

a bad job, and laid the old gun away, to escape the shower of jokes which were lavished upon him, and which he did not at all relish.

CHAPTER XII.

THE spring and summer passed swiftly by, and the gay autumnal months—with their golden sheaves of corn, and the many-hued leaves—gladdened the earth and the hearts of the reapers. We did not expect to reap a large crop of the fruits of the earth the first year in our new home. There had been land to clear, our house to build, and we found that all of this occupied too much time to anticipate great profits; but we were not by any means discouraged—or at least we should not have been, had we not observed that mother was beginning to droop beneath the cares of an emigrant's life. Her step in a great measure lost its elasticity; her cheek became sunken and pale, save when a bright, fiery spot burned upon it. Yes, our mother, always so dear to us, and doubly dear now, was gradually wasting away. Consumption, that great destroyer, was rapidly at work. The doctors from a neighbouring town told us she *might* endure the rigours of a cold winter; she *might* live to see the happy