

OAK-MOT

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Oak-Mot by William M. Baker

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WILLIAM M. BAKER

OAK-MOT



THE PRAIRIE HOME

OAK-MOT.

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM M. BAKER,

PASTOR OF THE SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AT ZANESVILLE,
OHIO.



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OAK-MOT.

CHAPTER I.

IN WHICH WE TRY TO MAKE KNOWN TO YOU THE FRIENDS
AT OAK-MOT.

“**B**EAUTIFUL! beautiful! I never saw anything more perfectly beautiful than this, even in my dreams!” If you only knew Egeria as well as we do, you would know it was she, of all the young people, who said that, without being told so.

“Think so? I don’t see anything particularly beautiful in it—about twenty miles of grass. I dare say if I loved grass as much as do those cows, I would be delighted too!” It was Edward, of course, who had that to say—*that* you might have known if blindfolded!

“Listen! They do think the world of it, the cattle; what do you call them cows for? See! every now and then one or the other stops eating away for dear life, lifts up its head and cries

mo-o-o-o! which means beautiful! Yonder is one old red fellow whose feelings are too much for him altogether. Listen, mo-o-o-o! mo-o-ach! That means glorious! glorious!" Hubert, of course. And the rest had to laugh, even Edward the Great, not so much at what he said as at his funny way of saying it. Egeria had said one day it wasn't blood that ran in Hubert's veins, it was fun only; and added, what was far from being kind, that for her part she "was tired to death of it."

The only thing Prosy did was to put away Adry's thin hair from his forehead, the wind blew so, and half whisper to him,

"How do you like it, Adry?"

Only the words no more help you to understand all of Prosy's kind heart in them, than do Hubert's all the fun he means. That is the trouble. If you will please take the people here at Oak-Mot as living, breathing, everyday sort of people, not one of them without some virtues and many defects, just like all other people from Adam down.

"Very much, Prosy, very much," is all that Adry says; and he says that slowly and painfully, brightening up the moment Prosy spoke and trying to look around him with new interest.

“Very much, indeed,” he added with more colour in his poor pale face.

On the whole, I am glad you were not there on the top of the hill with them that morning, to see the swift look Edward Beach gave his sick brother Adry as he feebly spoke the words. Even that clear, bright morning, with all that lovely scenery around him for the first time, could not keep Edward from doing that.

Not that it hurt Adry; with Prosy, by far his favourite sister, beside him, it was little attention he gave to any one else, even to his father or mother. Such a look as that hurt the one who gave it far more than it could have done Adry, even if Adry had seen it. It is like firing a musket that kicks to give any one an evil blow, or word, or even look; it is the one who gives it who is always hurt the most. Remember the last time you were guilty of such a thing, how badly you felt! and it will be so as long as you live.

You see, Adry was the eldest of all the children. Not that he was a child, either. Just one week before the Beach family reached their new home at Oak-Mot, Adry was twenty-four years old, though you would never have dreamed it to have looked at him; not, at least, when he sat in his