much to us, ever since, that we speak of it that way. Some way God helped us to see there were fragments that we neglected to use. We talked with the children about getting educations as we had never talked before. They had not known that I believed a way would be provided for each of them to go to school. They did not need urging for they wanted to go, in fact, they made plans that would help them to prepare for it. They suggested ways and made plans to use fragments of time. If Hetty or I would read to them at meal time they would read to us evenings and rainy days, and study a little every day. Hetty thought she could teach Rose, and give me more time with the older ones. She and Rose agreed to do part of the work you had been doing. That gave me time to make and carry out better plans. When a woman works too hard she cannot plan well.

"Your father had left the teaching to me, because the outdoor work required all his strength. Finding that the boys were interested he told them about college days. You know Tom asks searching questions. After he had listened awhile he asked his father why he had never taught them. This was such a surprise that he did not know how to answer. I suggested that his work had been very hard, and the boys offered to try to do more of the work if he would help them. While he was considering that offer I told them about the two prizes he won in college.

"Jim spoke up quickly, 'You were a bright fellow like that and took prizes in the subjects that we want to study. We are talking of going out of the valley this winter to work our ways through school because we want to learn about those things.' He didn't want those boys to leave the valley, and

he came out of his shell and got to know them and their ambitions. It was good for all of them. He promised to teach them through the fall and let them go to school during the winter if we could think of a way to get the money.

"Summer is always a busy time, but some one of us read to the others at mealtime, and a part of it was something we read over until it was memorized. We talked over all that we read. Rainy days were devoted to study. Work outside of the house and inside was reduced to the minimum. The neighbors came regularly Sunday afternoons, and enjoyed the readings from the Bible, with the comments different ones made, and the readings from papers.

"We had music. The old hymns did sound sweet as we sang them out in the yard to the accompaniment of Mr. Stanley's violin and Johnny Clinton's mouth organ. One of the boys expressed his appreciation of these meetings by saying that we were getting like other folks in other places. That set us to thinking, and we knew that we had to get a good deal more like the other people to keep those boys satisfied to stay in the valley.

"We talked with our own children to find out what they would like to do. They did not seem to have many plans, but the wishes they expressed enabled us to see that there must be concerted action on the part of all parents. Afterward we learned that it was shyness that kept them from telling a plan all of them were working on.

"Our crops had seemed to be our only source of income, supplemented by wild game and fruit. Better ways of using the latter were found, and none goes to waste. This gives the boys money of their own. There are many fragments that we are using to bring our hearts' desires to the community." Nothing more was said for a short time as the berry pickers were too far apart.

Later Tersa asked about the Sunday school. "Is Sunday school held in our yard yet?"

"No. We meet nearer the center of the valley, as that is more convenient for all. Can you tell us some new ways of teaching, or new things to do to make it more interesting?"

"Perhaps I can." Miss Love gave each of us some little folders with the words and music of several new songs on

them. She said that the day would come when we could have music and it was well to be prepared."

"The young folks will like that. They have hoped you could help them out with some new songs. You are not to take a class yet, but to be a helper who makes suggestions to teachers and tells them how to introduce new ways. That will help them more than if you took a class."

"I believe that is the best way, for my plans were to start from the beginning, and the beginning is finished. You have no lesson leaves, have you?" Tersa did not know why she asked the question. She did not really expect her mother would answer in the affirmative, and was surprised when she said: "Yes, we have lesson helps and Sunday school papers. More could be accomplished that way."

"Well, I wonder what next!" Tersa ejaculated.

"Her mother smiled as she answered: "There are a few other things, but you have heard enough for the present, and the girls are coming to help us. The crop is large; did you ever taste better berries?"

No, indeed. Where did you get the plants?"

"In the meadow. They are the old wild ones. Their size is due to cultivation, but they have the same flavor that they had when wild. The best flavor in the world."

CHAPTER III.

One day Mrs. McDonald suggested that a ride to the postoffice would do them good, and the girls and their mother rode over in the light wagon after the dinner work was done. Tersa had been brought home another way and she was glad to get out from behind the grove that shut off the view from their home. She was unprepared for the changes she saw when they left the grove.

"Why, mother, where are we?"

"Down by the Blair and Clinton farms. Surely you haven't forgotten them."

"No, but those large buildings. What are they?"

"I think that you must be looking at our new community school house and church."

"I must, if you have them."

"You are not dreaming them. They are right there," Hettie assured her.

It didn't seem as if they could be real, but there were father and the boys when they reached the buildings, and they were very real.

"Come, schoolma'am and see that little fireplace and stump you have been planning to use to demonstrate new methods," said Jim.

Tersa joined in the laugh for the mental picture that she saw of that stump and fireplace was absurd beside the large building. It did not seem as if this could belong to her people. She followed them as they took her from room to room in the basement, then over the first floor, and finally to the large auditorium that covered the second floor. They called her attention to the slate blackboards that were placed all around the walls of the schoolrooms; the home-made bookshelves in the little library; the comfortable seats and desks; the arrangement of the windows to admit good light and fresh air; the cloak rooms and closets; the furnace in the basement, and all that made the buildings better in every way than those at the Industrial school. She couldn't say

much for the surprise was too great, but she was delighted. Her folks were satisfied that she appreciated everything, and seemed to think even more of it than they did.

"Now, what do you like best? I hope you say the blackboards for they were the hardest to get, and are the best quality on earth," suggested Tom.

"Say the stove, Tersa. Say it is that big, fine range and the cords of wood in the basement," urged Jim.

"Speak for the library," insisted Bob.

"It's all of them. There is such an abundance of everything needed that I can't choose. I want to take them all in my arms and hold and stroke them."

"Some armful," commented Tom.

"What you have done is wonderful, and how much more I can help you do is wonderful, too."

"You are surprised, aren't you? We wanted you to be surprised," said Rose complacently.

"Surprised!" echoed Tersa. "Yes, I think I am surprised enough to satisfy all of you. I feel fairly stunned. I had dreamed of having a school building something like this in fifteen or twenty years. It is so much nicer than my dream building that it seems another dream."

She stopped and looked back at the building after they passed into the yard.

"The buildings are made for twenty years ahead," explained her father. "Some of the boys are going to learn to work in concrete, and then these rough plank walls can be covered with that. The heavy timbers will show, but that was intended. A small building would have been crowded now. It would have been unwise to build it when there is timber on every farm that is good for this purpose. We did not see it that way at first, but finally all of the people were of the same mind, and this is the result."

The church was another surprise. It was a sanctuary. The words: "The Lord is in His holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before Him," came to Tersa as she looked at the well-made seats and the finished walls. A beautiful pulpit held her attention.

"Some more of your work, Bob?"

"My offering to the Lord," he answered gravely.

"It is a wonderful offering." The walnut was polished until the grain was brought out in perfect markings in the satiny finish. There was something about it that made it seem to hallow the room. A carved angel on the front seemed to have life in every line. The face looked so familiar that Tersa soon saw that it was a reproduction of her mother's.

"Doesn't mother love this best of all, and appreciate your tribute to her?"

"She doesn't know that it is her likeness. Don't tell her."

"Not tell her? Why not?"

"Never mind why, just don't." No further explanation could be secured, and she was left wondering what it was that made her mother so indifferent to Bob's great work, for Tersa knew in her heart that her brother was a genius.

"Well, this is the end of a perfect day," Tersa sang that evening, while the family hummed an accompaniment and Jim played softly on his violin. The moonlight shone on their faces and the yard was more beautiful than in the sunlight.

"How did you do so much in so short a time? How could you? You are the most complacent folks over the finest buildings, and you act as if it is a matter of course for you to have all of these improvements, and the Deans and Barrs acted the same way. I can't act matter of fact about it. I feel as if the year of jubilee had come when this ransomed sinner returned home."

"It is a year of jubilee for all of us. We shouldn't like it if you did act matter of fact. If you had accepted everything with an air of 'Oh, yes, quite fine, but only what I am accustomed to,' we should have been disappointed. We meant to give you the surprise of your young life, and we think we swept you off your feet," exclaimed Tom.

"Well, you did. Tell me about it, father."

"It was this way. We held community meetings once a week after we became interested in reading together and talking over what we read, and planning to make practical use of some of the things we learned. Your mother talked schoolhouse to the women and girls whenever she saw them. They grew enthusiastic and talked it over at home. They soon had the men folks in line and commenced plans for a

small building as soon as we could get around to it. A small one didn't appeal to your mother, and she had us all dissatisfied with it before we had really started to cut logs for it. The work commenced that winter, so that the lumber would be well seasoned, then our prompter imbued us with the idea that we might be able to get a teacher before your four years were up, so we went to it and made a business of getting the timbers ready. Logs seemed to be what it would be built of until we read of a home-made sawmill. Finally the plans were made for the mill. It was built and a millrace made by the river. We had a regular fourth of July feeling the day we run the first lumber out in good shape. The boys brought their ingenuity to work and planned a planing mill. Rough lumber would never do for the inside finish and seats. Our ready money was gone. The women and girls came to the rescue with a double wagonbox full of sun dried corn and fruit. This inspired the boys to have a hunt. We had stopped hunting more game than was needed to supply fresh meat, because we wanted to protect the animals. This seemed to be an emergency, so we lifted the ban, although all were careful to avoid needless killing. The hunt was a success, and the boys felt that they had stood by their mothers and sisters to the best of their ability. The skins and meat sold for a good sum, and the fruit and corn brought more than was expected. The surplus was used for hardware for the buildings. That mill has done good work ever since it was made.

"The work went on. Everything that could be made, was made indoors in a big building we had built during winter—that is the next winter. Doors, window frames, etc. Early last spring building commenced in earnest. We had to work in shifts a week at a time on account of our farm work. Jim had everything figured out, and as so much of the lumber was sawed ready to be nailed in place the work went forward rapidly. It speaks well for our boy that all of his measurements were correct and nothing had to be changed. The buildings are well made, sanitary and comfortable. The furniture is up-to-date, although it was made in this out of the way corner where the rest of the world never goes by. Everything is ready for you to commence your work next week. You had better train the older girls for the first two

weeks, then have the smaller ones come. You will have your helpers started with less delay than if you tried to start all of the work at once."

"I shall be glad to begin as you wish, and I will try to do work as good as you have been doing."

"Never forget to keep your mother for your inspiration, as she has been ours. She never became discouraged, but it seems to me that she literally pulled the rest of us up on a higher plane."

"I will remember, although I do not know how she did it."

"It's a way she has," explained Tom, grinning impishly at his father.

"Tom has a theory that mother manages all of us without appearing to do so."

"Nothing like mother's way; some diplomacy," chuckled the oldest son.

Tersa was as surprised at the familiarity that existed between father and sons as she was at the other changes. They had always treated their parents with loving respect, but she had seen Jim trip her father, and Tom untie his mother's apron strings, and then gravely advise her about forming habits of tying knots securely, while she had listened attentively and thanked him as she gave him a handful of cookies, that he was maneuvering to slip from the pan she was placing them in to cool. None of them would have thought of doing these things in the old days.

"This is the way she did it. She studied the plans given in the different papers, then Jim drew plans that suited them better than those in the papers. You know he could always draw. He drew a picture of the way the buildings would look when finished. They used them for the talks she gave at community meetings. She told us that the schoolhouse should be larger than we need now, not smaller, for we should be able to hire teachers in a few years; that we had time to build a large one now, and we would all be much busier when we needed to enlarge a small one. It was better to use our trees for building purposes, than to cut them and pile them until a convenient time came. Our land was needed for cultivation, and would be productive if cleared. Always remembering to use conservation methods, and re-

serve the woodland we should need. She made us see a vision that came to her one morning of the valley people engaged in their avocations, and everyone doing a part with no time to waste. 'If we do not get the material ready and build now, it will take years later to accomplish what can be done in a short time now, for our boys and girls have almost reached their opportunity,' was the remark that closed one of her talks. It was the last word that was needed.

"None of us had given the subject of sanitation much thought, but with Jim's help she presented the subject of sanitary and unsanitary buildings. Queer that the article that helped us understand it the most came from a Sunday school paper. A sanitary building it must be, for our romping, healthy children must not become sickly because of unhealthful conditions in their schoolhouse."

When her father paused Torsa asked her mother if it was hard for her to get the others to see as she saw.

"No, for they all wanted educations for themselves and their children. Every family was anxious to learn all they could by study and discussion, and they wanted to send the children to a school so that they could learn more, and teach what they learned in school at home evenings. Father and I have been teaching the grownups and they have taught their children; now they want the order reversed in a measure. Your father is real proud of his men pupils."

"Mother looks real well satisfied when she speaks of the progress her women pupils have made," Jim supplied.

"We both feel that we have done what we could. It was your mother's courage that kept us up to the mark. It has been hard work to keep the farms going and be earnest students at the same time. The valley's one big bill has been its kerosene supply."

"It furnished light in more than one sense," Hettie added.

"We'll cut that down by furnishing electricity," Jim confided. "Honestly our fathers and mothers used to sit up and study an hour or two extra every evening for a week before there was to be a match."

"What kind of a match?"

"Oh, any old kind. Spelling bee, geography race, history contest, ciphering match. They had them every month. Talk

about reviews! Once in a while our respected parents stayed up more than the extra hours."

"Did they always win?"

"They did not. It was no one-sided contest."

"The others are as good students as we, so it was a fair race. One would win in one contest; others in another, but there never was a contestant who carried off all the honors. They were quite evenly divided."

Hettie who had enjoyed listening said: "I never shall forget the evening when mother sprung the plan for cutting the timber for the church while they were cutting for the school." The others laughed, and their father said: "No one else had thought of building a church for years. The second floor of the school seemed to be the place for religious services as well as for all other gatherings."

"Why wouldn't it have done?" questioned the eager listener.

"I believe that if we would have God's house revered it should be sacred as a house of worship. Those who were the most enthusiastic in working to have the church used for other purposes, are now deploring the lack of reverence the present generation shows for the house of God. They are not the ones who are to blame for they were never taught to hold it sacred."

Hettie resumed her narrative: "Mother said that it would mean harder work and more economies to build the church. Even if the prosperity of the valley continued, and greater prosperity came, it would mean years of hard work before we realized our hearts' desires.

"Neighbor Johnson said that while the plan was new to him, he gave it hearty endorsement. He suggested that a name to live up to would encourage our best efforts, therefore, let us name the valley. He thought that Prosperous Valley would be a name that would be appropriate for whatsoever we had done had prospered, and as hitherto the Lord had helped us, we had reason to believe that He would henceforth. Surely the Lord would bless us if we thought enough of Him to build a church when the assembly hall had seemed to be all that was required.

"Our leader caught the enthusiasm and had us turn quickly to: 'There Shall Be Showers of Blessing.' Everybody

joined until the countryside rang. The feasibility of the plan appealed to them, and the thought of honoring God appealed still more. There was no need of laying it on the table until the next meeting. It couldn't have been kept on the table if a weight had been put on it. When the decision was reached to take up the work at once the boys jumped to their feet and yelled: 'What's the matter with Prosperous Valley?' 'It's all right.' 'The valley's good enough for us.'"

Mr. McDonald took up the story at this point. "They commenced to sing, 'I'll Stay Right Here and I'll Never Want to Roam,' then they made us a proposition. They wanted a club house of their own. Think of it! Before you went to school those boys had not known anything about clubs, but that first bundle of Sunday school papers told about them, and had some good stories about things that happened in them. They read those papers in tatters and copied those parts and read them to shreds and then they knew them by heart. They made drawings of things the boys had made and constructed articles with these for guides, but they never breathed the word club before us grownups, until they followed your mother's example and took the meeting by storm. They offered to work hard for the school and club if we would deed them a site for a club house and give them time to work on it. They have a fine club house."

"It surely is like other folks," agreed Torsa. "I have heard so much that it seems as if I can't settle down to teaching. I want to teach, but I want to see all the improvements, and hear each one tell how the changes were worked out."

"Each in its order and each in its place," quoted Rose.

"Yes, that will be the best way, and the new helps appeal to me. It will be like a Christmas box to see and use them all."

Mrs. McDonald sighed. "You will have little to do with. I wish we could have a real library and the maps and apparatus needed."

"Mother, dear, we are better equipped in some ways than they are back at the school. They haven't as good blackboards, nor half as many. The scrapbooks you made would cost a mint of money if we had to buy them. The other things that the boys have made are as good as any that are

for sale. That peck of pawpaw seeds that Rose and the other children gathered and cleaned will be such a help in teaching number. I think they must have learned while they were getting them ready."

"We did. We learned how to make pint and quart measures from pasteboard boxes, and to count hundreds and hundreds," acknowledged Rose.

"Geography will be more interesting if we can make a home-made pantograph, and enlarge some accurate maps that I drew."

"There is one at your service that I made to use in my work as architect," volunteered Jim.

"Is there anything that you haven't made? If there isn't perhaps we can use directions I brought. Our school will be the best equipped in the state before long. That kitchen with its fine range is the greatest surprise of all. I am glad to have the honor of starting the school. I was sorry that I had to come away. I thought I should have to work all alone and knew I was not prepared for it. I should have remembered that God makes everything right when we trust Him. It commenced to seem easier when Tom told me on the way home how much the papers helped, then when you said my letters had been teaching you, I knew everything would be all right. Today in the schoolhouse that verse from Esther came into my mind: 'And who knoweth whether thou are not come to the kingdom for such a time as this.' God must have wanted me to come, so that the others could make better progress in their studies now when they need my help most. I am so glad I am home. It is the dearest place in the world."

The family had dreaded the effect disappointment might have on Tessa. They gave expression to their relief in different ways. Jim woke the echoes with his wild halloo; Tom assured her that she was needed more than she realized, and they would all stand by; Bob remarked in a matter of fact way that he would make a desk like her dressing table for a Christmas present for her; Rose and Hetty hugged and kissed her. Her mother cried on her husband's shoulder. These tears were the first her children ever saw her shed. When she felt the relief that comes from nature's

way of relieving overcharged feelings, she explained the strange occurrence.

“I have been foolish to think you would miss all the things we can't have. I might have known God was leading you. You haven't changed a bit, you are the same sunny tempered, unselfish girl who went away.”

No wonder Tersa gasped. Praise of this kind was unknown, and she had always been so interested in her duties that she had thought nothing about her own disposition.

CHAPTER IV.

Weeks passed merrily. The girls were doing their parts as student teachers. They liked this work so well that they were sorry to give way to the next shift, for it was necessary to have them take turns in doing this work so that it would not interfere with their own studies and recitations.

When Miss Love learned how large the classes were, and that the girls were assisting in teaching, she sent normal training lessons and helps to teachers. She wrote: I see that you will be dean of a much larger school some day if the valley is planning to have a school of higher learning. Your people are the sturdiest, most self-denying lot of Americans that I have sent a teacher among. You cannot imagine my surprise when I learned that they are living in their log houses, when they have mills and could make the lumber from their own forest trees for beautiful homes. The reason they are doing this fills my heart with a song of praise. Do you realize how much it means to you to have parents who deny themselves as yours are doing to build a schoolhouse that they can be proud of twenty years from now? And that church! When I showed those pictures and drawings that your brother Jim had made to a visiting bishop from the north, he told me to send all the helps I could for you would be leaders in the state and nation at no far distant day. He said he should tell the story of the use you have made of the papers and magazines wherever he had opportunity. He was confident that more people would respond to the appeals for literature, when they understood what these had done, with the blessing of the Master. It gave him a new line of thought. It is this, that the reason the work done in home mission circles has not always resulted as it was expected to do, is because the settlers do not know how to do better than they were doing. That it is a duty of the church to see that they receive the study helps they need. Selling good reading matter to the junkman is a waste that must be stopped for 'The Lord hath need of it.'

"I wish I could accept your mother's invitation to spend a month with you. I need the rest, but I cannot leave now. The girls who have entered school recently have not had the same home influences that you girls had. This makes the work harder, for there are no older girls to help me as you did.

"I sent your mother's letter to the lady in the North. If she had been able to keep on with her work, she could have given more money to our school, but I really believe she has done more by sending out the literature with her prayers. It was all she could give, and how our Master loved and blessed the gift. I am mailing a magazine that has been in a cupboard for a year, because I thought no one could make use of it. It contains directions for bringing pure water into the houses. It seems as if your boys can put in a system of waterworks at little cost. Surely those busy, intelligent mothers need it.

"Tell the boys to study out that electrical article. Wouldn't it be great if the valley could have a home-made electric system and waterworks?"

"It will give your parents many more useful years if it can be done. Don't let them overwork until they lose their usefulness in their best years."

The effect of the letter was electrical. The young people were so enthusiastic about it, when it was read at community meeting, that they took up all the time devoted to discussion. Tom finally voiced the sentiment of the boys when he said: "Three years ago we thought we had nothing but the few acres cleared for agriculture, the wild fruit that we gathered for home use, and the game we shot for the home table. Now, we know that we have comfort, and perhaps more than comfort, for all the people of the community if we conserve and use the fragments all around us. Some of them are of immense size, when we really take a good look at them, so large in fact that all the baskets in the state could not contain them. Our parents have put our interests first. They have said they must do for their children. Now, we answer back that the children propose to take a hand in doing for them.

"The tractor, with the farming machinery that it operates, means one-tenth of the work for the men folks, and much

less than they used to have to do for the women folks. If we look at only one kind of work that it shortened, look at the short time we spent threshing. Now, if there is something else that will make labor lighter, let us turn our attention to that, and see what can be done. Mr. Chairman, I move that these magazines are turned over to John Timmons, and that he ask other boys who have a turn for mechanics, or any other subject that will help in studying this out, to study with him and report as soon as possible." After the motion was carried he added: "None of us fellows could enjoy school if we knew that our being away made life harder for our parents."

"The rest of us fellows feel the same way about it, so I say to our committee, 'Go to it.'"

The fathers and mothers felt that teaching unselfish service to their own had brought back a blessing.

CHAPTER V.

Tersa sang all the way to school the next morning, and had the pupils sing an extra song at the opening service. The reason her joy bubbled over was because the boys had assured her that if they could make the thing go, the school and church should have systems installed. Then there was another reason. She had given up all thought of ever going away to school again, so you can imagine her surprise when her parents told her at the breakfast table that they intended to see that she attended school again in a few years.

"We hadn't intended to say anything about it yet," explained her mother, "but since Miss Love wrote what she did about you being dean of a college some day, we talked it over and thought that as our plans have worked out quicker than we have expected them to, it might be as well if you knew what you are expected to do. Then, too, you ought to study a little in order to be thorough. Father and I can help you do more advanced work."

Tersa sat speechless. None of them knew how she had accepted as inevitable the thought that poverty would shut her in the valley, as the mountains shut it in from the outside world.

Mr. McDonald broke the silence: "We talked of keeping you there. We could have done so if we had not built the church and school house, bought the community tractor and made the other improvements. It took all the money we could raise to pay our share. The boys wanted to give you their savings. We felt they could not afford to wait for their opportunity."

"The way to raise the money for your expenses may trouble you a little," suggested her mother, "so we make this proposition. If you know of some way that helps us to get better prices for our output, or if you teach us how to make articles, or to do better with the fruit and vegetables that we prepare for sale so that they bring better prices, you shall have your share to lay away for your schooling fund."

"I can't take it in that I shall ever go to school again. I gave all of that up to come back and help the others. You must not sacrifice more for me."

"It will not be sacrifice. You must find your fragments. It will come from the value of your services to the community. If your knowledge of prices of a better market help us to make more money you are earning your share. You cannot do any more work than you are doing. You will not receive wages for teaching, because you are passing on to others what was given you. Others who go away will have to pay their own expenses. The help you give them as a teacher will make those expenses less, for the better they are prepared the less time they will have to spend away at school."

"I can't take it in yet. I don't want to go away to school now. I am glad to do my part. I like to think that I am the pioneer teacher and that the work of education is moving on faster because I am here now. Possibly in future years someone will say: 'Well, who was that first spinster who taught here. She didn't know very much about teaching.'" After the laugh this remark caused had died away she resumed: "I am proud to be that first teacher, but more proud of my family, for they started the valley on the way to success. I can't think of anything I can do to start my fund, but there must be something. The Lord never failed when you two made up your minds that something had to be done. By the way, mother, Hettie told me the price paid for that load of sundried corn. The dealers made a big profit on that. I wrote Miss Love for the address a lady left with her. She promised a market for all the sundried corn as good as that you sent the school. She was so fond of it that she offered four times the price you received."

"I guess you're starting your fund all right," remarked Tom.

Tersa joined in the laugh at her expense. She had not thought of her share in the proceeds when she mentioned the better market.

"You children seem to find your fragments close at hand," Mrs. McDonald said.

"When they are such whales and monster loaves we don't deserve credit for seeing them," deprecated Jim.

"I wish you would tell me about your fragments," suggested Torsa wistfully. "I feel shut out from your plans. There is something going on all the time that I don't know anything about. I know about the community plans, and other boys and girls tell me theirs, but my own brothers and sisters are mum about theirs. Winter is coming on and I don't know any more about them than when I came home."

"We are willing to tell you, but mother advised against cramming that small head of yours too full. You see that if you were always taking in information, and never giving any out, your head would burst. The great idea has always been to develop our powers of thought and study, so you are being developed mentally according to the old family recipe," and Jim was away before his brother could shoo him out of the door.

"Suppose you take Torsa to the club house and tell her this evening. She has waited patiently to see it and you ought to be ready to show it to her now," advised their mother.

"What I was about to suggest," answered Tom.

"Do!" urged Hettie. "She can't tell anything about the arrangements, or see how it looks if you don't take her there till the opening night, and she needs to look it over to get material to use in her speech."

"What speech?"

"My dear sister, did you think you could be a guest at the club's first reception and not make a speech? One is expected from you on every occasion, if we are short of enough occasions, we'll make some. You must compliment the boys on the beauty of their work, the height of their aim, and the good that their club life will accomplish," and Jim's head was withdrawn from the door in time to dodge something aimed at it.

"You make the speech. You can do so much better than I," Torsa answered.

Hettie stopped the banter by pointing at the clock and asking if this were a holiday, or was the work to go on as usual.

"All right, domestic science expert, but you better learn to make speeches, too, for you are on the program for the second open night."

"I feel as if it is two holidays, but I'll work. O, how hard I'll work," and Tersa started to school.

The ride in the crisp air in the starlight was a rest and invigoration. The confidential talk with Tom that had been promised made the excursion seem "just like other folks have," which was Tersa's dear ambition. To have her folks have good times and do good deeds was what she loved best.

The club house was located some distance from their home, but near other homes. It was a commodious building, made of logs with split shingle roofing. Large porches, or galleries were all around it. The dining room, kitchen and work rooms were in the basement; offices, library and other rooms occupied the first floor, while the second was given over to dressing and rest rooms, and the large auditorium, with its comfortable gallery extending all around it.

After they had gone over it, Tom built a fire of pine-knots and hickory chunks in the library fireplace. They sat before it in two home-made easy chairs that were comfortably cushioned and covered with fur on the back and seats.

"We will talk first and look around again after the others come," Tom explained, "we are going to try out something new this evening. What is it you want to know, little sis?"

"Just what you want to tell me of your plans. When you sent me to the shelves in your room for that book on chemistry, I saw a number of books. They made me think you must be doing more studying than you could do at home. I hesitated to ask about it, but I should like to know."

"I shall be glad to talk it over with you. Our folks thought that there were so many changes for you to see and hear about that we had better put off telling you about some of them until you became used to the new conditions, and at home in your work. The changes came suddenly after you left, and they kept us busy. We would talk over what to tell you first, and how much to keep as a surprise, and the time passed along and we never decided what to tell and what to keep secret till you came home. Then when your letter came saying you had not much time to write because you were doing twice the amount of studying that you had done before you found you were to leave, it seemed best to wait till you came. We boys could hardly give up

a plan to keep you there the full time, but it seemed best to father and mother to let you come home and teach. I believe they were right, but Jim and I were not convinced of that until we saw how the work went forward by leaps after you took hold. It didn't seem fair for you to have to give it up, and we thought you would think it was not fair to have to come home when you had been promised two years more of schooling, while we, who are older, were to keep on at school."

"You don't believe that I feel that way now, do you, Tom? I prayed every evening that you all could have the chance to do what you wanted to do for yourselves. Are you attending an agricultural school?"

"None of that in mine. Do you remember what mother used to tell us about our great uncles, who were college professors, and grandpa, who was a minister back in Scotland?"

Tersa nodded: "Yes, that was what made me want to be a teacher in a girls' college some day."

"Mother told us often that our grandparents were educated people and wanted their children and grandchildren educated. Father's uncles were in the commercial world. I thought a great deal about those great uncles of ours, but more about grandfather. I made up my mind before you left home that I would get all of the education I could and some day I would be a minister. After you left I thought more about it, and how the time was passing, though I did study and memorize every book we had.

"One day we took the big wagon and went nutting with the children. It had the double box on. When we started to take it off the littler ones begged to have it left on because it seemed like riding in the cars. We left it. If they imagined that riding in it was like riding on the cars, we wanted them to have all the fun they could get out of it.

"It seemed to me that I couldn't go on the way I had been going any longer. I wanted to make better headway toward going away to school. I stopped under a tree and prayed: 'Oh, Lord, I want to preach the gospel to people in this state who haven't heard it. I would like to be better educated, and I wish I could start to school this winter. If I may

go, show me the way.' Just as true as you hear my voice speaking to you a voice seemed to speak right beside me: 'Look in your hand and around you. Here are your fragments.' I stared at the nuts in my hand and at those on the ground. 'Gather up the fragments, let nothing be wasted. Go, and my peace shall be upon you, and blessing, I will make you a blessing,' the voice added.

"Thank you, Lord, 'I'll do it right away,' I promised. I climbed into the tree and shook it so hard that the nuts rained down. The noise attracted the others, and they ran to see what I was doing that for when the ground was covered with them. When the last one had fallen that I could shake down, I dropped to the ground. The youngsters watched me, and Jim knew that something had happened.

"What did you do that for?" was all he asked.

"I told him all about it. He listened and all the answer he made was: 'Good thing wasn't it that father took the cart and we had to bring the big wagon. There is a pile of bags in it that we can fill after the double box is full. See here, kids, Tom has found the fragments that are going to give him his chance to go to school this year. Pitch in and help him and we'll all help you.'

"Pitch in they did and the work seemed to jump right along as easy. The team pulled the biggest load home that night that they ever pulled from the woods. What was the best way to get them to market? We couldn't figure it out that night. There were so many nuts in the woods.

"The next morning our answer came up the valley in the shape of an auto truck. The men were making their first trip. It was for the purpose of engaging produce or anything else that they could buy and sell. They wanted the nuts as soon as they saw them, and wanted to engage more. I told them we could fill their van every week, if they were willing to pay the market price for them. They hadn't expected to find anyone who knew the market quotations. I had learned it the evening before. They talked and talked and were determined to get them for a little of nothing. I told them at last that they could pay it, or leave the nuts. They paid it, and agreed to take all we would sell them.

"Marketing them that way meant saving weeks of time in hauling them to market.

“Father’s eyes kept asking all the time: ‘What is it, son?’ After they were gone Jim and I talked it over with father and mother, and asked their advice after I had told my story.

“Jim explained that we wanted as good an education as he had, and as our ancestors had had. We knew the others wanted one, too. They said that God was leading us and the only thing to do was to follow. They had been impressed with the thought that we ought to go to school each year, but couldn’t plan a way. They promised to do all they could to give us time to harvest the nut crop, for it was my chance to help myself. We gathered tons of the nuts. Rakes and other tools were used to speed up the work. Sometimes father and mother went along and took food and cooked dinner over an open fire.

“I was to go to the Stratton High School. The way came for Jim to go, too. The folks decided that it would be better for us to get rooms and board ourselves. We could take practically all of our provisions from home, and not put in as much time cooking as we would have to put in working for our board. Before we could get away to look for rooms Charley and John Speer, Joe Drew, Ben McAllister, Chester and Billy Robinson, Albert Sims and Greg McIlroy were ready to go, too. We didn’t need rooms, it was a house we had to have, and we got it. I’ll tell you more about that later.

“I believe I am called to be a minister, and that I can do social service work better than if we had not had it to do right here. What do you think?”

“I am so glad you have chosen the noblest work in the world. I am proud and thankful. You will succeed. It wouldn’t have been planned out for you by our Heavenly Father if it was not your work. Friends here have been telling me what a leader you are among the other young men and boys. That will be a help to you when you are in a new field. We will do our part so that you may have a fair chance to prepare for the future. I do hope I can get away long enough to hear you preach and meet your congregation. Aren’t you glad that our folks taught us? Do you remember, when we were little, how they kept us from learning the uncouth speech of the valley people, and had us teach the

children we played with to use nice words? I am glad father and mother went to school in Indiana. Supposing he hadn't found mother and brought her here, but had married some pretty girl who did not care for books. She has been a blessing. I always think of her as a 'light to lighten the gentiles.' She surely has been an incandescent lamp in this valley. How they love her."

They sat silent for a time looking into the future. Tersa broke the silence: "I am so glad we had this talk. We shall miss talking with you when you are away."

"You can talk to us. I'll tell you a secret. Some of the boys are almost geniuses. They have been working on a telephone system. If we had more money it would not be hard to put one through from here to Stratton, but we will put one through with little expense, then you can talk to us. Some boys are going from every family this year. We have rented a big house just outside the town limits. The line can end there without paying anything for the privilege. If we lived in the center of the town the company would not allow our line to enter. They don't own the country rights yet, and McAllister is working to get them for us before they get wise. Don't write to anyone about it, and don't get the habit of talking about it until we give you permission. You might make us lose our rights if you did. The line is far enough from the roads so that the produce fellows can't give it away."

"You will have a large family to plan for," Tersa ventured after they had dropped the subject of the telephone.

"Yes, but we are trying to plan wisely and be forehanded. A fresh cow and some poultry are to go along, and furnish fresh eggs, milk, butter, cottage cheese and all the other fixings we can manage to make that our folks don't bring us. Someone plans to come every two weeks with supplies. As there are several families, or so many families, it will just be a treat for the ones who are lucky enough to get to come, and it will be a treat for us to see someone from home so often."

"Yes, I used to want to see some one from home, but it wasn't much use to wish for it. What is Jim going to be?"

"I think he will tell you when he has the chance. Jim is a genius. He will become famous while I am making over my obscure corner."

"Maybe you will be famous, too. You know what the bishop said about Prosperous Valley? How much longer shall you be in high school?"

"I finish this year. You see father and mother helped prepare me for it, and helped me during vacations. O, here comes Jim and the others. We are going to try out that part of the line that is finished."

Time passed pleasantly as Tersa talked with other girls who had come with their brothers. Finally she was called to try the telephone.

"A lady wishes to speak to Miss McDonald," announced the boy at the board.

"Hello, Tersa, how are you this evening?"

"Why, Mary Dean, is it you? Where are you? I must see you right away."

"At home, to be sure. Where else would I be at this time in the evening? We have not reached the dignity of a club house yet in this valley, but we are coming to borrow the pattern of yours."

"Do get one right away, I am sure they will lend you the pattern. You don't know how good your voice sounds. How is your school getting along? Do you like it? Have you heard from the other girls?"

"Everything is all right. The children are eager to learn and are doing well. I hear from the girls once in awhile. Our boys are coming over to see that club house of your brothers very soon. I heard them accept an invitation this evening. I think I'll coax my brother to bring me along."

"Yes, do, Mary," said Tom over Tersa's shoulder. "We are asking them to come for Friday evening and stay till Sunday afternoon. Tersa and I speak for Dick and you to stay with us. Tell all of the other fellows to bring their sisters and we will give them a good time."

"There is so much more I wanted to talk over—"

"Never mind, you can talk when she comes over, and the line works all right to their place and a few miles beyond."

You can talk together often if someone else doesn't want to talk at the same time. Don't tell the others who we talked to."

"Why not?"

"Just don't, that's why."

"Can I talk to Miss Love?"

"No, I am surely sorry to say that you can't. The line doesn't go in that direction after it leaves Dean's, and remember, it's a secret."

"I'll try, but it is hard to remember everything in this modernized valley.

"Pretty good valley, and tolerably up to date, considering."

CHAPTER VI.

The open evening at the club house was a social affair on a larger scale than the valley people, and most of their guests, had ever taken part in, but they made the occasion the success that years of training in society's ways could not have made better. There had always been a fine courtesy among these people, the courtesy founded on the rights of others.

The young minister had arrived unexpectedly and was given as cordial a welcome as if his room was ready, and his support assured. He entered into the spirit of the evening, and gave a talk that won the hearts of all. He told them what he had expected to find. The bishop sent word that he was to come at once before the effects of an attack of pneumonia had destroyed his chances of restored health. "He told me that I must see conditions before I would believe them; that the surprise of my life was in store for me. That made me think everything was in bad condition. I came prepared to coax little children to learn their first lessons; to persuade boys that an education is a necessity, while I wondered what course to undertake to help the girls of the community to become interested in study. I find a cultured people; a valley awake and making gigantic strides toward higher learning. I have been treated with the finest courtesy, and the welcome you have given me makes me want to stay right here and claim you for my people, for your God is my God.

"The youthful school teacher expressed diffidence in regard to the work she is to do. It is a great undertaking, but there must be a strong public sentiment supporting her that will help bring success. I marvel at the thought of one so young doing what she has undertaken. Your community life in this secluded place gives you confidence to follow the Star as the wise men did. The health-giving climate has made you strong with a strength that will endure because your hearts and lives are pure. I am forgetting my regret at leaving school during my last year; forgetting the wrench

it gave to give up work in the slums of a city where Christ is so needed; wondering that I could think it a hardship to come away off here to work for my Lord. Perhaps I shall not feel that it is so great a hardship to be unable to go back at commencement to graduate with my class." The young man said much more than this for the valley had reached out for him, and claimed him for its own. He knew his lot was cast in a pleasant place with a man's job before him. An earnest prayer for the blessing of the Father upon them in their new relation came like a benediction.

He slept with the boys on fur rugs around the fireplaces in the big assembly room that night, and his sleep was the most restful that he had known. The boys stayed at the club to make room for the girls in their homes, and because they really wanted to spend a night there.

Mary and Torsa stayed awake to talk over all that had taken place since they parted. After Mary had told all about her nook in the world, and Torsa had answered the many questions she asked about her corner, Mary said: "To think that we all felt so sorry and cried, because you had to leave school and not be able to do very much excepting teach the younger pupils. Here you are teaching pupils nearly as advanced as you were, and you have the best equipment, a schoolhouse and church, clubhouse, telephone and electric lights assured. It was a surprise when the boys switched on those lights tonight, and put out those jolly big candles."

"It was a surprise to the rest of us. We knew they were working out different plans but did not think they were so far along. They haven't had the magazine long that told them how to use the waterpower to run the lights. We did not expect them so soon. One of the boys told me that they wired the clubhouse and got it ready and are leaving full directions with the boys who stay at home, so that they can carry on the plan. Each home can have its lights installed as soon as the fixtures can be secured. They are going to wire the schoolhouse and church right away."

"You lucky girl. If you could see my little schoolhouse. It is so rough and small and only part of the children can attend school at a time. I mean to create a sentiment for something better. You farthest away people shall not have so much more than we have five years from now."

"The way your crowd asked questions of our bunch tonight I think you will take home a strong sentiment that will insure the improvements before the time you mentioned. Your people have more ready money than ours because they have saved it and have had more cleared land to get crops from."

"Yes, they are saving it to build frame houses next spring and summer. When are the folks here going to build new houses?"

"Not at all, excepting for the few who marry. As early marriages are not favored now, it will be some time before there is a new house."

Mary turned abruptly, sat up in bed and looked at her friend. "Do you mean to tell me that with the buildings you have, your folks and the other folks will be contented to live in log houses?"

"That is precisely what I do mean to tell you. The houses are well made and the drainage is good. We have a builder in this place who had been an architect in a southern city until his health failed. He came here for the pure air from the mountains. He swapped work with the farmers. They helped him put his crops in; he helped them plan and put up their houses. They are sanitary. Additional rooms will be added where needed. Bathrooms and other modern conveniences will be put in. When we are prepared to improve our homes the intention is to cover the walls with brick or cement, or else to finish them up in a little better shape and stain the outside. Many may add larger galleries, but there are too many precious associations connected with them for new ones to be built in their places. Our people transmitted their love for their old homes to their children and may it be handed down to the next generation."

"I'll have to think all of that over. You chose the public buildings, so can we. Our homes are pretty good. I believe our folks could be persuaded to do as your folks are doing. Probably the only reason they wanted new homes was because they thought their children wanted them. We did, too; we wanted them like everything. Maybe we will all change our minds before we go home."

"We are going to show your crowd all over the valley; take them to the different homes, and have a dinner after

the community meeting in the afternoon in the schoolhouse. Our second floor is a community room that seats a large crowd. I believe that when our plans and the reasons are given, your crowd will go back a unanimous delegation to work for community centers first."

"I hope so and I am going to pray that they will."

"That is the way we got our start. Prayer has done more for this community than anything else. Mother prayed for a way for all the children to get educations, and for the improvement of all the families; that the children would be a blessing to the community and reverence the older generation."

"She did more than pray. Some of them were telling about her tonight. Folks say they owe everything to her efforts to start them in a new way to self-improvement, and to getting them so interested that they wouldn't step out of that way for a fortune. She worked hard for others."

"O, yes," agreed Tersa. "Mother never was a lazy Christian who expected the Lord to hand out educations and everything she wanted for the valley without any effort on her part. Do you know, I think it hurt her a little at first to have some one else pay my way to school and she is just as thankful as she can be that when I go away to school next time I can pay my own way."

"Back to the Industrial school?"

"No, I am going to keep on studying here and I believe I shall be prepared for college when I finally start to be a pupil again."

"Tersa, how old do you think you will be by that time?"

"Don't know. Depends on how long it takes to get other girls prepared to teach. Several leave for the old school the first of the year, and are ready to pay their own expenses. I shall be old enough to prepare to do what I am called to do. You know I am to go down in the valley's history as the spinster who taught our first school."

"Yes, I think I see you. Tell that to the girls. You will marry and have a family of your own."

"That's all sheer nonsense. I haven't time to think of such a thing. My pupils and my other interests here are enough to fill the mind of one mortal woman. Your proph-

ecy is doomed to fail for my work is my calling. Here it is five o'clock and time to get up and we haven't slept a wink.

"The day will not be half long enough; such a wonderful day it is going to be."

The visitors enjoyed the novel experience of being carried around the valley in wagons attached to the tractor. They were given the question hour that was a feature of each meeting. The discussion was carried on beyond the hour for they asked many questions. Plans were offered them and anything else that would help them in initiating the new enterprise they were determined to carry out. They were enthusiastic about everything, but the boys insisted that a tractor and machinery should come first in order to give them time for the extra work.

"We'll show you next year when you come over that we are making good. You folks have been real friends and treated us royally and we surely appreciate it."

"Are you going to wait a year to ask us over?" Some of the boys seemed to think that the visiting girls were worth calling on if they lived near enough.

"There isn't a building big enough to hold a crowd but come over in the spring and we will show you a good time at a barbecue in the grove where we hold our gatherings."

"You can count on us."

The evening was spent quietly in the homes for the custom of a quiet evening in preparation for the Sabbath was the delight of all.

CHAPTER VII.

Gerald McClintock, the young minister, was startled that first morning when he saw the church filled with a crowd of earnest worshippers. He felt the reaction that comes when one is keyed to heroic sacrifice and finds there is no sacrifice required. He had realized that it was a well organized church, when he met with the members Friday evening and Saturday but the full significance of progress that had been made did not dawn on him until he faced them from the pulpit. He knew now that he should have to study conditions; make over, or adapt his plans to the needs of a congregation well advanced in the Christian life. The music was a surprise. A perfectly conducted orchestra, similar to the one King David led, for the players were really praising God with the cornet, violins and other musical instruments, lead the congregational singing. He had heard good music all of his life and could not account for this orchestra back among the mountains. Soon he would know of the leader who left a career to come to this place seeking health for a loved wife. How he felt that any opportunity was gone forever, but felt repaid by the return to health of the one who had been his inspiration. Opportunity was waiting for him and lead him to walk along the river bank in the shade one Sunday afternoon. Some of the boys were under a spreading beechwood trying to play on a violin and a cornet to accompany a lad who was making music bubble out of a mouth organ. When the boys stopped to rest, the longing they expressed to be able to get some decent sounds out of their instruments made him step forward, sit down with them and play. They talked it over. Master and pupils had met and progress was rapid from that time and the old fiddles in many homes were found to be of unsurpassed quality. Other instruments were taken out of places where they had been laid away; new ones were being added gradually. Genius and application brought results that pleased the leader and made him see that he had been sent to the valley to teach these lads. He planned to send two of them out to go into

more advanced work when he had done all he could for them.

Sermon time came. Surely the text had to be changed, for the minister had prepared the sermon from one he had used in the north. He had thought of these people as wanderers away from Heavenly things, and ignorant of the Bible. The wanderings of the children of Israel furnished the subject and the text fitted sinners who hadn't repented and been saved by grace.

"The lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage," were the words substituted. Perhaps in no other way could the barrier of reserve been swept down so completely as it was by the boy pastor who told them of his life, the work he had been doing, and of that he had planned to do. He won their hearts completely when he told them how glad he was that the Leader of His people had guided him to them. He asked for their prayers and cooperation in the work they were beginning together. It was like one of their own lads coming to them and talking things over and each family made loyal response to the appeal for help.

"We will have a church too," announced the visitors. "This service was the most helpful of anything we have heard. Where can we get a minister who will be so glad to come. Our folks have written a few letters in regard to a settled worker, or preacher, and the answers read as if they thought we were calling them to a hundred miles behind the lines of civilization. Maybe Mr. McClintock can help us to find one."

"Be sure to ask him. You heard how he felt about coming here. The others were no better informed. I hope some one will be ready to answer the call for service without having to face the loss of health. You need a strong man for your work. We shall soon have our man so strong that he can undertake any work needed."

Mr. McDonald extended an invitation to the parents of their visitors to come and see what had been done.

"In behalf of all, I am delegated to invite your parents to come over next Friday and spend the week-end. The program will be similar to the one carried out for you and end as this will, with a community dinner. I hope that it

will prove a blessing to your families and I know it will to us. There is nothing more helpful than meetings of God's people when their hearts are filled with love and praise. We cling to the custom of having dinner together on Sunday for two reasons. It saves the work of each family going home for dinner and requires less preparation. The second is that we spend the day in service and rest and there is no hurry. We must join in sending the gospel to the other settlements. We have had two crowds here from the lower valley and West mountain. They became interested and have started the work. They are glad of our used lesson helps and papers. When the dominie is stronger we intend to lend him to them for a Sunday. As it is, a gospel team goes once a month and holds services and counsels with them."

"Where does this work extend?" thought McClintock. "I am expected to go and hold a service for these visitors some day, and another at each of these other places. I shall have to be a combination of deaconess, pastor and district superintendent all in one. How the work takes hold of my very heart strings. I love this eager multitude, receiving the Bread of Life, and passing it on, not in fragments, but a full supply."

Again time flew by and Gerald McClintock smiled at the preconceived notions he had entertained of his flock. He had expected to find it a rough, illiterate flock needing several shepherds and a few good sheep dogs. He stepped briskly along the walk that lead to the community buildings. He was comparing this with the muddy footpath he had expected to find. It was another evidence of thrift and forethought, for the stones and gravel that filled it were intended for a foundation for the cement walk the boys intended to make later. The whimsical smile at his own mistaken notions changed to a gentle one as he thought of these people so anxious to hear the word. Unconsciously he commenced whistling "I Love to Tell the Story." The words singing in his mind to this accompaniment were: "For those who know it best seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest." They did love to hear the story, and with God's help he would tell it to them so that it would never grow old, but continue to be their joy until they reached the unseen things above and saw Jesus and His glory. So engrossed in his thoughts was he

that he entered the assembly hall and was standing near a window looking out toward the Heaven above when he was aroused by a chorus of whistling. Turning he saw that the hall was filled with a company that was whistling in unison. Sweetly and clearly the notes soared. "God's orchestra," he called them in his mind. When the last clear note died he stepped onto the platform and prayed that the love of the Saviour would help them to do their best for Him. No other opening numbers were needed for they were ready for service. He made a proposition that seemed to come straight from Heaven for the help offered was so opportune.

"Now that the other settlements have secured pastors my time can be given to you, my people. My work as a pastor is lighter in many ways than is the case in most pastorates. I do not have to devote time to the finances of the church; the officers you elect are efficient; I do not spend time trying to increase my congregation, because everybody comes to church; precious hours do not have to be spent trying to coordinate the different church activities for you did that. In short, the pastoral work is about three-fourths lighter than is usually the case. This gives me spare time to devote to other work. I have been watching the school with interest. My own studies and the work in outside places has kept me busy, or I should have offered to become an instructor. Miss McDonald has organized and conducted the school in a creditable way. In doing this she has shown not only resourcefulness and ability, but daring, for she is doing the work that at least three teachers should be doing. While her physical strength is as superb as her mental and spiritual, she can not keep up through the years unless she is relieved. None of you expected her to change your world as she is changing it. She has worked out an unexcelled system. If she can be relieved of all duties excepting the training the girls for teachers and the work of being at the head of the Home Economic department, she will still be doing double duty. I wish to offer my services as teacher of her most advanced pupils. I believe I can do this and in no way decrease my efficiency. Three recitations a week are enough for pupils of that age, especially when they are so eager to learn that there is no shirking. I will hold classes three evenings each week for those who are taking high school

subjects. They can study at home and bring their difficulties to class. If Mr. and Mrs. McDonald and I work together we can fit these students for college. The conditions here in the valley are ideal for study. Influences are of the best; the stimulation of being at home and helping carry out community plans will be an incentive to do their best; the fresh air and wholesome food will keep their health unimpaired. Aside from that, expenses will be less, and better colleges can be selected when they are ready for them. I do not wish to interfere with the plans of those who have arranged to go to high school this year and next. It is time for you to accept or reject the plan. I will leave the room while you talk it over and make a decision."

Deliberations were soon ended. Mr. Heath spoke on behalf of the assembly. "Pastor, we want to tell you that your offer is a God-send for we would rather trust our boys with you than with strangers, who are not interested in their home life and surroundings. It means more than that for it gives to some the chance to keep up with the others. They could not be spared from home yet to go away to school. We can not be thankful enough for this opportunity God has sent. We appreciate your devotion to our young people and will do all in our power to see that you do not have to give too much time and strength to this undertaking. This work will help the community in the future as well as in the present. Our pioneer work has been blessed of God, and among His greatest gifts is you, our leader, counselor, friend."

Small wonder that the minister felt that these words were a benediction to be treasured and his people felt the same about the blessing he asked the Father to give them.

The different groups were soon on the homeward way talking the new plan over.

"Mother," Jim asked, "did you ever think God would pay you back in the coin you love best, when you worked so hard to start our community toward Christ?"

"Dear lad, no. I supposed it would take years of the hardest toil to do what has been accomplished in these few years. I surmised that we older ones would be worn out by the struggle; that it would require all the faith and grace we

could gain to help us endure the privations and discouragement."

"You don't find it an endurance test?"

"No, for my Lord walks with me all the way and turns my darkness into day, and then again it is soaring like the eagle, or resting beside still waters.— They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength."

"If they don't try to pull all of the burden from Christ's shoulders and carry it alone."

"Why, Jim, what a notion! Yet you are right, for one can try to bear it alone when He is so willing to help carry every load and make it easy to bear."

Again pastor and people met in the assembly room. The former did not know the object of the meeting, and wondered why the words "Whatsoever house ye enter, there abide. The laborer is worthy of his hire; take neither scrip nor staff" should float through his mind. He turned his attention to the opening remarks of Trustee Thompson: "Pastor, the members of the church have decided to make a proposition for your careful consideration. They do not expect an answer at once, but as soon as you reach a definite conclusion, they would like to know your decision. If it meets with your approval, it is well. In case it does not, we expect a proposition from you. The amount we felt should be paid for your service was not definitely decided until last night. A canvass was made and the amount each family was glad to pay was named. We should like to make the report now."

McClintock was genuinely surprised at this announcement. The bishop had told him that he did not know that the valley could pay a salary. They had paid him small amounts from time to time, and he had supposed that was all they could do.

"My people, I came with the assurance that food and lodging would be provided. I do not want you to pay me a salary. You are making tremendous efforts to reach a standard of life that takes all of your combined efforts. We will all work together until the time comes when you can pay a salary without hardship to yourselves."

"We have wanted a pastor, but we would not do so scandalous a thing as to ask for one until we could pay him his wages. You surely are earning what we have decided to pay

if it meets with your approval. If you are not satisfied with it, feel free to say so and we will see what can be done." He then named a sum of money that they thought a fair compensation for each year's work. This sum would have been considered a good salary in any place that McClintock knew anything about. He considered the offer for a few minutes. At last he spoke: "You are offering too much. I know the spirit of sacrifice characteristic of you and your families. I could not rest satisfied if I felt that what you pay me hindered your plans in any way. This is my home now, and I want to help the work along, not hinder it."

"Seeing there are no ravens here to supply your needs, we feel you should accept a man's wage for a man's job."

"There is one part that Thompson left out," contributed Douglas. "We do not want to seem unduly curious about your affairs, but if some one up north is waiting for a parsonage home here, we can cull more timber from the forest and build a manse."

The parson threw back his head and laughed. "There is no one. I am not old enough to marry. As I had to make my own way, I could not pay attention to any girl. I did not have the money to spend that seems to be essential in order to give a girl a good time."

"There is another matter the mothers wanted brought up tonight. They have tried to implant a respect for commencement and the honor of graduating from a university. They feel that if you do not attend your commencement, the young folks will think less of it. Your attitude will influence them. If you go it will bring inspiration to them when you tell them about it. If you do not care to go they may think it of small importance."

"Go back to it! Surely I will go back. I did not think I could because the only way to get there seemed to be to walk back and beg my food and lodging along the way. Since you insist on a salary I shall be looking forward to that event with the greatest anticipation."

The subject was dropped for they understood each other. They felt satisfied that they had done what any self-respecting community would do, and that he was overjoyed at their action in the matter.

The childless couple with whom the minister made his home saw a strange sight that evening. They were sitting in the moonlit room watching for their boy, as they called him when alone. He came running down the walk, swinging his cap, and when he was inside the yard under the shadows cast by the large chestnut trees, he turned handspring after handspring. The watchers understood, for they knew the purpose of the meeting.

"The poor lad," murmured Mrs. Seaton, "what he must have been going through to make him so happy over the news."

"The lad is a man in most ways. He has had to be a man all his life. It is a sign that the valley is doing him good when he lets off steam that way. I know he is ready to burst because he dare not let out a yell, and I am going to the door and be his yell leader." As he stepped out into the moonlight McDonald became to all appearances the sedate minister.

"Let her go, lad. Three cheers for the valley people and what's the matter with them?" Seaton's voice rang out in a yell that was loud enough to reach the group on their homeward way. They shouted in answer, after they had heard the church, the valley and themselves cheered in turn.

"What's the matter with McClintock? He's all right. Who's all right?" Cheer after cheer followed until it spread to every home, and horns and bells joined in the tumult.

After the loud noise had subsided the call: "The dominie's going to stay! The dominie's going to stay" echoed and re-echoed from house to house.

"Of course he's going to stay. You couldn't pry him out of the valley with crowbars," McClintock shouted back when a lull in the noise gave him his chance. And all the noise broke loose again for the boys had been afraid that someone would take their preacher away from them. It was the valley's welcome home to one of its family. "Bless the lad," said more than one voice, while the Seatons hugged and patted him and dared for the first time to call him their own dear lad. He straightway called them father and mother, and they were the happiest family anywhere around for the son they had always wanted had been given them, and "the solitary had been set in a family."

CHAPTER VIII.

Mrs. McDonald's prayer that she might find out who sent the papers was answered. She was a Miss Phebe Sheldon. She had been obliged to give up school-teaching because of bronchial trouble that resulted from an attack of pneumonia. As she could not give to missions, she sent all of the papers and good magazines that were given her to this school in the south. The postage was all she could give to home missions, and knowing the good that good reading matter does, she prayed earnestly that they might do the work a home mission worker would have done if one had been sent.

The McDonalds had finished reading a short letter from her that Miss Love had forwarded to them.

Mrs. McDonald called her the evangelist of that region because the literature had done such effective service.

It was merry little Rose who suggested a way to show gratitude for what she had done, and, incidentally to return a hundredfold in this life.

"If she isn't well, why don't you write and tell her to come here and stay. The air does make people well. She could visit everybody and have a good time."

"She hasn't the money to come," remarked practical Jim.

"We ought to send it to her," Mrs. McDonald said. "The valley owes her the chance to get well, and more than that. We can not do too much for her. I have talked with the other mothers and all of them have wished they could do something for her. We will take it up at the mother's meeting tomorrow afternoon and arrange to have her come if she will."

"I'll tell them about it at the father's meeting in the evening" announced Mr. McDonald.

"It's as good as settled as far as we can settle it," remarked Hetty.

A letter was soon winging its way northward containing the proposition that they hoped would enable them to make

return for a part of what had been done for them. The letter told how much she had done for them, and how much they wanted to do for her to repay her in a small measure for the benefits they had received. No better way could be seen to render to the Lord for all His benefits, than to pay her expenses to the valley and furnish her a living as long as she cared to stay. If at any time she wished to go back, they would pay the expenses of the return trip. A cordial welcome and loving care were assured.

She took the letter to her physician, who was a wise friend.

“Go at once. The sooner the better for your chances to make a complete recovery.”

“Suppose I shouldn’t get well, but die among strangers, penniless.”

“They will give you Christian burial. You may take it for granted. They are too tactful to tell you that, if they thought of it. Their firm determination seems to be to get you well. The air down there is lifegiving. You will think that you never breathed pure air before when you fill your lungs with the piney fragrance that comes from the trees. And the mountain water! I wish I could have a supply of it. There is no other water half as good. Don’t let your stubborn pride stand in the way. It is the very climate I should have advised if you could have afforded the trip and here you have paid for it in advance without consulting me.

That little girl school teacher needs you. Think of her undertaking to do all she is doing. You will soon be well enough to take part of the older pupils and she has all she ought to do in her domestic science work and teacher training. Those people are bright and apply themselves to study for they love it. There was a fellow named McDonald from some valley down in that state who went to college when I did. We were close friends. He could assimilate and digest more studies than any four of us. The boys used to say he ‘ate ’em up alive.’ He married a girl graduate at the end of his college career. She was of Scotch-Irish parentage, and possessed the most courage and executive ability of any girl I ever saw. When she made up her mind that anything ought to be done, she had us all doing her way. She made

us see that it was the right way. We were always helped in the doing, and the school was benefited."

"That sounds like the things Miss Love has told me about these people, in her letters. Was the school in Indiana?"

"It was, but the valley didn't have any name that I can recall. You find out if they are the same people and let me know. If they are they will consider it a privilege to do for you. What you did must have been of more real help than it would have been if you had sent them a million dollars. It has done so much for them that you ought to consent ungrudgingly to be a generous receiver."

"I believe I will. I am proud of my independence, but it is better to accept than to be laid aside in my prime. I have been praying for a place where I can regain my health and find work."

"The Heavenly Father remembers that you are of more value than many sparrows. He has looked out for you and for the ones you go to, for go you should. Accept the answer to your prayer, if it does not come in the form of a position with a stated salary. They will not make you feel dependent. The letter makes that plain. God leads in different ways than we choose, but they are always better ways. When you obeyed His command to 'Give and it shall be given you,' you gave all you could. You had always been liberal. Now, you are to receive what shall be given you. It is God's return gift. I believe you will be led into larger service for Him than you have ever known. Get some earnest girls here to take up your work with the literature, and send it to places where it is needed. I have never told you that it was an article in a sample magazine that led me to find a way to go to school, and afterward to medical school. No minister could tell of more instances of God answering prayer than I could tell from my own life. Poverty tried hard to bind me down."

"I will go. I'll start as soon as I can. Thank you, doctor. You've helped me more than you know you have."

"Be sure to write me if those are my friends. We couldn't write to each other in the old days because we couldn't afford the postage. If they are my old friends, my wife and I will spend our vacation with them next summer."

CHAPTER IX.

A second winter had come before Bob told the straightforward story of his aims and what he had done. Tersa and he were sitting in front of the fireplace. The rest of the family were at the social center. Books were laid aside, and she watched her brother daintily finishing a carving of a bird's nest. She looked more closely and saw that the nest was resting on a branch of Mountain Ash.

"You are making that design from the bird's nest that was in the Ash by the back porch last summer. Did you save the nest and branch?"

"No, I started the panel in the summertime. It was all done but the finishing before the birds left."

"Did you draw it, or just look at it?"

"No, I did not draw the design. I watched the bird and branch until I knew how they looked when my eyes were shut, then I commenced to carve them."

"I don't see how you can."

"I don't know whether I can tell you or not. I've always been out in the woods more than the rest of you and I always wanted to whittle sticks into birds and flowers and all of those things. One day I was whittling a rabbit. I was alone on the river bank. Rudolph Erlach, our Swiss friend that lives alone on the side of the mountain, came along and saw what I was doing before I knew he was there. He showed me how to make it better. He liked the way I learned what he taught me. He asked me up to his house the next Sunday afternoon. He showed me carving that he had done. It was great. The house was full of furniture and a big building beside it was filled. All of it was carved beautifully. There were panels to put in the walls of rooms. He said some one would buy it all some day. I wish you would go there with me soon. The walls and ceilings of the house are solid paneling. I can't describe it, but Gerry Mack says it is fit for the congressional library at Washington."

"Who says so?" The unfamiliar name puzzled Tersa.

"McClintock."

"The pastor? Why, Bob."

"He wants us boys to call him that. You don't suppose he wears his pulpit airs with us fellows, do you. Well, Swissy liked the way I fell for his work and wanted to teach me. I had no tools, but he made some for me. The rest of you can be what you want to be, but I am a woodcarver and that is what I am going to be."

"Good for you. I like something different myself, that is why I am going to keep on till I am president of a college. That will be something different for this part of the state."

"Something of a backset for the folks who wrote that this part of the state was the most illiterate spot in the country. Won't you want to quit teaching and get married? You won't? That's funny. Hetty will. She has had a hope chest for a year. I am making a real chest for her, but it won't be done this Christmas."

"No, Bob, I don't believe I shall ever marry. I've never told any of the rest of our folks, but I feel about school-teaching the way Tom does about preaching, that it is my lifework. I never see anything in the future but other folks' boys and girls that I am trying to train. I shall have a home if I live after father and mother are gone, because I love a home, and I can help more young people if I have a real home to welcome them to."

"How are you going to market your work? I am interested in that."

"Gerry Mack knows some people who are planning a home. He wrote about Swissy and I, and we sent samples of our carving. Swissy asked the folks after he came here, as soon as he could talk enough to be understood, where he could find a market. They all thought nobody would buy so he has farmed enough to make a living, and send a little back across the sea. He kept on carving, and now I guess he will make something out of what father and the other men thought was a waste of time."

"Hasn't Mr. McClintock heard anything from those folks?"

"Yes, but nothing worth mentioning. Do you think this panel would do in a house?"

"It would be lovely. If I had a home I should love to have a room that had wall panels like that. I should have it for my study."

"You would? What would you put on the other panels, supposing you liked the outdoors, and wanted the room to make you feel as though you were outdoors when you had to stay in it?"

"I'd have that panel right in front of my reading chair. On one side I'd have bluebirds and apple blossoms, and on the other, bobolinks and grasses. That would be one side of the room."

"You wouldn't want crows flying over corn?"

"No, I don't think so. Crows over corn seem lonesome to me."

"Lonesome?" Bob's tone expressed wonder. "Why, crows are company when you have to be out in the field alone in the fall. It would be lonesome without them. They caw and answer a fellow when they get used to him. Two of them hung around all fall, and they come when I go to the woods now. Funny that you get lonesome when you see them, and I get lonesome if I don't."

"What else would you put in the room?"

"I don't think I should put those things you spoke of in the room I'm planning. Swissy and I don't plan like that."

"How do you plan?"

"We plan from the things we like to see. One panel has crows flying over growing corn; another has bluebirds and pussy willows; a third has a chipmunk on chestnuts and leaves; the fourth is two bobolinks on oats. The long one for over the mantel has rabbits playing in clover, and butterflies flying above them. One over the desk has squirrels and jays quarreling in branches of pine cones. The last one is of the squirrel that chased around in that cherry tree. You remember how he used to sit on a branch away up in the top of the tree and eat cherries? I carved that. Gerry says it is so real he can almost hear the squirrel chatter. We sent those, if they suit, may be they will like others." He was well satisfied with the choice Tessa had described, for he hoped to make a desk and panellings for her, a piece at a time, to be given at Christmas or birthdays.

"When will you know if they take them?"

"Can't tell. If it takes him a long time to make up his mind, and see if they are as good as others he can get, or if he is away, it will take longer. Then the answer has to come back. Gerry says we just have to sit tight and wait, but I wish I knew now."

"I wish so, too. If he takes them you will be rich."

"Slow way to riches. Swissy will furnish the most panelling. Gee, I hope he takes them and wants my furniture. If he takes, we are sure of a market. Gerry says he's the kind of a fellow that advertises by telling his pals where he got it. That is his way of helping to develop American art and industries. He buys good American home-made articles, and gets other folks to do the same."

"I like that in him. It seems so patriotic."

"You know how your dressing table and father's and mother's desk look. I've made a lot of other furniture like it. O, I don't mean a truck load, but there's a bunch of it."

"Where is it? I haven't seen it."

"Why, it's in my shop. Yes, I said shop. It's that little house you call my den down there in the grove. Yes, I made it myself. Of course, I did. You needn't be so surprised," although he knew very well that it was a complete surprise. "Did you think the rest of you could do all the things you are doing, and I have nothing to show but the work on the farm? That's where you are all wrong."

"You never told me. Do our parents know about it?"

"Sure they do. Do you think anything could be going on around this farm and them not know anything about it? I wanted them to know. Mother thinks I fritter my time away, but they decided they could use the furniture I made when the rest of you went to housekeeping, so they let me keep on, provided it did not interfere with my share of the farm work, and I studied and recited to them. It works all right. Study and farm work are easy for me because I always learn something that helps me with this. They help me to think and plan better. I have seen in a flash what would fill some place I needed a different design for, or the whole scheme of a room has worked out while I was plowing or reaping."

"Our family seems to have diversified talents. I am surely proud to have such a genius of our very own. You have been given a gift from God."

"That's what I think." The boy turned with a look of exaltation on his face. "That is the way I feel about it. God gave me this work to do and I must do it. It calls me. When they were so opposed to it, I quit, but I couldn't stay quit. Father finally told me to keep on with it, and mother stopped showing me advertisements of factory furniture at low prices and giving me readings on the earnestness of life, and the nobility of labor."

"Maybe they see it differently, and maybe they are letting you follow your own bent, not quite sure how it will turn out. They may not praise for the same reason that they never praised any of us very much. They believe with the psalmist that our works praise us, and we have our reward in seeing the result."

"Likely you are right. All the same I'm glad you said what you did. It helps a lot to have home folks believe in me. I meant to give each of you a piece of furniture for Christmas. Gerry said I had better try to sell it. That all I could sell now would advertise my work better. He was sure all of you would feel the same way if you understood. Won't it be great if he does buy?" Bob's mind kept turning back to what meant to him keeping on with his loved work or putting it aside and only doing it once in a while.

"Does Swissy have any share in your furniture?"

"Not so that you'd notice it. He never saw most of the pieces till they were done. He taught me, but he don't want pay for it. He said it was so good to have company; some one who loved to make the things. He has one room that he fitted up like a furniture dealer does a big window. He said when any one wanted to buy they could see it better; the panels are fastened so they can be taken off. The furniture is Swiss; like in best room over there. There is a queer settle, stools, chairs and a table. He even has a fireplace of split boulders. He can't take that out, but he has the stones ready for one just like it."

"If he sells will he go back to Switzerland?"

“Not on your life. He is a citizen of the U. S. A. He has two little orphan grandchildren over there. He couldn't make enough money to send for them. He sent the little **ne** made to pay for their keep. We never knew about it till I taught him to speak and read and write English to pay for my lessons. I guess the folks would all help if they knew, but he is working it out his own way. He has always been confident that somebody would come here and buy his goods, after he found he couldn't send them to be sold. The boy has learned carving and the girl is making some sort of fancy stuff that will help out in the rooms.”

“Why didn't he work on the farms and get the money?”

“He got sick coming over and has never been strong till lately. That's why. They are good kids. He tells me what is in the letters he gets once in awhile. They pray and believe that God will let them come over. Religion is just the same when folks really have it.”

The return of the others stopped further conversation. No chance came to speak to him about it again until two weeks later, when they met at the gate one day after school.

CHAPTER X.

“Any word yet?”

“No, and we both looked for it today. We wouldn't believe at first that there wasn't a letter. Swissy was sure there was one. He was all excited and kept saying 'It is coming; the word is coming; it is a good word.' I just left him. The last words he said were 'We hear tonight,' but we can't, you know. He always has been right before when he was sure something was going to happen. A cog has slipped somewhere and tied it up.”

“Maybe you will. Word might come over the telephone.”

“Not likely. Hello, there's Gerry Mack by the living room window. Wonder what he comes so often for?”

The pastor had brought a friend, an old school friend, sure of welcome. The newcomers gave him the cordial welcome characteristic of the house of McDonald and Winthrop McDerwent knew it was sincere.

The supper and the conversation that accompanied it were a treat to the guest, although he was accustomed to the best of both. Questions that were arousing the attention of thinking people everywhere, were discussed with wisdom and foresight. Where did they get the breadth of view and powers of discrimination? Mr. McDonald talked like a statesman and the other members of the household showed an intelligent understanding of each subject. No superficial views were presented; every remark left the impression that the subjects were understood.

After supper Gerry asked if Bob had seen Erlach.”

“I came from there at supper time.”

In reply to a question as to what he was doing when Bob left, he replied that he was looking for word from the north. He was sure the carrier would have a letter from the noon train.” but he didn't and I never knew Swissy to fail before when he was so sure something was going to happen.”

“He must have been right this time,” observed McDerwent.

"He simply couldn't fail this time," affirmed McClintock. "Call him over. I am sure his answer is somewhere near."

Bob seated himself by the fireplace and his face settled into stubborn lines. They could have all of the fun out of it they could get, but he wasn't going to join in against his friend.

"Rose can call him. Perhaps you have a wireless" scoffed Bob.

"Please do, Rose," requested McDerwent, "I am sure it came on the noon train and the carrier brought it over."

Bob was quick to sense that there was something he did not understand.

"Did he lose it and you fellows find it? If you did why didn't you give it to me as soon as you came," and the impatience Bob showed for the first time gave the others an inkling of the suspense he was enduring.

"We must have Swissy. You know he is your partner in one sense," reminded Gerry.

"All right," was the brief answer and Bob made no further remark, but gave his attention to a piece of wood he was fashioning into a snowbird.

The others kept up the conversation until Erlach arrived all smiles and breathless.

"You ran all the way?" Tom asked.

"Sure. I waited so many years. First to send for my children; then they are dead and I want my grandchildren. When the good news is here, then I hurry for I want my little ones."

"It may not be good news," cautioned Mr. McDonald, who could not take it in that there could be much of anything in it.

"It is good news. I know since Thursday."

"Yes, it is good news," McDerwent assured him. "I am the man who has your carvings. I was away from the city and did not reach home until Thursday. I found them on my return and knew at once they were what I wanted. They are much better than I had thought they could be. In fact they are equal to any I have seen in the old world. If you are satisfied with the price I offer I will buy them. I am eager to see more of your work, whenever you are ready to show it to me."

"All right" Bob answered. "We will go right down to the shop, then we can go and see Swissy's."

In this matter of fact way Bob took the news that he had been recognized as one of earth's great geniuses.

McDerwent marvelled; the words of praise and appreciation hushed on his lips.

"He takes it as a matter of course," he said to Gerry as they walked toward the shop.

"Outwardly, but he is alive inside. As far as I know he has had no words of praise, with the exception of those I have given him. He has lived so close to nature and nature's God that he has understood that he possesses a great gift. It is his simple, straightforward nature that shows itself now but look at that Swiss caper."

Erlach was making up for Bob's quiet acceptance. He was skipping about, keeping time to a tune he was whistling, when suddenly he commenced to yodel.

"Genuine mountaineer all right. That's the way they do that in the Alps," was McDerwent's comment.

"Ah!" The long drawn out exclamation was the only sound that McDerwent made as he looked about the room in the shop that Bob led them to. Walls and ceilings were covered with panels of delicate carving, the furniture corresponded. It was like, and in a way unlike, work that he had admired in Europe. The difference was in the designs. Vines covered with the open seedpods of bittersweet, twined around chestnut burrs, late asters and goldenrod. It was a simple design but the arrangement was perfect, while the carving was exquisite. "What is this wood?"

"Basswood or Linden."

"Where did you get the design?"

"I made the furniture a little different from the pictures in a magazine."

"Yes, I notice a difference in it and the furniture I have seen, but the design of these decorations. Where did you get them?"

"Where they grew."

"You mean that you copied these from nature?"

"Yes."

"They look alive. It is perfect."

"They were alive when I used them. That long vine of bittersweet grew along the limb of the tree."

"Bittersweet is a bush, isn't it?"

"Not this kind. It is a vine."

"The boy is an artist," breathed McDerwent to his friend.

"Yes, he has not only the eye and skill but the soul of one."

"He has great creative genius. This is remarkable work." Bob threw open a door and exhibited another room full of his work.

"I want it," McDerwent announced after he had looked at it carefully. He turned to Bob's parents. "Mr. and Mrs. McDonald, you are the parents of a genius. His work is equal to any I have seen and I have made it my business to see all I could of the best in the old and new world. His creative genius makes it seem a marvel that, living here away from all artistic influence, such work should be produced. He has had one of the best teachers, but he is richly endowed."

"We have seen that he did good work, but we did not realize that it is as good as you say. If he is a genius he has developed the way God develops most of that kind with nature for the first teacher. Son, I am sorry we did not understand about your work: that it is a lifework."

"That's all right. I thought you would understand some day. I never could give it up, though I tried when you were so down on it."

His mother drew him into her arms and kissed him tenderly. "Bobby, my little man. I am sorry that I couldn't see it was a God-given talent. I ought to have helped you, but I didn't understand."

"That's all right," again answered the tall broad shouldered fellow. "You thought I should be a farmer, and it looked to you like a waste of time and strength to see me working with my woods. You had so much to do to get the rest started and keep them going, that perhaps God took care of starting me, because he saw you had all you could do to help prepare the rest for their lifework."

"I wonder," murmured McDerwent.

"He did a good job without your help," teased Tom who enjoyed his brother's vindication. The approval of a man

of McDerwent's ability to judge the best, made him think of the times she had upbraided Bob for his shiftless waste of time and strength.

"Yes, he did a much better job than I could have done."

"You will have to take a little credit, for you used to talk with me about the way God made the birds and flowers and put each part together, when I was a little chap. That started me to finding the different parts. You taught me a Heavenly Father's love of the beautiful and the nicety of the designs' 'each in its order and each in its place.'"

"Mother scores again," laughed Jim.

Erlach urged them to come over to his house and see what he had.

"It is eleven o'clock," expostulated Mrs. McDonald. "Tersa must go to bed and so must all the others. The boys will have to get an early start back to school in the morning."

"All the more reason why we should go tonight. You womenfolks can go to bed. We shouldn't sleep if we did. It will be three weeks before we are home again, and we want to know how this goes."

"Yes, yes," urged Swissy, who had been waiting as patiently as he could. "All the boys my good friends. Let all the boys come please."

McDerwent added his word: "I should take it as a personal favor if you would consent. A part of my errand is to find someone who can take up Christian work in a very illiterate community. I believe your son Tom is the one to take up this work. It is not so far from here. A friend of mine read a letter of Gerry's telling how work is done here. He wants to try it from the start. He will finance it. The help this will be to your son is inestimable. He can begin in the summer vacation and work till time for school each fall until he makes it a permanent work, if he wants to undertake it."

"Take them along. The ride in the fresh air may make up for some of the sleep they lose, and they are strong lads."

"Your son will do his part better in the world if his strength is conserved by the help my friend wants to give him. He is financing the work in another locality. The results are most encouraging. A home missionary struggling

along without adequate financial support for the work he could do if he had a little money is seriously handicapped, and often gives health, sometimes life in the struggle. My friend has built and equipped a combined school and church, furnished a library and other things needed. These help the preacher do ten times the work he could do without them. He sent farm machinery that is passed from one farmer to another. They work together and the spirit of helpful service develops."

McDerwent's surprise when he saw that they were to ride behind a tractor, was genuine.

"What will you wonderful people show me next?"

"The scenery by moonlight," promised Tom.

Erlach's home was a greater surprise. "It is a Swiss chalet," he exclaimed. "There are the balconies, and the outside stairway under the wide projecting roof. That is a good example of the better class of Swiss homes. You boys have grown up with a piece of architecture that many have to cross the sea to find."

After they had seen all the house contained they sat down to talk it over. "Would you come back home with me and build a fireplace like that in my home?"

"Yes, if you like."

"How much of this furniture will you sell?"

"All of it."

"All? You will have nothing left for yourself."

"Yes. I have enough left that I will never sell."

"Could you get paneling ready like this?"

"I have much panelling; much furniture stored away. I work, work from early morning till late evening."

"We will come tomorrow and see more."

"Sure thing."

"I will buy what is in these four rooms, perhaps more."

"O, then I send for the little ones quick. It takes letter so long to go, and so long for them to come. Will you fix it so I send this week?"

After receiving answers to questions, McDerwent said: "I have a friend in Switzerland. If you let me send to him, your grandchildren can get here quicker than if you sent a letter."

He consented gladly after the matter was explained to him.

"You send for them. The little ones are alone working in the village. I want the little ones here."

"Think of it, that with these priceless things all around him he had a son and daughter die from hard work and privation. The little ones may be overworked and underfed. Gerry, I'm going to start things flying tomorrow to get those children over here just as soon as I can, if I have to send my agent over after them."

"Mac, I know now why you are the steward of so much money. Your Lord knew He could trust you with it for his other children, who hadn't had a fair start."

"You do much for me, I give you these," and Erlach placed little cabinets of exquisite workmanship in the hands of McDerwent and Gerry.

They understood and accepted the gifts in the spirit in which they were given.

"Won't the future Mrs. Gerry like this on her living room table," chuckled the parson. "We'll always keep them to remember you by."

"Sure, I always remember you, too."

"Whew!" from Jim when they were putting the tractor away. "Swissy is rich and our Bob has a bigger sum of money than I ever thought he would have."

"You mean he will have. What you going to do with it, Bob?"

"I want to buy that tract of land across the river so that it shall not be cleared for farming. I'll make a payment on it with the money I get. Then I'll build a house and live there and conserve the wood I need for carving. I can go on with my work and study nature for new designs and inspiration all my days. I couldn't if I stayed here for the forests are being cleared away too fast."

"But you're not going to live alone?"

"No, when father can get along without me I'll be old enough to marry."

"Who?"

"The girl who has always believed I wasn't shiftless," and that ended the information the boys were able to get.

"To think," grumbled the boys at the before daylight breakfast the next morning, "we've got to go back to school and leave this history in the making for three weeks. It's a shame."

"Why couldn't he have come sooner, then we could have known all about it."

"Console yourself Tom, with the thought that your work among rough mountaineers is to be speeded along by the help of a new schoolhouse, and many other things that we had not hoped for."

"Mother and father, pray hard, that nothing may happen to make this help fail. It's going to mean so much to the work."

"God won't fail you, lad. We have been praying that some of the Lord's silver and gold should be sent to help start and carry on your work in the new place. Just keep on the way you are, and God will send the help you need."

"Maybe there is someone who can go down now, if the gentleman wants to start the work at once. He has someone who can teach, if not preach, and it is sorely needed."

"I am going up there the next two Sundays with a boy from there who is at school. The folks sent word for me to come and start preaching now."

"Why didn't you tell us before?"

"I thought I would wait and see if I could preach a little to them. I feel that it is my place to work, and that God will help me for he sent the call. It seemed an accident that this fellow and I were studying the same subject, and that led us to talk on the way home from the library one evening."

"Here," said Hettie, placing a box beside him. "This is full of picture and scripture cards, and primary papers. You must have been the one the children brought them for."

"Good. I can use them. He says they haven't anything at all."

"The valley must go right to work and fix up a box for Christmas," Tessa declared. "I will start them right away, and such a box! Big and full of things useful, things sweet, and things to play with."

"The work is begun. Then helped everyone his neighbor and the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that

smootheth with the hammer, and him that worketh the anvil, till it was ready for the soldering, and they fastened it with nails that it should not be moved," read their father at morning prayers. "May we, Lord, always be as ready to help others as we are now, and may Thy spirit go before into the valley and prepare the people for the message that God is their friend," he prayed.

Rudolph Erlach could hardly believe that the large sum McDerwent paid was all his. When assured that Bob had been paid separately, he insisted that the money was too much. Convinced at last, he said brokenly: "O, if my wife and children could have had some of this they would be alive yet."

"That's the sorrow of the world, that money always comes too late for some who should share in it," sympathized McClintock.

McDerwent turned the man's thoughts away from the depressing subject by asking him to build a chalet for him.

"I like to live here; rather stay by good friends I know long time. Nice folks for the little ones to know."

"If I can find a piece of land for sale I will have it built here on the side of the mountain."

Bob told him of land for sale.

"Father had a letter from the owner. He used to live here. He wants to sell and the price is reasonable."

"I'll see your father about it today. Now, Erlach, will you build a house like yours for me?"

"Sure, sure, if Jim draw the plan, we make it fine."

"Inquiry satisfied McDerwent that Jim was the architect he wanted, and he telephoned him that evening."

"Glad you can put work in Jim's way. He is a steady, capable fellow, and there is little of the work here that he is best qualified to do. I do not know if he will be an architect, but he has done all of that work on the community buildings. His work will be satisfactory to you, and the pay will be a Godsend to him."

"If he is like the rest of the family he will be accurate in anything he undertakes. I shall be glad to secure his help. The secret of their success is that they seem to know the work they are best adapted to do and stick to it, and give it their best efforts even when they see no chance for advancement."

"Gerry, will you explain this people to me? What is the cause of their simple greatness? What makes them different? I have visited different localities in the interest of Americanizing the people, but I never saw anything that could have been like these valley people were at any stage. I came to buy more, if I liked it and the work was good. I thought they had sent their best, but find they have some even better. I intended to visit you for a little while, then go back. Here it is over two weeks since I came. I never saw people I liked as well. If my wife and baby were here I should not want to leave."

"Then come and live with us."

"I'll think it over, if the spell of the valley holds I shall make it my home. I like the life here. What makes it the way it is? There is something different back of it all."

"God and the McDonalds. They have had the faith that removes mountains of difficulty. They made their requests known unto God, and as their prayers were answered, He gave them visions of what he was willing to do for them and for others through them. When they needed outside help, God sent a lady to the valley. They were automobiling and turned in at the valley entrance. It was not the way they meant to go at all. The beautiful scenery attracted them and they motored here, not realizing that they had lost their way. They stopped at the McDonalds and were their guests for some time. They were interested in the family and wanted to send Torsa to the mission school. Mr. McDonald told his wife it was the answer to their prayers and they dare not refuse it. Tom took Torsa to school. The principal was attracted to them. Tom asked her about the studies and for something to read. She gave him some papers and magazines. When she saw how eager he was, and how intelligent the questions were that he asked, she gladly gave him a large bundle of reading matter to take home.

"Our teacher, Miss Sheldon, had collected all the papers and magazines she could get and supplied the school. They proved to be the counselor and guide the people needed. They were read to tatters and many of them memorized, and you see the results. The valley's undeveloped resources have been found and developed. Value has been seen in

things they thought worthless. Their fragments, as they call the things they made what use of they could and let the rest go to waste, have been conserved, and used to pay for educations. They make the most rapid progress in their studies of any people I ever saw. They give back in good measure. A chance is sent them to help those who have helped them. Miss Sheldon was sick and would have died in the north, her physician said when he and his wife spent their vacation here last summer. When the valley people heard of her poor health, they brought her here, for she was almost destitute, and she regained her health. She is a teacher of unsurpassed ability. But it is God back of all of them that has been the great power. He loves them, and they love Him. They seem to me to be the type that God loves best, for they love Him so."

Looking across the fields as they stood thinking over God's valley people, McClintock saw Bob standing watching some object. Whipping a pair of field glasses out of his pocket, he watched him for a short time, then handed the glasses to his friend.

"Visualizing that bluejay and crow. He will put them somewhere and there will be the life in their lines that he sees now. God's pupil."

"It is the education every youth could receive if our artificial systems were done away with, and individual traits and tendencies given a chance."

The years go by in the valley, and what Jim and little Rose are to be is finally told to Tersa, but you must wait till later to know. Tom and Mary are in their home in their community, and it is turning to Christ.

Swissy's little ones are with him, although they were not so very little, as they were at the teen age, and they are a loving family living in comfort and happiness.

Gerald McClintock has stayed among his people although there have been calls from other places. He found the work of keeping lives pure, and educating children, well worth his earnest help. He has a wife who understands the aims and ambitions of their parishioners as fully as he. She is as greatly beloved as her husband, which is another unusual circumstance.

“Tersa McDonald?”

No, indeed. Don't you remember what Tersa said about her calling? It was not idle talk. Her life is given to it. If it wasn't Tersa, who would it be but Hettie? You haven't heard so much about her? No, but she was doing her part just the same. Can you think of a McDonald who wouldn't be?

She was quite as remarkable in her way as the others were in theirs. She worked with her mother at home, with the exception of three or four months each year, then she was in college. She could have kept on with her studies at home, since more teachers were employed in the school, but it seemed best for her to learn of life outside the valley while she was free to go. Home economics was succeeded by English. Entrance examinations were passed with credit, and she was a prized pupil. Her early training and studying at home each year qualified her to judge of the worth while.

It was a summing up of the futility of Christian work in the university where she spent her last years as a student, that gave McClintock an insight into the depths of her mind and character.

“Our valley must have a college,” she asserted, “for we cannot let our boys and girls go to these places where religion is a form, and they lose the faith and Christian experience out of their lives. They cannot take part in a young people's meeting in most cases. About one in each dozen can pray. A few more speak as if they were discussing a literary subject. In fact, some of them speak in meetings for the help it is to them in learning to speak to an audience. They fairly chatter on frivolous subjects, but many of them act like imbeciles when they are asked to take part in a meeting.”

“What did you do about it?”

“I did something,” was all the answer given.

He knew she had done the work that had raised many lives to a higher spiritual plane and made students see that Jesus Christ was a friend to honor, not excuse. He consulted with her often about his work, and the college that was to be endowed. It was she who introduced the subject of the college at the United Valley's Convention. Her speech was notable for its logic and eloquence, as she gave the reasons

why the need of this work was great. She convinced the audience that she was right, and every delegate pledged support to the project. Yes, Hettie, the girl who chose to stay and help mother, had been trained by the close association with that mother, and given a practical insight into the best way to help community and state. Did she get a college that would stand the test of the comparison of its work with that of other colleges? Most assuredly she did. It stands today and will endure till the end. In all of our acquaintance with the McDonalds has one of them ever failed to go over the top in any offensive, or defensive started?

A letter from a man who knew Hettie asking for an invitation to spend his vacation with his old friend made McClintock realize what Hettie had become to him. It read: "Miss McDonald is the girl to make a minister's work a success, spiritually. Bishop Wilding has told me of her and her family. I believe she is the wife I want, and I should like to come and have the opportunity to become better acquainted. Let me know if I may come?" There was more in the letter, but he forgot all but that part. She would be just the wife for a minister. There was no question about the wonderful helper she would be, but the valley needed her. How could the work go on without her? She had presented the cause of the college until every inhabitant was keen for it, and working hard to get it soon. There was her gentle courtesy, the eloquence that swayed a crowd, then who could take her place in the Sabbath school? Last, but not least, what would he do without her? He should have to get along if she went with the other fellow, but he couldn't, then he stopped and stood still under a maple and stared across the valley, but he never saw Bob wave, or anything else that was taking place. "Why not?" he finally asked a robin that perched beside him. At least the robin thought he spoke to him, and called an answer. Away went the dominie on the run. He dashed in to Hettie's home, through the lower rooms and out on the back porch, where she was holding a glass of clear jelly to the sunlight to see it reflected in the heart of the jelly.

"O, Hettie, I am glad you are back."

"I am glad to be back. It is my last trip for the college and I feel as if I did not want to hear of higher learning, or

face another audience this summer. I don't think I shall. I have earned the right to indulge in a vacation suited to my own enjoyment, and I am going to spend it right here putting up fruit and sewing with mother. We both need each other again."


"Yes, stay with your mother this summer, but won't you come to the manse in September and be its honored mistress and my loved wife? I love you Hettie, so dearly. I did not know it till a few minutes ago. Do you love me?"

"Yes, Gerry, I've known we loved each other and couldn't be happy with anyone else for some time."

"Queer," said Gerry, "but it don't matter seeing we are both sure nobody else would do." He was so happy that he forgot all about the letter, that had helped him to his happiness, for six weeks.

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