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SIDNEY MARTIN'S CHRIST-
MAS.

CHAPTER I.

“IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE WHAT I DO.”

“Ho, HUM!” he said as he looked drearily out of the window. “If a fellow could only be at home to-day. What is the use of having Christmas come, if a body has nowhere to go, and

“IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE WHAT I DO.”

nothing to do, and nobody cares what he does. It makes no difference where I go, or what I do. I'd just as lief be at the store as anywhere.”

It *was* dreary for a boy of fourteen, only twenty miles from a nice country home. But it was a poor home, no money to spare for holiday visits, so the boy who was received as clerk into the large store on the corner, the largest in the town, because the merchant and his father had been friends in their long-ago boyhood, was trying to be a brave boy and spend his holiday alone; but it was dull work. It was so new and sad a thing to feel that it made no difference to any one what he did. The town clock struck nine.

“Only nine o'clock!” Sidney said,

"IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE WHAT I DO."

and he thought that he did not know what to do with the day.

He went out, however, and began to take an aimless walk up the street. Nearly opposite Judge Porter's handsome home, that large house, built in foreign style, and the pride of the town for that and other reasons, he stopped suddenly and listened.

Music — clear and sweet it rose on the air. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men." Sidney went on around the corner with a curious face. Who could be outdoors singing on Christmas morning? The minute he got a view of the side gateway the riddle was plain.

"Ho!" he said, and then he laughed. "I do say, if those Shemways haven't

"IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE WHAT I DO."

come out in full force, exactly as they used to do in Germany; and there they are singing the Christmas carol. I wonder if they think they will get 'Christmas greeting' as they said the children did in the old country? What a droll looking set they are. The carol is real pretty, though." This he added as the sweet words began again, "Glory to God in —"

Just at that very point they stopped every voice, and little Gretchen, the youngest of the group, gave a little squeal that did not belong to the carol. It was plain that something had frightened them. Sidney crossed over to them. Just inside of the gate had appeared old Bose, the great house dog, and he was not a lover of their music,

“IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE WHAT I DO.”

to judge by the low growls with which he greeted it.

“Don’t be afraid,” said Sidney, coming promptly into view. “I know old Bose and he knows me. He is an ill-mannered scamp, but he won’t hurt you so long as I am around. You sing away and I will stand guard.”

And sing they did, like larks, and earned a penny all around, and plenty of little cakes. The Porters had spent a winter in Germany; they knew how to treat the little singers. Sidney, not being so well wrapped as the singers, shivered a little as he walked away. His promise fulfilled, *he* had to be content with a hearty “Thank you,” given in broken English, and a grateful smile in little Gretchen’s eyes.



CHAPTER II.

“I WAS WALKING DOWN BY THE POND.”

THE Christmas carol had taken up quite a little of the morning. Sidney felt glad of that; the faster the morning went the better. He put his hands in his pockets and whistled to keep himself company, and tramped cheerily on.

Just where he was going he did not know, and it made no difference where he went, you will remember. He met a great many people whom he knew, and a great many that he didn't know. But none of them had anything to do with him.

Just across the town bridge there was a boy, and though Sidney knew no more about him than that he was Dr. Eldred's son and went to the academy, and sat across the room from him at Sunday-school, he seemed like a friend to the lonely fellow, and he stopped to look at him, and wonder how it *would* seem if they were good friends. Young Eldred was in some perplexity. He had his sled, and stood holding the rope, while Miss Etta Eldred, curled

“ I WAS WALKING DOWN BY THE POND.”

nically on the seat, wrapped in furs, appeared to be waiting for some decision.

“ I suppose I have just got to go home first,” the boy was saying in disappointed tones, as Sidney crossed over for a nearer look at one who had a sister near by to enjoy. “ How are you?” Eldred said cordially to Sidney; he was not a proud boy, though he had a good deal to be proud of.

“ Are you going down to see the skating? There’s to be a great time. Two fellows are going to have a trial of speed, and the one who gets beaten is to give an oyster supper to us fellows in the evening.”

“ I hadn’t heard of it,” said Sidney, with interest. “ When is it to be?”

“ Why, it was to be at twelve o’clock,

but I hear since I came out that the time is changed to eleven. It will be long after that before I can get there, for it is ten now, and I've got to go all the way home with Etta; she sprained her foot, you see, and mother is not willing to have her walk."

"I'll draw her home if she will let me." Sidney said this as heartily as though it would be a great favor.

Young Eldred caught the words joyfully. "Why, will you? That is real kind of you. Etta, you wouldn't mind for this once, would you?" And Etta shook the feather in her cap and said, decidedly:

"Oh no, not at all, if he would just as soon."

"But you will miss the race yourself. You know it is a long walk

down home." This was Eldred's afterthought.

"Oh, I shouldn't mind that," Sidney said. He had not known a thing about it, so he wouldn't really be *missing* it.

And so it came to pass that he shouldered the satchel of books that were being taken from the academy for the vacation, and had just been gone after, and taking the reins in his own hands, waited only to see the doctor's son join a party of boys who were waiting for him, and then he and Etta started. A full mile over the crispy snow, with a merry young girl who occasionally came to the store to buy bright ribbons, and was always kind and pleasant.

This was a nicer Christmas than he had imagined, and so he told himself

“ I WAS WALKING DOWN BY THE POND.”

with a pleased face as he walked back the long mile alone, having taken his charge to the very door, delivered the books to her care, and himself put away the sled in the carriage house. Etta had thanked him heartily, and given him a pocketful of splendid apples besides. And better than all the rest, the morning was quite gone. Actually nearly twelve o'clock! This he said aloud, in glee, as he came to the main street once more, and caught sight of the moon-faced clock, keeping guard in the church steeple.





CHAPTER III.

“I WAS AT MR. SEYMOUR’S.”

HE had just one thing to do that day, that had a little touch of business about it, and all the dignity of an appointment. That was to take a smooth and beautifully polished wooden top, that he had made, down to Mr. Chester Seymour’s, on Seymour Avenue,

and be there at one o'clock precisely. There was to be a simple little Christmas tree shown off at that house, at that hour. The tree was for the benefit of Mr. Seymour's half dozen little nephews and nieces, who were clustered around him, and the little lame boy who lived with them was to be counted in. This lame boy was a pet of Sidney's. He looked like a certain little boy at home, who slept with Sidney when he was there, and whose company was sorely missed.

The top had been made for him in spare moments; and since the thought came to Sidney the moments had been so spare that he had walked around to Mr. Seymour's the night before to ask if the top came at nine o'clock the next morning would it be in time for the

tree? Then and there Mr. Seymour had rejoiced his heart, by a promise that if he would bring it at precisely one o'clock it should be hung at once, and he should have a peep at the tree.

This programme was carried out, and the tree was heartily admired by Sidney. There was nothing on it for him. Nobody had thought of that, but he had expected nothing, so as he would have said, he hadn't *missed* anything.

"Could you go home by way of Mr. Stuart's, my boy?" Mr. Seymour had said, as he, having enjoyed lame Neddie's delight over his top, was about to go. "Could you as well go home by way of Mr. Stuart's and leave a note there for me, or will it take you



too far out of your way? It is quite a distance round."

"Yes, sir," said Sidney, promptly. "No, sir, it is not too far. I like the walk, and I haven't a single thing to do. This is a holiday, you know."

Mr. Seymour had smiled and thanked him, and given him the note, and hoped he would have a merry Christmas, and went back to his dining-room and his turkey.

There was not to be any turkey at Sidney's boarding-house. But though they were poor in the farm-house, twenty miles away, they raised turkeys, and always had one for Christmas. Sidney knew the smell, and whiffed it up like a breath of home, as he turned from Mr. Seymour's hall.



CHAPTER IV.

“I MIGHT AS WELL GO THAT WAY.”

MR. STUART lived exactly in the opposite direction from Sidney's boarding-house, so how Mr. Seymour could have said “go round that way home,” I am sure I don't know. Our boy Sidney was getting just a trifle tired of long walks, but they seemed to be exactly in his line on this Christmas

"I MIGHT AS WELL GO THAT WAY."

holiday, so he trudged briskly on, trying not to think of home any more than he could help. His note delivered, he stood a moment in thought. Should he go home around Pike's Hill, or take a short cut across it.

"I might as well go one way as another," he said, aloud. "What is the difference? I guess I'll take the hill, that will bring me home in time for my dinner."

So up the steep hill he climbed, getting out of the way of half a dozen coasters as they rushed gayly down. One, though, didn't rush down. Instead, he pitched over on his back. Sidney was the only boy who was not half way down the hill, or just starting on that journey, and Sidney went at once to him. He was groaning a lit-

" I MIGHT AS WELL GO THAT WAY."

tle, and in trying to get up, groaned some more and fell back.

"That nasty sled of mine," he exclaimed, as Sidney bent over him. "It has got a loose runner. I told Jimmy it would be the death of me. Help me up, can't you? I've hurt my foot, or broke it, or something. It twisted right under me."

"Where do you live?" Sidney said, tugging with all his might, and succeeded in seating him on his sled just as some of the riders came puffing up to see if it was anything more serious than a tumble.

"I live on Pine Street, and how I am ever to get there is more than I know." And he groaned as he hit one foot against the other.

"Can't some of your friends draw



“ I MIGHT AS WELL GO THAT WAY.”

you there?” Sidney said, looking at the boys standing around.

He shook his head. “ They aren’t my friends,” he said. “ I never saw them before ; they are from the upper village, and they have got to meet the sleigh they came with at two o’clock. They’ll be likely to do it, won’t they ? ” This with a smile, as the clock in the town chimed two, and every boy suddenly took to his heels.

Sidney drew in his breath. He was just tired of walks, and this was not so interesting a sprain as he had helped home earlier in the day, but of course the boy couldn’t be left sitting there ; so he spoke quickly :

“ I’ll draw you home. Sit as steady as you can, and I won’t jolt more than I can help.” And away they went

"I MIGHT AS WELL GO THAT WAY."

down Pike's Hill, and off toward Prime Street, a quarter of a mile away.

"You're a real good boy," said the sprained boy's mother, as he delivered her son safely into her hands. "Tommy won't forget you in a hurry, I guess." And Sidney walked away rubbing his hands, and feeling that he would not be likely to forget Tommy, he was such a heavy fellow.





CHAPTER V.

THE SUM OF IT ALL.

JUST as Sidney was eating a cold dinner, an hour after the proper time, the senior and junior partners at the corner store shook their heads as they looked at each other, both being very grave.

“It looks dark,” said the younger man.

“It does, that’s a fact!” said the elder. “But then I can’t seem to believe that he took it. I have always thought him the very soul of honesty.”

“But how else can we explain it?” And here both seemed to grow sadder. The end of it was, that a summons came to Sidney before he had touched his doughnut; he took it in his hand and made all haste to the store, wondering much as he was ordered to the private office.

“There has been sad work going on here to-day, Sidney,” began the senior partner, as soon as the door was closed. “I left a twenty-dollar bill in my desk last night, and my partner saw it here this morning at nine o’clock; this afternoon at three it was *not* here. Now,

you know you are the only clerk in town to-day."

Sidney looked from one to the other for a moment in startled wonder, as if to ask what all that, however sad it was, could have to do with him. Then he began to understand. He was a quick-witted boy, and a just one; he did not fall into a rage, as boys in stories do, for it occurred to him that these men had only known him four months, and there couldn't seem to be anybody else who could have taken the money, so it seemed natural enough to suspect him. His voice, though very earnest, was not angry.

"It looks as bad as possible, Mr. Barnes; but I truly know nothing about it."

“That is easy to say,” Mr. Barnes answered, coldly; and thinking in his sensible brain that it was very strange if the boy was innocent that he was not indignant.

“The question is can you give an account of yourself between the hours of nine and three to-day? Where have you been and what have you been about?”

Sidney's face gloomed over, and he sighed heavily. “I have been wandering along and going nowhere in particular, and doing nothing at all. For all I can prove to you, I may have spent the twenty-dollar bill twenty times, only I *haven't* done it.”

There was a listener to all this sitting quiet in his chair. This was the senior partner's son, a young lawyer.

He was looking searchingly at the earnest-faced boy.

“Have you any idea where you were at nine o'clock?” he asked, suddenly.

“Yes, sir; I was standing at the window looking out and wondering what to do with myself; the town clock struck and I counted and thought what an awful long day there was.”

“What then?”

“I went right straight out, and walked up street as far as Judge Porter's.”

“What stopped you there?”

“Why, the little Shemways that come to our Sunday-school were out singing Christmas carols, just as they did in Germany; and they got afraid of Bose, the Judge's dog, and I'm no

afraid of him, so I stopped and took care of them till they were through."

"Go on. What did you do then, do you know?"

"Yes, sir; I went on across the town bridge, and from there I went to Dr. Eldred's, on Stone Street."

"What took you there?"

"Why, as I was walking down by the pond Fred Eldred stood there with his sled and his sister; she was on the sled; she can't walk; she has a sprained ankle; and Eldred wanted to go to the skating race, so I took his sister home."

"Just so! That took considerable time, didn't it?"

"Yes, sir; it was twenty minutes of twelve by the town clock when I came back."

“Then did you go to dinner?”

“No, sir; we don't have dinner on Christmas until two o'clock. That is the way we keep the holiday.” Sidney said this with a gleam of mischief in his handsome eyes. Having a clear conscience, he could not help seeing the funny side of things.

“Very well, tell me what came next?”

“Next I had an errand at Mr. Seymour's.”

“What Mr. Seymour's? On Seymour Avenue? What took you there?” and the keen eyes looked at him steadily.

“Why, I had a top that I made for lame Neddie, and I didn't get it done till to-day, and Mr. Seymour said I

might come around at one o'clock exactly and have a peep at the tree."

"Did you have it?"

"Yes, sir; and it looked fine."

"So this was one o'clock. Then you went home, I suppose?"

"No, sir. Mr. Seymour asked me to take a note to Mr. Stuart's at the corner just below Pike's Hill, and I went straight there."

"After that I hope you had a chance to go home?"

"No, sir;" said Sidney, beginning to be amazed at his own story. "I went up Pike's Hill to go across lots, and a boy had just tumbled over. They were riding down hill like mad, and he sprained his foot, so I helped him up and drew him home."

"Who was he?"

“ His name is Smith, Tommy Smith. He lives on Prime Street, below the old Market.”

“ Were you the only boy there was to do for him ? ”

“ Yes, sir. The other fellows were strangers to him, so was I for that matter. But they had come from the upper village for a sleigh-ride, and they were to be at some point down town at two o'clock to go back. They were late, too, the clock struck while we were getting Tommy Smith on the sled, and the fellows all ran like tops.”

“ And from Tommy Smith's I earnestly hope you went home.”

“ I did, sir ; ” said Sidney, and his face was in a broad smile.

The young lawyer turned to the two

men, who had listened in breathless attention.

“I’ll take the case,” he said, “with pleasure. It is the most complete *alibi* I have heard this many a day; and the young man has been practicing all day on the Christmas carols that he began the morning with: ‘Peace on earth, good will to men.’ There has certainly been much ‘good will’ put into this day.”

“It is a complete chain,” the senior partner said, heartily. “My boy, I will go to every one of these parties whose names you have given, and if their statements agree with yours, it will settle the question of the bill. Whoever has it, it can’t have been you.”

“And they *will* agree, of course,”



Sidney said, heartily. "Because it is so, and what else can they say?"

"There is no need of going to them," said the junior partner. "It is all right."

And Sidney, as he went back to his boarding-house, went thoughtfully over the day, and was much struck with the fact that something at every turn had marked the time for him. "It did make a difference which way I went, and what I did, after all," he said, gratefully.





MR. PARKER'S JOHNNY.

HE didn't behave very well during prayers; he saw the cat through the window, and beckoned to her, and almost forgot himself and said "Pussy" aloud. He tipped his chair so far back that it went on his sister Nannie's toes and made her cry out. That was an accident; but if Johnny had not been

trying to see how far he could tip up his chair, it would not have happened.

For all that he heard a little of what was being said. Among other things, his father prayed this prayer, "Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, heal the sick." That sounded like a great big prayer to Johnny. He knew two boys who used to come to school, and who told him only yesterday that mother said they were almost naked and could not come any more. He knew half a dozen children down by the forks who were almost always hungry. One of them hunted after apple skins and ate them.

Then there were ever so many people who were sick. Didn't Dr. Porter tell his mother the day before that there was more sickness than usual? What

If God should answer father's prayer that very morning, and come and feed all the hungry people, and dress up all the naked ones, what a wonderful thing that would be!

Johnny almost held his breath at the thought, and kept so still during the rest of the prayer, trying to imagine how it would seem if people really got what they prayed for, that his mother looked at him in wonder, and thought he was getting to be a better boy.

There was no school that day, so he went with his father to the blacksmith's shop. He was learning to make a horseshoe, and had no time to spare. It was a cold, wintry March day. Johnny's father had just gone out to fix the hinge of the shop-door, that kept rattling, when Johnny heard



FELTER.

a shivering voice that sounded as though all the teeth inside her lips were chattering, say:

“Won't you please give me a little money to buy some bread? or can't you let me have something to eat? I am very hungry, and my little sister has had nothing to eat since last night.”

Johnny dropped his horse shoe and went to the window. There stood a girl with a basket on her arm, a little bit of an old shawl wrapped around her; her arms bare to the elbow, just because the dress-sleeve was too short and ragged to cover, and the wind blew her about so hard, and she looked so blue with cold, that Johnny said:

“Oh my, I should think she would

freeze!" Then he listened to what his father would say.

"Oh, yes, that's a likely story. I suppose there are eleven of you starving, and your mother sick, and your father hunting for work. Isn't that it?"

"No, sir," she said, meekly. "There's only two of us, my little sister and me. Father died last month, and mother can't do any work, 'cause she broke her arm when the stove fell down. We are awful hungry."

"I don't doubt it; never saw any of you tramps that wasn't; but this is a blacksmith's shop—I don't board here and don't have any cold victuals stored away under the horse shoes, so you'll have to move on."

Very slowly the half-frozen little

MR. PARKER'S JOHNNY.

girl moved on, and Mr. Parker came in, looking cross.

“ It beats all how full the world is of tramps ! ” he said, and he pounded the iron that had been heating till the sparks flew all over the floor.

Johnny was still looking out after the little girl and thinking, “ Feed the hungry, clothe the naked. ” The little girl made that thought come to him again. What if God should call her just then, and throw down to her out of the sky some warm clothes and a whole loaf of bread ! Johnny knew this was silly ; he knew God never fed people, nor clothed them in that way ; but he kept saying to himself, “ What if he should ! What is the use of praying about it, I should like to know ? ” he said at last, and then he turned to

his father and spoke his thoughts aloud :

“ Father, how is He going to do it ? ”

“ Do what, Johnny ? ”

“ Why, that that you prayed this morning, about ‘ feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. ’ He doesn’t make manna come now as he used to ; I don’t see what good it does to pray it. ”

“ Why, ” said Mr. Parker, stopping his pounding and speaking slowly, “ he puts it into the hearts of some of his children to look after them. That is the way the poor have to be taken care of. ”

“ Well, I wonder who has got that Sims girl in his heart ? ” said Johnny. “ That was Janie Sims. They live down back of the school-house — they

are awful poor. I wish he would have somebody bring them enough to make them look fat; and Janie must be most naked, too, 'cause that shawl she had on was full of holes. Somebody ought to be tending to them right away."

Mr. Parker didn't say a word. That day when he and Johnny went home to dinner mother said :

"There was a half-frozen child here this morning begging. She looked dreadfully starved, too. I don't know when I have felt so sorry for anybody. She said she was the widow Sims' little girl."

Father and Johnny looked up together, and father asked :

"Did you give her anything?"

"Why, yes. We had some cold

pieces, and she looked so hungry, I told her to come in and eat some bread and meat. She ate as if she were almost starved. Then I had an old hood and that big cloak that has been hanging in the garret so long, and a pair of mittens, that I gave her. She looked quite decent when she went away."

"There, Johnny," said father, "do you see now how God did it? He sent the Sims girl here to be fed and clothed."

Johnny chuckled. "It was real nice to let you help answer your own prayer, wasn't it, father?"

"I believe it was," said father; and the next morning, when he wanted to say in his prayer the familiar words:

MR. PARKER'S JOHNNY.

“feed the hungry, clothe the naked,”
he waited long enough to decide
whether he meant to do it, if God gave
him a chance to help.

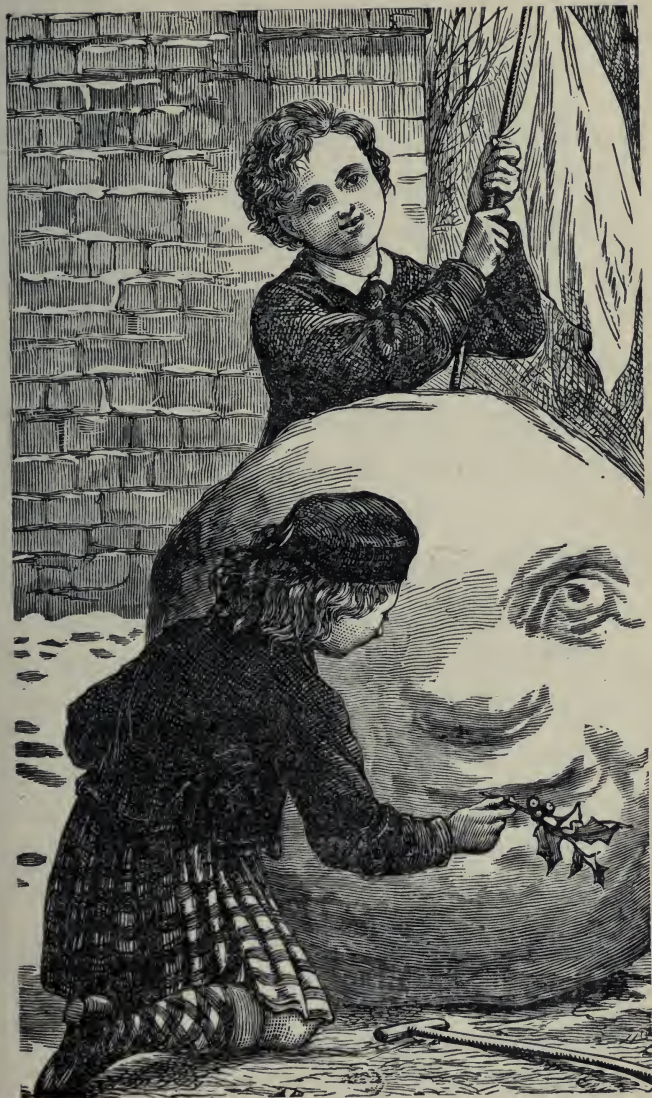




ROBBIE'S WORLD.

“WHAT are you about?” sister Nell said as she stopped to look at her little brother on his knees before a great snow ball.

“Making a world,” said Robbie, puffing, and blowing frosty air from his red lips. “We’ve got it most as big as



the world, haven't we? And here is the man who lives in it; it's a moon-world, you see, and the man who blinks through the blinds at me looks just like this. See, what a nice mouth he has! Charlie says, 'Put a cigar in his mouth,' but I don't b'lieve he smokes, do you? Charlie, I just believe we had better leave that out."

"I'll tell you what you are doing, Robbie Turner; you are getting the croup! Just look at your legs there in the snow—wet as they can be. Charlie, I wonder at you; what will mother say to that? and here you are without any hat on, or overcoat; the next thing for you will be a sore throat; see if father doesn't have to go for the doctor at midnight."

"Oh, fudge, now! If he does it will

be for you; there isn't anything but some banged hair to keep your ears warm, and you know mother wants you to wear a tippet." This was Charlie, and he spoke rather crossly; I think his conscience must have pricked. Boys and girls are sure to be cross when they know they are not doing just right. "I don't believe in making such babies of us; other boys go out without hats when they want to, and as for Robbie, he is five years old; why shouldn't he play in the snow a little?"

But for all that, Charlie dropped the flag-staff he was trying to make stand beside the moon-world, took the shovel in one hand and Robbie by the other, and went into the house the back way.

Mother was in the kitchen, though,

and saw the wet boots, wet stockings, fat wet knees, and exclaimed in horror. Then there was a time. The croupy boy had to be dressed in warm clothes and have his feet put into hot water, and himself put to bed an hour before the usual time. As for Charlie, he wouldn't for the world have let anybody know that his throat already felt a little sore.

“He was so awful fidgety;” he tried to explain things to his mother; “I couldn't do anything with him, and I thought it was so warm and the sun shining bright, and all I did just to amuse him, poor little fellow — he did want to get out in the snow so bad.”

Mother looked at her oldest boy very steadily. “Are you *sure* of that?” she asked at last; “or did you so long

to get out in the snow yourself that you couldn't give your thoughts to amusing the baby, and so made him restless?"

Then Charlie hung his head and looked foolish, and all that he answered was to say, in a low voice, "I *do* wish he didn't take cold so *awful* easy."

Nell liked to be grown up in her manner when she could, so she looked grave enough to be forty, and said: "He is always good when you play school with him; if I had been here I could have shown you how happy he could be without going out doors."

Wasn't it dreadful for her pride that mother said just then:

"Perhaps, if our little girl hadn't had a new hat and muff to wear to-day, she might have staid at home and

helped to entertain her little brother while his mother was gone. I do hope he won't have the croup; I have done all I can to prevent it, and I don't think he will be sick; but I think it will do his brother and sister good to think that they had so much 'self' in their plans, this afternoon, that they forgot all about little brother's good."





LITTLE BY LITTLE.

MAIDIE was late to breakfast, or, rather, breakfast was very early, so papa might get the first train, and Maidie slept over. So she was to eat 'er breakfast alone. "She will be

mamma's little woman," her mother said; "and see how good she can be."

Oh yes, Maidie would be good! "As good as gold," she said; and she meant every word of it. She was perched in her high chair, and her bib apron tied around her neck, her mug of milk, and her slice of beautiful brown bread crumbled into it; and she felt very large and old, after mamma kissed her, and ran to finish packing papa's valise.

The first thing that led Maidie astray was the sugar bowl. She wondered if she could reach it from her seat; not that she wanted any, oh no! her mamma didn't allow her to eat sugar; she just want to see if she could reach it; so she tried; yes she could. She wondered if she could lift a spoonful

out, and get it to her plate without spilling? She wouldn't eat it, she just wanted to see if she could do it; so she tried; some of it spilled, and a good deal of it didn't.

"I wonder how sugar would taste in milk," said Maidie. "Play this wasn't milk, play it was coffee, and folks always have sugar in coffee; I don't want to drink it; oh no, *indeed!* I just want to see how it will taste."

So in it went; then tastes were taken, first a little bit of a one, and then good big swallows, Maidie saying all the time to her conscience, "It is coffee, you know, and folks *always* put sugar in coffee."

Pretty soon she wondered how salt would taste in it. She leaned out of her chair to reach some, and try it; but

LITTLE BY LITTLE.

the chair slipped, and down went Maidie within an inch of burning her nose. She picked herself up, looking scared, but found she could reach the salt from the floor, so she was comforted; in went a spoonful of salt, and was gravely stirred; then Maidie tasted, but it didn't taste good a bit. Oh! it was horrid; she couldn't eat that! What should she do? There was her whole nice breakfast spoiled; all because of the mean old salt. Maidie didn't lay the blame to herself at all; it was all that old salt's fault.

But what would mamma say when she came and saw all this? Sugar spilt on the table-cloth, salt spilt, a little river of milk which was made when Maidie tumbled, and her little girl down from her table, and her breakfast

not eaten? Something must be done.

“I know,” said Maidie! “I’ll just give my breakfuss to Dorcas; she likes salt. I saw papa give her some, and of *course* she likes sugar; mamma said I wasn’t to put things in her pail, but, then, mamma didn’t mean such things as this that I couldn’t eat; *course* mamma would want it to go in Dorcas’ pail.”

So away went Maidie to the kitchen to find Dorcas’ pail, and pour her breakfast into it. On the way she said:

“Mamma said I must sit still till she came, but she didn’t mean sit still, after I tumbled out; how could I?” The cow’s pail was nowhere to be seen, but the water pail stood there. “It is empty,” said Maidie, standing on tip-



LITTLE BY LITTLE.

toe and peeking in. "I s'pose I may as well pour it in there to wait till the pail comes in from the barn; it won't hurt; it is just nice clean milk with a little sugar and salt in it, and bread."

So she reached up to pour it in, but, somehow, Maidie never understood how, her bib apron got caught in the table, and jerked her arm, and just pitched the cup right out of her hand on the clean kitchen floor, and there lay the milk. Worse than all, the dear pretty mug, that Auntie Kate gave her for Christmas, was broken in six pieces. Then how Maidie puckered her lips, and winked her eyes, and finally lifted up her voice and cried.

But don't you think the silly little girl didn't seem to know, even then, that the beginning of all her trouble

LITTLE BY LITTLE.

was away back there when she said to herself:

“I wonder if I am big enough to reach that sugar bowl all by myself?”
Such a little bit of a beginning; and the “good little woman was spoiled.”





EFFIE'S SPECK.

FOUR boys and four girls, and eight nice round hoops — some of them new and shining.

“Now for a race and a game,” Ned Lewis said, as he seized his; “there is just time before the bell rings. The

EFFIE'S SPECK.

one that gets to the corner the fourth time ahead has won the game. Come on!"

Away they went, all together, spinning their hoops before them; Charlie Thomas, who had been sick and who could not run, being the one appointed to keep count and see which beat. It is wonderful how much each one of them wanted to beat. To see their little legs flying through the square, and the eager light in their eyes, you would have thought: Surely, there must be an apple made of silver to win in the end, so eager were they.

Effie Brown was the swiftest runner in the class, unless it was Ned Lewis; the rest were never quite certain which was really the *very* swiftest — for sometimes Effie beat and sometimes Ned



EFFIE'S SPECK.

—but they certainly were ahead of all the others. A shout went up from two or three of the party as the third run was made.

“Jolly,” said Fred Wilson; “that little Miller girl is going to beat, I believe. Who knew *she* could run so? She has got there right along with Effie every time; Ned’s a little mite behind this time but I believe those girls are both going to beat.”

Effie heard, and she didn’t like it; the little Miller girl was a year younger than she, and a shy softly little girl. She didn’t want to be beaten by her—that would be worse than to have Ned beat. She didn’t even want to be equal with her. It would soon be settled. She ran with all her might; her hoop fairly skimmed over the ground, keep-

ing her eyes all the time on the little patched shoes that clipped along right by her side. A loud shout, a clapping of hands, and cries of "Hurrah for Effie" told that the race was won.

"She was a trifle ahead," Charlie said; "just a *trifle* — it wasn't more than half an inch — but that makes it a beat."

The little Miller girl looked up with a quick eager glance; *she* knew that her own little patched shoe touched the goal before Effie did. Didn't Effie know it? If Mamie Miller had been any other girl among them, she would have shouted it loudly, and insisted on having her rights; but, bless you, Mamie wasn't sure she *had* any rights in this world. Didn't she wear faded

calico dresses and a sun-bonnet, and patched shoes.

The racers walked back very slowly, wiping their faces and saying it was fun, but it made them very warm; only Effie kept still. Yes, she knew all about it; she was certain that Mamie Miller's foot reached the corner before hers did—just a second before, or hardly a second; so short a time that Charlie, who was watching, did not see it at all; but she did.

“I can't help it” she said; “I am not to decide the game. It was Charlie's business, not mine. If I had been ahead and he had decided that I wasn't I wouldn't have said a word. What difference does it make, anyway? It's real baby to care so much about a race.”

There's no use, Effie; your heart doesn't feel pleasant about it, and you can't talk it into beating quietly, as if it made no difference. If it is such a little matter, you know it troubles you. She kept on thinking about it after they had reached the school-room, and stood waiting for the bell.

"No use to begin anything new," Ned said; "there wouldn't be time before the bell."

Nellie Howell came up gayly with a tuft of spring blossoms from the woods. "There is just time to crown the victor," she said, laughing; "bend your head, Queen Effie, and I'll put these blossoms in your hair, in honor of your beating us once more; we're getting used to it, so we don't mind it at all."

EFFIE'S SPECK.

Effie drew her head back quickly, and looked around for Mamie Miller. "Put them in Mamie's hair," she said. "She won the race; her foot touched the corner just half a second before mine did."

"Oh! oh!" chorused all the voices but Mamie's.

"Are you *sure*? Why, Charlie Thomas, can't you *see*?"

"I did see; Effie got there first. I saw her."

"No, you didn't," said Effie, shaking back her brown hair. She could laugh now; she felt very happy. "If your eyes had been sharp, you would have seen that her foot got there ahead of mine; I saw it, anyhow, and I was the nearest to her. I am not going to be crowned for what I didn't earn."

EFFIE'S SPECK.

Come here, Mamie Miller, I'll fix the flowers in your hair."

It was such a little bit of a thing, but you don't know how happy it made Mamie Miller. She felt more as if she was "one of them" than she ever had before.

"I wonder you didn't let it go," Ned Lewis said, walking home with Effie after school, still talking about the race; "you came so near to winning, and the umpire thought you did; what did it matter, anyhow? I'd have let it gone."

"I almost did," Effie said; "then I thought it was surely big enough to make a speck on the snow."

"What are you talking about—snow in April?"

Effie laughed. "It is my verse," she

EFFIE'S SPECK.

said. "The Golden Text, you know, 'Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.' The snow gets all specks, you know, and I make believe that the specks are little bits of sins. I don't want specks all over the snow."

"Humph!" said Ned. It was a new idea to him; and, after he had opened the gate for Effie, and handed her the books he had been carrying for her, he went home thinking about it.





HATTIE'S NEW YEAR'S EVE.

I DARE say you think she spent it at a party or a festival, and had a splendid time. But she didn't; she sat crouched in the old arm-chair by the window, shivering with cold (because the wind blew in at every crack), and kept her nose flattened against the glass, till it almost froze.

Let me tell you about it. Little Ben was sick, very sick indeed, for he had

HATTIE'S NEW YEAR'S EVE.

the croup, and his loud hoarse breathing could be heard all over the room, even when Hattie put her fingers in her ears, which she sometimes did, to shut out the dreadful sound.

Father was away, and grandma was away, and nobody was within three miles of them, and it seemed almost certain that darling little Ben would die. Mother had done everything that she could think of, and now there seemed nothing for it, but to sit there holding the poor little struggling boy, and wait for the end.

“If Dr. Grey could *only* be got,” the poor mother had groaned.

“Mother, couldn't I possibly go for him?” Hattie had asked; and mother had said:

“Oh, you poor child! It is three

miles away through the snow, on this bitter night, and you just getting up from measles; it would be just nothing but murder to send you out."

"Mother, doesn't he sometimes come this way from the hollow?"

Mother shook her head. "Not often, Hattie; he won't this time, the road is too drifted; and, besides, it is very late; he is home from the hollow long ago."

"Oh, dear me! mother; *do* you think Benny will die?"

"I am afraid he will. Oh! my darling baby boy." And here mother put her head down suddenly on her struggling baby and cried aloud. It is dreadful to hear mothers cry.

Hattie felt as if she should fly; what *could* she do? How could she stand

there and watch him go, and do nothing for him.

“Oh, mother!” she said at last; “let me just open the shutter and put up the curtain, and set a candle in the window, and then somebody going by will see it, and maybe they will stop and see if we want anything.”

“No one will be going by on this lonely road to-night, poor child; on such a wild night, too; and if they did they wouldn't stop.”

“Oh, mother, you can't be sure; let me try; *do* let me try; and there's another thing;” and Hattie bent her head and spoke lower: “I will pray to Jesus all the while to send somebody this way; may I do it, mother?” And mother had nodded, and herself gone to open the shutter, so that the wind

need not blow on Hattie, and there she sat and kept up her watching and her prayer: "Dear Jesus, *do* let somebody come this way to help our darling Benny; oh *don't* take him away from us, and poor father and grandma not here."

So the long half hours went by and mother worked as well as she could, and Benny seemed every moment to grow worse, and Hattie prayed, and nobody went by.

"Oh, Hattie! come away," her mother said, at last, "you will get cold, and nobody is coming to help us; and dear Benny is going fast."

"Not yet, please, mother," Hattie said, and she said over her little prayer. What was that? Hark! Bells, yes surely sleigh-bells. Oh, who was it—



HATTIE'S NEW YEAR'S EVE.

would he stop? Would he take any notice of the poor little candle? "Mother!" she said and her voice was husky; "couldn't I open the window and scream to the man to stop? I hear bells."

Mother shook her head. "Poor darling!" she said; "don't you know the wind blows so that your voice could not be heard? besides, it is too late? Dr. Grey is three miles away, whoever it is."

And the bells came nearer. Oh, they were going by! Oh no, they were going slower; no faster; oh, she didn't know which it was, her heart beat so loud that it seemed to her she could hear nothing else.

"Whoa!" said a sharp firm voice. She heard that; somebody was surely

HATTIE'S NEW YEAR'S EVE.

stopping; she got down from her chair, and as fast as her stiffened feet would take her went over to the door; mother had heard too, and couldn't help feeling a thrill of hope that made her almost faint; But she murmured, "It is too late. Before the short rap had fairly touched the door, Hattie threw it open.

"Anything the matter?" said a firm voice. "Was your candle a signal of distress, little Hattie?"

And Hattie said: "Oh oh! Dr. Grey, come quick! It isn't too late, is it? God sent you. I know he did."

How still Dr. Grey was, and how fast he worked; how very quick her mother was to do just what he said. How hard it was to get poor Benny to swallow the drops that he forced

HATTIE'S NEW YEAR'S EVE.

down his purple lips; but were they magic drops, or was the great Doctor, who is always near, looking down to help? Surely Benny breathed easier.

Yet none of them spoke, only worked and watched, until at last the doctor, said:

“Well, little girl! your candle did good service to-night. I don't know how I came to stop, though; when I saw that light, it seemed to me that I must.”

“I know,” said Hattie; “I know just how it was. God sent you. Dr. Grey, is Benny out of danger?”

“He's all right,” said Dr. Grey; and Hattie will always remember that New Year's Eve, when Jesus answered her prayer while she was “yet speaking.”



SARAH PARSONS.

IT was a lovely summer day, and she went after berries to make a short-cake for tea. Mother seemed to think that a bit of strawberry short-cake would taste better than anything; I think myself it wasn't very good for her, since she was sick, and had not eaten any dinner. But that is her concern. Sarah and I have nothing to do with it.

So Sarah went for the berries; and Aunt Chloe, the old black cook, who



had lived with Sarah's mother twenty years, was to make the short-cake. There were never any nicer short-cakes than Aunt Chloe could make.

Sarah picked away for awhile; then she sat down in the pretty, mossy place to rest. She only meant to sit there a minute, for she knew it was late. But she began at her favorite dream — what she would do if a fairy should come right up out of the spring that bubbled a few feet from her, and strike her wand on the ground, and tell Sarah she might wish for anything that she wanted, and she should have it.

“I should wish for money, right away,” said Sarah to the moss and the birds—there was no one else to talk to; “because you see money can buy so

many things. If I had plenty of that I could have everything else. I should always wear blue silk dresses; that color would become me so well, just match my eyes. I should have them trimmed with lovely white lace, and be made short-sleeved, as short as this;” then she pushed up the sleeve of her calico dress until she should see how this style would become her.

“I”—having gotten them fixed to her mind, she went on with her dreaming —“I would have a perfectly splendid house furnished elegantly, and lots of servants; and mother would get well then, for she would never have to do any more work. She should have lovely brown silk wrappers, and white caps with blue ribbons, oh my! every-
thing.

“ She wouldn’t have to eat sour, field strawberries, then. We would have an acre of berries, and a man to take care of them, and pick them ; only mother thinks they don’t make as nice short-cake as the field ones do. Well the man could go now, and then, and pick some wild ones just for a change. Dear me ! I ought to be picking mine ! ” and she got up and shook out her dress, and drew her sleeves down slowly, and went in search of her basket.

Dear me ! she found it tipped upside down in the dirt. Who had done it ? a dog, or a cat, or what ? Nobody knew ; at least Sarah didn’t. But she knew her berries were gone, and the sun was getting low, and there wasn’t time for any more picking.

SARAH PARSONS.

She began to be sure that Chloe had been at the gate two or three times to see if she wasn't coming; and that mother would get no short-cake that night—all because she had sat down to plan what great things she would do for her if she were only rich.

“He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much.”





CHRISTMAS MORNING.

“POOR birdies!” said Anna Freeman, as she strewed the soft bread-crumbs from the window; “I do wish you had something better for breakfast on Christmas morning. Here we have had broiled chicken, and buckwheat cakes, and honey, and milk, and coffee, and I don’t know what not, and all I have to give you is these same old

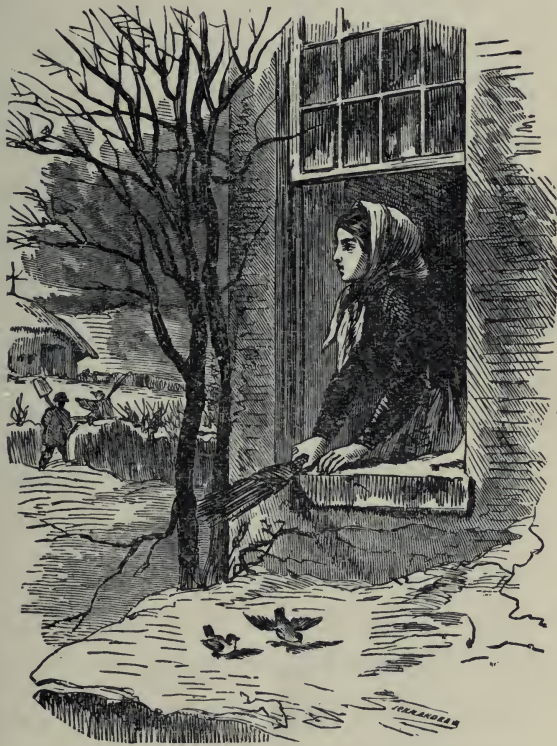
crusts. I wonder if you wouldn't like the wing of a chicken to pick?"

Effie Freeman lay on her bed, listening to this talk. "Do they look as though they had a fever, any of them?" she asked, with her wistful eyes turned toward the window, where she did not dare to go because of the draft.

Anna laughed. "I don't know. There is one with his feathers all ruffled up—looks as though he might have had a chill in the night."

"Well," said Effie, "one thing is sure—he didn't have to soak his feet, nor be wrapped in a blanket, when he was as hot as could be; nor take horrid bitter medicine out of a spoon."

"I don't believe a single one of them hung up their stockings," Anna said, trying to help her sick little sister think



of something pleasant. "They don't have any Christmas presents, poor little simpletons; they don't know anything about Christmas, and never will. I wouldn't like to be a bird, after all—nothing but hop, hop, and eat and die, and that is the end of you."

Mamma sat by the bedside, giving bits of toast and tastes of cream to the little sick girl, and just then she said:

"Perhaps the birdies might have been disappointed about what was in their stockings, if they had hung them up—little girls are sometimes I think."

A bright red color crept slowly up Effie's cheek, that had been pale enough since the fever left her.

"Mamma," she said, and her lip quivered a little, "I didn't mean to be disappointed; but you know we some-

CHRISTMAS MORNING.

times have books or things—something besides nuts and things—and just at first it seemed strange; but I like my things.”

“I know, darling,” mamma said, soothingly, sorry she had troubled her sick little girl. “But there were reasons this time why we could only put trifles in your stocking. You will know all about it one of these days.”

As for Anna she couldn't help giggling a little, and she was a very loving sister, too. “What did it mean?”

After as much of the toast had been disposed of as Effie could manage—and she did not do as well as the birds, her sister said—the business of dressing went on slowly and with a good many rests, for Effie was very weak; but Anna hovered over her, helping

CHRISTMAS MORNING.

when she could, and evidently in a great hurry.

“The sitting-room is real warm, mamma,” she said, after she had been out for the third time to see about it. “And I have wheeled the easy chair in just the right place, and put the pillows in. Shall papa come now and carry her out?”

“Not so fast,” mamma said. “You take Effie’s breath away by your flutterings. I want her to rest a little before she goes to the sitting-room.”

At last the soft crimson wrapper was on, a fresh ruffle at the neck, a fresh handkerchief in her hand, and she lay back like a snow-drop among the red cushions to rest.

Papa came presently and gathered the slight little flower in his great

CHRISTMAS MORNING.

strong arms, and kissed her soft, pale cheeks a great many times on his way to the sitting-room. At last she was plumped into the arm-chair, and then father, and mother, and sister waited around her, and the sister gave happy little laughs.

“Why, why!” said Effie. “What is this? Where am I?”

And then Anna laughed louder. She was seated in front of a new piece of furniture, tall, and dark, and handsome, with glass upper doors, through which shone rows and rows of brightly bound books. The middle of it opened out like a table, was covered with heavy green cloth, and had pens, and ink, and drawing pencils, and drawing paper scattered over it; and below were rows and rows of little drawers, some of

CHRISTMAS MORNING.

them half open and showing more paper and envelopes, and all sorts of pretty tools for working.

The little artist and poetess who owned that affair could have plenty of helps. There was a card fastened to the desk, and on it, in large letters, was printed: "FOR OUR DEAR EFFIE, FROM PAPA and MAMMA."

"You see, darling, it wouldn't go in the stocking," said mamma, Anna dancing around her, "and we didn't know what to do we were so afraid you would be disappointed—and yet we didn't want you to see this till you had had some breakfast. Isn't it lovely? And the books—oh my! they are all new. They are from Uncle Fred and Aunt Effie, and they are just perfectly splendid; and there are little mites of draw-

CHRISTMAS MORNING.

ers and slides, that open with springs, all over it—just the cunningest places. I never saw anything so pretty in my life. I couldn't hardly feed those birds this morning, I was in such a hurry to have you see it."

"Poor birds!" said Effie, suddenly. "I don't care if there are bitter powders to take, and feet to soak, and chills, and everything, I'm glad I'm a little girl, and am here in this world—it is a nice, beautiful world; and mamma, Christmas is just beautiful. Papa, I do believe I'll get well now fast. I want so to use the lovely great thing. Isn't it splendid?"



WHAT A GENEROUS GIRL!

“HE is a real old man! His hair is just as white, oh! a great deal whiter than grandpa’s; and he bends over so, he is almost double. I should think he must be most a hundred; and I’m going to give him every bit of my money.”

This is what Anna Harmon said, as she dashed, all out of breath, into her

WHAT A GENEROUS GIRL!

mother's room; waiting just a second to see if mother was willing before she whizzed out again, leaving both doors open in her flight.

Mother was willing for two reasons; First, because she knew that there was a solitary ten-cent piece in Anna's purse; and, secondly, because she had seen through the open window that the bent old man was Father Barker, and she knew he would not make a bad use of ten cents.

Anna and Herbert had not been in their new home long enough to get acquainted with Father Barker; but their mother called him an old man when she was a little girl. A nice old man he was, though very feeble now, and in his second childhood.

Down went the ten-cent piece into



his shabby old hat, and his thanks sunk deeply into Anna's heart. At the dinner table she could talk of nothing else. Father listened with a satisfied face, pleased more that the flower of generosity had blossomed in Anna's heart.

"If there is any one virtue more than another that I long for in my children, it is to have liberal hearts," he said to mother in a lower tone. Then to Herbert: "And what did you have for old Father Barker, my boy? Poor old man! He has given many a sixpence to the boys in the day when he had plenty."

Herbert's face was very sober, not to say cross, and there were two heavy wrinkles under his eyes. He looked down on his plate, and the red blood

rushed to his cheeks as he said, "Nothing, sir."

His father looked sober. Not that he thought his children should be giving their money away, but Herbert certainly acted strangely.

"I hope you are not going to let your sister outdo you in kindness to the poor," he said, at last, rather to coax Herbert to explain the wrinkles than for any other reason.

Now this Herbert was a real flesh-and-blood boy — not one of the very, very good ones that you read of in some books, who always kept things to himself and made no complaint. Instead of that, he looked down on his plate and worked hard at cutting up a bit of steak, while he said, speaking fast:

WHAT A GENEROUS GIRL!

“If Anna hadn’t borrowed all my money, and forgotten to pay it, I s’pose I should have had something to give away, too.”

Now it was Anna’s turn to blush. “I didn’t think,” she said. “I forgot all about it.”

“Then it was really Herbert’s money that you gave away so freely,” said mother. And father said: “After all, there is one thing that I would rather my children would be, than even generous, and that is honest.”

“I’m sorry I forgot,” said Anna, looking ashamed.

“And I’m sorry I told,” said Herbert, looking ashamed too.

Then they were all rather uncomfortable; but old Father Barker had a nice dinner which the ten cents bought him.



MRS. WARD'S BOYS AND GIRLS.

THEY gathered in mother's room, and were all in a fever of expectation. Emma, who was called the best writer among them, was to read the lesson according to her way of putting it. John, on his part, was anxious to see what she could make out of it this time; and the twins, who had a high opinion of Emma, knew it would be

“perfectly splendid.” Here it is; judge for yourself :

THE CHOICE.

“Then the minister called his congregation together, and made this address: ‘Our Father in heaven has given me this message to give to you. He says he showed you the way out of Egypt; he saved you from your enemies, the Philistines, and from all that wanted to harm you; and in return for all this kindness and patience, you have said that you did not want him to be your Ruler any longer, but that you wanted to be like other people, and have a king; so now you can gather together, for he has decided to let you have your own way.’

“So all the different families gath-

ered together, and they cast lots to find out who should be their king. First the lot fell on the tribe of Benjamin, and when they took that tribe apart and cast lots again, it fell on a man named Saul. So then they knew that Saul was to be their king. They went to look for him, to tell him what a high honor had been given him, and he could not be found. They searched everywhere they could think of for him, and then they prayed to the Lord about it, and he told them at once where he was. He had gone away and hid himself.

“I don't know whether he didn't want to be king or not; but I think he did it because he felt bashful. Well, some of them ran at once to the place where God told them he was, and sure

enough, there he was hiding quietly behind some stuff. They coaxed him to come out, and brought him to the people. And he was very tall, head and shoulders above all of the others.

“He was a fine looking man, and the people were very proud of him. They thought a great deal of looks. The minister now that they had a king wanted them to like him and treat him well; so he said to them:

“‘Do you see this man that the Lord has chosen for your king? There is no one who looks like him among all the people.’

“Then the people set up a great shout of welcome, and said ‘God save the king.’ So at last they had the desire of their hearts. God thought if they wanted a king so much, and would

rather have one than to have him for a leader, that he would choose the best one he could find for them, and see what would come of it. And if you want to know how they got along about having their own way, you must read in the Bible what King Saul did for them, and how they liked it."

"That's splendid," said Mary, "I never knew there was so much in the lesson."

"She has got some things in, that are not in the lesson," said John.

"Mother," said Emma, "have I anything that isn't taught, do you think?"

"I don't think there is, daughter, but I have a plan that John shall condense the next month's lesson for us just as much as he possibly can. Get in all

the facts, but in as few words as possible."

John shrugged his shoulders. "I'll try it, mother," he said, laughing, "but you have given me a hard job; you know I always use twenty more words than are necessary in every sentence."





LEONARD'S APRIL FOOL.

“THE trouble is there is no fun about April Fool nowadays,” Leonard Wells said, with a long face. “You can’t find anybody to fool—the folks all know you are trying to, and they keep watch of you all the time; and when you are in real earnest they think

you are fooling. I wish I could think of something that nobody ever did."

His brother Willis was taking a walk up and down his room with an open book in his hand. "I might help you in that," he said. "I think I could put you in the way of doing something that you never thought of before."

Leonard looked interested. His student brother had very little time to spend in fun; but he was pretty sharp.

"What could I do?" Leonard asked.

"Old Grandmother Bates isn't troubled with April jokes very often—at least of a kind that surprise her. I see she has a whole cord of wood in her yard; how would it do to put it somewhere else, and make her think it was stolen?"

"Think it would be too horrid

LEONARD'S APRIL FOOL.

mean!" Leonard said, his handsome face flushing. "She is old and lame. I'll go without fun before I get it in any such hateful way."

"I wouldn't," his brother said. "I'd do it. Let me tell you how nicely you could plan it."

So he drew a chair and sat down to explain his plan. As Leonard listened his lip curled less scornfully. This didn't sound quite so mean as he had thought it would; and it would certainly be something new.

"There would be a good deal of work about it, I guess," he said at last.

"Not so very much for half a dozen strong fellows, with a whole afternoon and a moonlight evening before them. I shouldn't wonder if mother would help you about that April fooling."



LEONARD'S APRIL FOOL.

The result of this talk was that mother was very busy in the kitchen the next day, making cakes and biscuits, and Leonard went to Grandmother Bates' house right after breakfast, and presented his mother's compliments, and invited her to tea that afternoon.

No sooner was she safely seated in his mother's parlor than Leonard led a company of sturdy boys, each shouldering a horse and saw. What fun they had! It was so nice to be at work all together, and to be in a hurry; for the work must all be done before Mr. Wells' horse and wagon brought grandmother home, or the fun would be lost.

Saw! saw! saw! for two good hours, and split! split! split! for two hours more, then it was supper-time. Away

they went to Mr. Wells' to supper! Such a splendid supper as Leonard's mother had set out in the dining-room! How they ate, and talked, and laughed, and then rushed back to that wood-pile! Before nine o'clock the little wood-shed, that had been quite empty, was piled to the top with nicely split wood.

There was a great placard of white paper tacked to a pole, and set up where the wood-pile lay that afternoon, and on the paper, in large letters, were the words :

“APRIL FOOL!”

Over this they giggled. In the early dawn of the next morning Grandmother Bates opened her side door, and limped out to pick up a little stick or two from

LEONARD'S APRIL FOOL.

the unsawed pile. As she went she said :

“ I *must* try to find somebody to saw and split my wood to-day ; then I must contrive to pile it up myself, little by little. I wish it didn't cost as much to have wood sawed and split as it did to buy it in the first place.” You see Grandmother Bates was poor.

If Léonard had heard her groan when she reached the place where the wood ought to be, and saw nothing but the pole with its flapping sign, I don't know but he would have thought it was too bad after all ! Oh dear ! how she *did* feel ! She stood there in the cold for some minutes, looking around, wondering where the cruel beings who had played the fool to her could have put her wood, and whether she would

ever find it all, and how much it would cost her.

Then she turned and went slowly back to the house ; and, because she wasn't thinking what she was about, she turned to the little empty woodshed door and went in. What was that? A great pile of beautifully split wood, another flapping sign, saying :

“ APRIL FOOL!”

I can't tell you how she looked when she saw this, but the boys all knew, for they were hiding just where they could get a full view, and they chuckled so loud that they almost betrayed themselves when they saw her face.

“ It was the first real jolly April Fool I ever had!” Leonard said grate-

LEONARD'S APRIL FOOL.

fully, to his student brother that evening.

"I am glad you enjoyed it." the brother said. Then he went on with his Greek lesson.





TWO WAYS OF SEEING.

JANIE SMITH stood on the steps and watched the four-horse stage coach as it whirled grandly around the curve, and the driver drew up in front of the depot.

Janie had never been in the stage, for two reasons: one was, she had no money to pay the fare, and the other, that she had nowhere to go. She lived at the foot of the hill, just out of sight



of both cars and stage, but one of her pleasures was to start for the mill with her father's dinner in time to see all the bustle and delightful confusion occasioned by the coming of the stage from Durram in time to meet the express train going east. It was "just grand," Janie said.

This morning a little feeling of envy mingled with her pleasure. Miss Josephine Jennings was in the stage, and got out at the depot, and actually bought a ticket for herself, taking out a Russia leather portmonnie, and paying for it, like a traveled young lady, and she was four months and seventeen days younger than Janie.

She had never been in the stage before in her life, for the reason that, when the Jennings were at their coun-

try seat in the summer the carriage and horses were there too, and Miss Josephine had but to order them to the door when she wished to ride; but she thought no more of taking a seat on the cars, and riding to the city, than Janie did of taking a seat in the wheelbarrow, and being wheeled to the barn.

And here was this same Janie, who actually longed for just one peep inside those wonderful cars, and who could not think of any errand so disagreeable that she would not have done it, for the sake of one look at that great, beautiful, bewildering city of Albany, twenty-seven miles away.

She drew a long woe-begone sigh as she watched Miss Josephine go calmly through the amazing ordeal of buying her ticket, and having her trunk

checked, which sigh was re-echoed, and the expression of envious discontent deepened on her round freckled face as she stared carefully at Josephine, and took in every little item of her traveling attire.

How splendid she was. A seal-brown traveling suit of some rich soft stuff that Janie did not know the name of, but she knew it was elegantly trimmed and looped; a brown hat with a long brown feather, and a spray of mosses and ferns that looked real enough to have cost a great deal of money; a delicate brown veil, pinned with a tiny gold clasp around the hat, and reaching barely to the tip of her pretty nose; two-buttoned French kid gloves, and a traveling satchel of Russia leather.

Janie did not know all these fashionable names. She only knew that the whole effect was elegant and costly in the extreme, and was a marked contrast to the square little figure in a brown and white calico, that was getting too short, and a gray sack with torn button-holes, and much too short-waisted, and bare hands, and clumsy calf-skin shoes. That was Janie Smith, the miller's daughter.

Janie looked down on her calf-skin boots covered with dust, in utter disgust and dissatisfaction. Things looked very unevenly divided in this life. Why couldn't *she* have some of the bright, and pretty, and good, instead of having this girl almost smothered under a double share?

She set her father's dinner-basket

TWO WAYS OF SEEING.

out of sight, for Miss Josephine was nibbling a cream date, and it seemed to Janie that she could see right thro' gh *her* basket and get a glimpse of the cold baked beans and fat pork, and the apple-pie and doughnuts, wrapped in a brown towel, that were to make up her father's dinner.

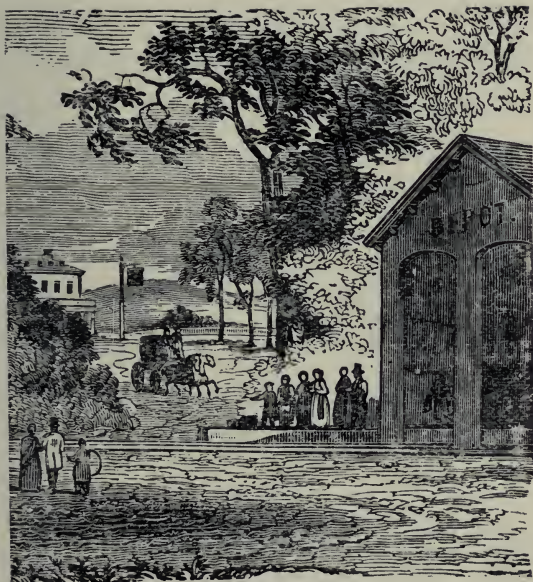
What would the elegant Miss Josephine have thought of them! She on her part looked at Janie, not with a disdainful air at all, but somewhat wistfully, and if that young lady could have seen her heart she would have been amazed to find that in it was a thought like this:

“It must be fun to tramp around, and not be afraid of spoiling anything. I suspect she has a real good time. I wonder where she is going, and if she

has been riding in that big wagon this morning."

The train whistled while the two girls stood eyeing each other, and the young traveler picked up her Russia leather satchel, and went down the steps, and up the steps into the cars, with the indifferent air of one long accustomed to performances of this kind, followed by the gaze of one who was growing more dissatisfied every minute.

Other people had been watching her too. The good-natured expressman as he walked back and forth, whistling and waiting for the train to start, turned and looked until her stylish little form was hidden by the cars, and then he, too drew a long sigh, but the words he said were :



“Poor little thing!”

Janie turned around and eyed him scornfully. What could a man be but an idiot who saw anything in that lovely-looking, *beautifully*-dressed girl to pity.

“Poor little thing!” Mr. Johnson, the village shoemaker, echoed this in great surprise.

“You seem to be staring after little Miss Jennings, but I take it you see somebody else, seeing she is the daughter of the richest man in this part of the country.”

“I meant her all the same, though; money ain’t everything, if it is handy to have.”

“Well, as far as that is concerned, the Jennings have about everything else you can think of, and as they’re

clever sort of folks, too, better than rich people generally are, it's plaguy hard to see where the pity comes in for them."

"It comes in though; there is a place for it in most people's lives, I reckon. That little thing going off so chirk and pretty this morning, ain't no kind of an idea what she is going to. You see she has been up to the house for a few days with no one but the house-keeper and the servants; and her father he was brought home hurt yesterday, from them machine works of his, and it ain't no ways likely that he's living this morning. — They telegraphed to have her come down home as if nothing had happened; not say a word to her, you know, and her uncle would meet her at the depot. So there she

goes as happy as a bird, and I can't help saying, 'Poor child!'

Janie Smith standing just behind him heard every word of this story. Before it was finished her breath began to come hard and fast, she picked up her basket, and ran every step of the way to the mill.

"Here's my lassie," she heard her father's cheery voice say as she rushed in. How good and precious his dusty face looked, how close Janie clung to him, and with what eager haste she kissed his cheeks, his eyes, his very hair.

Her father alive and well and happy, and there was poor, poor Josephine. How much trouble there was in the world, and how little of it seemed ever to come to her.

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These things she thought as she sat and watched her father enjoy his pork and beans, and wondered if "poor" Josephine's father could be really dead, and wondered how it felt to be very unhappy, and said within her ignorant little heart that she would never, *never* be so foolish as to want anything nice and pretty again, so long as her dear, *dear* father was well and strong, and she could bring him beans and doughnuts.





THE FLOWER TEMPEST.

THE flowers came from the woods. Marvie Baker went for them, taking the twins with her, and they came home with their arms full of the beauties. Then Marvie set to work to make bouquets for the Sabbath-school room.

Mrs. Baker got interested and left

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her cookies to scorch in the oven, while she robbed her rose-bush of all its treasures to add to the glowing heap on the table. When the bouquet was finished, every one in that house pronounced it the very prettiest that had been seen all summer.

“I declare,” said Aunt Sarah, putting her hands on her sides and looking at them with her head on one side, “they are beauties. That child has a real knack at flowers, if she does hate to wash dishes.”

Finally, the three workers trooped off to the church in the cool of the evening, just at the time when they knew their sexton, who had common sense, would be closing the windows of the great church that had been open to the sun and air all day, and borrowed



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the key, and arranged their flowers with great taste and delight on the superintendent's desk, in the main Sunday-school room up-stairs — that is, Marvie arranged, and the other two looked on and admired.

The three were up early next morning — in fact, they had needed to be, if they were to go to nine o'clock Sunday-school, for they lived at the very edge of the great town — a long walk to the church, and there was ever so much to do among cows, and hens, and horses, to say nothing of house work.

To Marvie fell the work of dressing the twins, and she went about it with nervous haste. She wanted to be very early. She had never before in her life had the honor of taking flowers to Sunday-school; not that she wasn't always

gathering them, and working over them, but the Williards and Palmers always looked after church flowers, and it was only yesterday that the burning desire to take some of her own gathering had entered the ambitious little head. She rolled the fat little twins up the long flight of stairs in breathless haste, while the perspiration rolled in drops down on their stiff little ruffles—I mean ruffles that were stiff and crisp when Mother Baker basted them into their places the night before.

A whisk of her handkerchief for each face, and a straightening of the little hats, then Marvie drew herself up and tried not to look excited and happy as she glanced toward the desk. Half way down the room and then she

stopped, and the hot blood mounted quickly to her very forehead.

The flowers, her precious wild-wood darlings, were gone! In their places a single spray of lilies, rare and sweet, lay gracefully back in their costly vase, indifferent to Marvie and her swelling indignation.

It was early, school had not yet opened, but the seats were filling rapidly, and proud Marvie began to realize that she was being looked at. The twins were tugging at her sleeves; their faces full of indignant whispers.

"Who put those flowers there?" Marvie whispered, leaning over to where her school friend, Addie Brown, was sitting.

"Miss Eva Palmer; aren't they lovely?" was the answer.

“Did she take away some that were there?” whispered Marvie again.

Addie nodded her head. “Yes, she did. Were they yours? Trudie Mills said they were.”

Marvie made no answer. She stood just a minute more, and then grasping the hand of either twin she bumped them down those stairs like little rolling-pins, and started in fierce silence for her walk home. In vain they questioned, and mopped their hot little faces where the tears fell. She was much too indignant to explain to them what was the trouble.

“For the land sake!” said the astonished mother as they panted into the house, in less than an hour from the time they had left it. “Why, children, what on earth is the matter? The

blood looks as though it would burst through your skin, Marvie."

Then and there Marvie told the story of her grief and wrong.

"Well, now," said Farmer Baker wiping his razor carefully on his shirt sleeve, "that beats all nature."

"I think as much," Mrs. Baker added. "I should think they might have left them for once, just to please the children; and they did look pretty, I will stick to that. But you oughtn't to have come home, child. You should have just swallowed down your feelings, and gone in to your class; it ain't anything so very dreadful, you know."

"Yes," Farmer Baker said, slowly, "that would have been the right way. There's no harm done; if they don't want our flowers they needn't have 'em;

but you being young it was natural, maybe, to run away. Never mind; wash your face in some nice cool water, and get ready for church, and forget all about it."

"I wouldn't do it," said Aunt Sarah, just a little spitefully. "I honor her spunk in coming home. I wouldn't go near the church. Them Palmers always did act as though they thought they were a little better than all creation."

So it came to pass that Mr. and Mrs. Baker went off to church alone. The twins were too tired, and Marvie too angry to go back with them. As for Aunt Sarah, it was her day at home, for these good people belonged to the class that feared somebody would take up the old farm house and run away

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with it if they all went off and left it on Sunday.

I will have to own that even the father and mother, as they trudged to church, felt a good deal disturbed, and had a little to say about people who felt above other people. They were late, and as they hurried up the aisle a faint of perfume of roses came to them.

Mrs. Baker did not stop in the aisle, but her face got pretty red. She knew those roses; there were none anywhere that smelled quite like them. And, behold! in the great marble basin, on purpose for flowers, was set the very plate on which Marvie had arranged them. Hidden it was by vines and mosses, but a tiny bit of the old blue china peeped out enough for one who

had washed it for forty years to recognize it.

The wild-wood beauties that her Marvie had gathered, transplanted to the sixty thousand-dollar church under the very eyes of the five thousand-dollar organ! She nudged father's arm; but he knew the china plate as well as she did; and there were big tears in his eyes, and in his heart this self-accurring verse:

“Charity thinketh no evil.”

Marvie, grown somewhat cooler but still looking dignified, hung on the gate and kept an eye on the twins, while she watched for the people to come from church. Their next neighbors came first, and the son and daughter of the house a little in advance of

the others. So they stopped for a word with Marvie; and it was this:

“Why, Marvie Baker, why weren’t you in church? Such lovely flowers! I don’t see where you found them.”

“I found them!” repeated Marvie, slowly, with wide open eyes.

“Why, yes; didn’t you know they put them in church? I should have thought Addie Brown would have told you. Is that the reason you didn’t stay to Sunday-school? Why, how mean! Why, we can tell you how it all was. We went real early. And Miss Eva Palmer came with that vase of lilies, and she screamed right out, ‘Oh, the lovely wild darlings! Oh, Kate, I’m just going to take them into the church; it is a shame not to have

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everybody see them. I brought these lilies for the church, but I'll leave them here and take the others.'"

"She said they were fixed up all right," put in the brother.

"Oh, yes, she did; and she asked who fixed them, and Trudie Mills said you did, and they all said you had lovely taste. Why it was real mean in Addie Brown not to tell you, she stood right by them, and heard it all."

As Marvie went after one of the twins who had rolled down a hill, she thought this thought:

"If I hadn't been in such a hurry to think the crossest thing I could, I needn't have had such a miserable day, and lost Sunday-school and church, and not seen my flowers after all. I wonder if they looked nice in the big

church? I never dreamed of putting any there. I don't believe Miss Eva Palmer is one bit proud. If Trudie Mills had told the *whole* truth I should have known all about it."

Which last sentence brought to mind a thought that startled more than the others :

"Had *she* told the whole truth, herself? Did she not tell her father and mother that Miss Palmer wouldn't have her flowers there, but threw them away, and put her own in their place? But I'm sure I thought so," she murmured, and then, curiously enough, there came to her that same verse that had started her father's tears :

"Charity thinketh no evil."



TOO LATE.

Do you see that bare-headed boy in the picture?

Perhaps you think him very polite, to be taking off his hat to a butterfly. He may be polite at times, but I don't believe the poor butterfly will think him so, or thank him for trying to put his hat on her head.

Before I tell you about Master J. D. Felter, I want you to take a good

look at the picture, and see if you can guess what kind of a boy Jacob (that's his first name) is.

Do you see that big oak leaning over the fence? Well, if you do, you can see the fence, too. Do you see those tall stalks of weeds that are growing by the big oak? Those are mullins.

Now look sharply, and see if you can see anything on the top of that tallest mullin. Can you see it? What do you suppose it is?

Yes, a great beautiful butterfly, with wings of yellow and purple, and I don't know how many colors.

If you were as near her as Jacob, you could see her little bright eyes, and her little feet, with which she is clinging to the yellow top of that soft mullin.

Now look on the ground. Do you see anything there?

“Grass and things.”

“Well, what things? Don't you see that book, and slate, and satchel? If you were to try very hard, I shouldn't wonder if you could read on the satchel “J. D. Felter.”

Now for the story.

Jacob was not a bad boy; on the contrary he was a very kind, obliging fellow; and of course his father and mother loved him more than any other boy in the world, because, you see, he was all the boy in the world that they could call theirs.

But his teacher loved him, too, so perhaps you will think he was always prompt at school, and ready and perfect with his lessons.

TOO LATE.

Generally he was, and generally he tried to be and do what he thought was right ; but, like another boy that I once knew, he sometimes forgot.

All this spring he had been late but once and that was one day when he couldn't help it. His father was sick, and there was so much to do that, although he jumped out of bed as quick as ever his mother called — and that was pretty early — still he *could not* quite do all and reach the school-house in time to take his place, and answer to his name when the roll was called.

Then he came very near not losing his credit for being there. The teacher had got so in the habit of marking him as present, that that morning he went right on in the usual way.

I have known some boys who would

have been glad of that; but when one of the class told him that he guessed his name was all right, Jackey just went to the teacher and told him that he was late, and why.

So things went on until almost the last day of the school.

Oh, what a bright, beautiful day it was! The very woods seemed almost to laugh for joy, as Jakey went whistling along by them toward the old red school-house. The birds were singing so sweetly in the bushes by the fence, and the bobolinks were having such a splendid time swinging on the tops of the little twigs that stuck up here and there over the fields, that it seemed hard to go and leave them.

Our little boy could not help thinking how pleasant it would be to be a



TOO LATE.

bobolink, or a yellow bird, or a swallow, and not have to learn long lessons in such bright summer days.

Thinking of all this, very naturally he began to walk a little slower, and a little slower, until, finally, he began to let the thought of school slip out of his mind, and to dream sort of fairy-land dreams.

Just then, as he walked slowly along — so slowly that the birds must have wondered what ailed his feet, and if his whistle were out of tune — his eye caught sight of a big, beautiful butterfly in the road, right before him.

Jakey said not a word, but after the butterfly he went.

How he ran and how the bright little thing flew down the road, up the road, across the road, over the fence,

over the field, across the pasture, up the hill, over a high wall, oh, it was a queer race!

Sometimes it did seem as if the poor little beauty must be taken prisoner, and then, just as Jakey's hat was about covering him, away would fly those bright wings again, as if they had just thought that it was time for *their* school to begin, and they were sure their owner would be late if they did not hurry away. Then they would stop again as if they, too, had forgotten about the school, or their owner didn't want to go to school on that pleasant day.

So boy and butterfly raced up and down, this way and that, until at last the butterfly lit upon that very mullin top.

Jackey stood and looked at him for a moment, and then away went satchel, slate and books, and once more taking his hat in his hand he began to creep up cautiously toward the little fellow that had led him so far from his school.

This time it seemed as if the butterfly had forgotten that an enemy was after him—just as we do sometimes—or that he had stopped to take a little nap; anyway, this time Jakey caught him, then he thought, “Well, such a fine fellow as that is worth a good run.”

Then he reached his hand under his hat to make sure of his captive, and caught him in his fingers, and drew him out to take a good look at him.

I wish I could show you how poor

Jakey's face looked then, poor boy—I came very near saying “foolish boy,” but I guess I won't. There was his hard sought treasure, but it did not look as he had hoped. Much of the beautiful color had rubbed off, some on his hat, some on his hands; one wing had been broken, and our boy had hard work to keep back the tears when he saw that the beauty was all gone.

Just then he heard the bell ringing for school; but it was so far away that he could only catch a faint bit of the sound.

What should he do? He could not get there in time! He must lose his standing in the class; for there was no *good* reason for his tardiness. As he went along toward the school-house he thought, “How sorry my teacher will

be! How badly father and mother will feel when they learn how foolish their little boy has been!"

But he was too late!

Jesus tells us of some persons that were "too late," and, I fear, there will be a great many "too late" at another place, or *for* another place.

Suppose you ask your father or mother if they can think of anything, or anybody that our little Jakey reminds them of.





FANNIE'S BOUQUET.

SHE wandered about the house, looking very sober.

“I don't know what to do,” she said, to every one who would listen to her. “Next week is exhibition at our school, and I am to speak if I get a piece, and there is to be a prize for the one who speaks the best, and I can't find anything to learn, and mamma can't help me, she is so busy making cake and

things." And the story always closed with a long sigh. Grandfather heard it, and thought about it a good deal. At last one day he said :

"What if grandfather finds you something to learn?"

"Oh, grandpa!" said Fannie, "will you? Why, grandpa, I didn't know you knew any book that had pieces in; I thought you only read big books like the Bible and such things."

"Wouldn't a piece out of the Bible do?"

Fannie looked sober. "I'm afraid not, grandpa. They never have them out of the Bible, they have poetry, you know, and things about flowers and trees, and such."

"Flowers and trees! Why, there's many a pretty thing in the Bible about

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flowers and trees." But still Fannie shook her head.

"I'll tell you what it is," said grandpa, "I'll get a piece ready for you; I'll have it ready by to-morrow night, and I'll help you learn it, if you will speak it at the school just as I fix it, and if you don't get the prize, I'll give you one myself."

"Well, I will," said Fanny, and she looked very happy. She was sure of a prize now.

The piece was learned, and recited to grandpa a great many times out in the arbor, he showing her how she ought to say it.

At last came the day for the exhibition. Fannie was dressed in white, and had a bouquet in her hand. Nearly



FANNIE'S BOUQUET.

all of the girls laughed at her queer bouquet. This is what it was made of:

Five great lilies, beautiful red and yellow and white; a piece of grape-vine, with the roots and earth clinging to it; a lovely bunch of grasses, just freshly gathered, with the sparkle like dew on them, and a bunch of faded and withered grasses, that had dried in the sun for a week; and right in the middle of them all was a large ear of corn in the husk, saved from last year's harvest.

She went upon the platform with this strange bouquet in her hand. Neither girls nor teacher could imagine what she did it for, but in a little while they knew. She laid her bouquet on the table, and commenced her piece:

“Lo, the winter is past; the rain is

over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. The vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heaven shall give her dew."

As she repeated that last verse, she held up her lovely grape vine. With the other hand she took a withered branch that had been broken off, and the leaves were withered and wilted and dead, and she recited:

"A branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine. Jesus said: 'I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.'"

As she laid them on the table, she

FANNIE'S BOUQUET.

said: "Herein is my father glorified, that ye bear much fruit."

Next she took the branch that had roots clinging to it, and held it up, as she said: "This was planted in a good soil, by great waters, that it might bring forth branches, and that it might bear fruit, that it might be a goodly vine the root of the righteous shall not be moved."

There were some tiny bunches of green grapes just starting in the branch, and she took hold of one of these, as she said: "Yea, they have taken root, they grow; Yea, they bring forth fruit; the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit."

And as she laid them down, she said: "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life."

FANNIE'S BOUQUET.

Next she took in one hand the great glowing rose, and in the other some waxen lilies of the valley. The real ones were all gone, but these were so real you could almost smell them. As she held them up for all to see, she said in a low sweet voice: "He is the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley."

Next she took her bunch of glowing lilies, and said: "And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies how they grow; they toil not, they spin not, and yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

As she turned to pick out her grasses, she said: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass."

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Then she held it up and said: "And the tender grass showeth itself. Thus saith the Lord that made thee, I will pour my blessing upon thine offspring, and they shall spring up as among the grass."

Then she laid it down, and took up the faded grass, and said: "The sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth.

All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field."

In the other hand she took her little bunch of faded roses, and as she held them out, withered grass and faded flowers, she said: "The grass withereth the flower fadeth."

FANNIE'S BOUQUET.

And as she laid them down, she added: "As the flower of the grass, he shall pass away."

Next came the ear of corn. As she held it up, she recited: "Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; the valleys also are covered over with corn. The earth bringeth forth fruit; first the blade, then the ear; after that, the full corn in the ear. Like as a stalk of corn cometh in his season, thou shalt come to thy grave. Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. Thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain," and she held up the shrunken kernels of corn. "But God giveth it a body, as it hath pleased him."

Just here she drew back the spread

FANNIE'S BOUQUET.

that covered the little stand, and, lo! behind it there stood a little box, in which there waved some rich green stalks of corn. Grandpa had transplanted them with careful hands, and brought them here to teach their beautiful lesson of the resurrection.

Do you need to be told that Fannie earned two prizes? One given by the school, and one by the delighted grandfather. And yet her piece was "nothing in the world but a few Bible verses." That was what one of the big girls, who did *not* get a prize, said about it.





TINY MAKING UP.

THEY were playing in the parlor— Tiny and her sister Florence. Florence wasn't so very much older than Tiny but she was old enough to be told to take good care of Tiny and keep her out of mischief. Things were not go-

ing nicely; Florence wanted to read, and Tiny wanted to play.

Florence fixed blocks, and dressed dolls, and harnessed the tin horses to the tin carriage, and then hoped that Tiny would let her see whether the girl in the book wore her hair curled or crimped when she went to the party; but Tiny wanted something every two minutes.

It was: "Florry, tie this!" or "Florry, button that!" until Florence was out of all patience.

Mamma was in the next room making beds. Pretty soon came Tiny's shrill little voice: "Florry, please unfasten this carriage door?" No answer from Florence. "Florry!" with an impatient little jerk to her voice,

“do please help Tiny.” Still no answer; and Tiny began to cry.

“Florence!” called mamma’s voice, “why don’t you help Tiny?”

“I *am* helping her, ma’am. I am doing exactly what she asked me to.”

Then Mrs. Stuart came to the door to see what was the matter. Florence was working away at the door of the doll’s carriage, but she was standing just so that Tiny couldn’t see that she was touching it. Mamma, looking on, thought that Florence was taking pains to stand in just that way.

“Florence!” she said, “does Tiny know that you are helping her, do you think, or are you trying to hide it from her so that she may cry, and be unhappy?”

Florence pouted: “She might know

it, mamma. I have done every single thing she has asked me to; and she wants something every minute."

"Did you try to make her understand that it would be all right in a minute? Were you doing the best that you could to make her happy?"

What could be said to this? Of course Florence knew that she couldn't say "Yes," and she didn't feel like saying "No;" so she kept still. Mrs. Stuart took Tiny away and set her up in a chair for being naughty; and Florence had the room to herself. Don't you think she couldn't read a bit? Pretty soon mamma came to Tiny; "Is little Tiny sorry that she was cross?"

"Mamma, Tiny wasn't cross; it was Florence."

“Oh, no! Florence was doing just what Tiny asked her to; and Tiny was fretting.” Tiny looked very sober, and went to thinking. At last she said:

“Mamma, maybe her hands were doing it, but her dress wasn't. Her dress was hiding my dolly's carriage, and not letting me know that it was getting fixed. It is Florry's dress that ought to be sorry.”

What was the use in talking to such a little dunce as that. Mamma didn't know quite what to say. At last she said:

“Well, whatever the dress was doing, you know you were impatient, and cried. Can't you tell Florence you are sorry for that?”

“Why, mamma! I didn't cry at Flor-



ence, I just cried at myself; because I was sorry for myself.

“Then you don’t want to be good friends with Florence?”

“I am good friends, mamma. I wasn’t naughty; it was Florry’s dress.”

It was plain that the little girl thought the blue and white dress was the only naughty one among them. So mamma said: “Very well, jump down and go and make friends with Florence.”

Away went Tiny. How did she make friends? She pulled up every root that was in Florence’s little bit of a flower-bed under the window, and came trotting to her sister, and held them out as she said: “Smell my flowers.”

It was very hard work to look pleasantly at the mischievous little sprite. Didn't Florence see the roots dangling in Tiny's apron? But then she wanted to make up with her little sister; she was old enough to know that it was the heart inside of the blue dress that was to blame and she wanted to "make up."

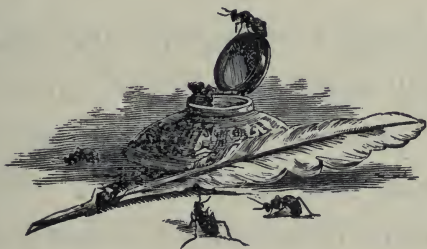
So she stooped and smelled the flowers, and kissed the dear Tiny; and mamma, looking out of the window, smiled and said:

"I guess Florence is 'making up,' too. I think she understands it; her pleasant face over those flowers is her way of asking Tiny to forgive the blue dress."

Still, as Florence dug holes in the ground and replanted her poor flowers,

TINY MAKING UP.

she could not help remembering if she had taken care of the little sister and of her blue dress at the same time, the flowers would very likely be growing in their places now.





APRIL FOOL.

Silly boys! Sillier on the first day of April than any other day of the whole year. Bent on having something that they called "fun!" On their way home from school, looking about them, right and left, for mischief, they spied Dick Wheeler's old black leather satchel.

"Hurrah!" said Aleck, the oldest and wildest of them; "here's fun! If

here isn't Dick's satchel that he carries on his arm, as if it was full of gold dust. He must be gone into the market; let's pry it open and take out whatever is inside — doughnuts, as likely as not — then we can fill up the satchel with something else, and April fool him."

"What can we put in?" the others said, gathering around.

"Onions," said one. "Sand," said another. "Molasses," said the brilliant boy who had the name of being the "cutest" fellow in school.

I hope you see how much his cuteness amounted to.

"It will run out," objected young Tommy Jones, who occasionally acted as though he had brains.

"What if it does! Be all the fun-

nier to see it drip, dripping. I say, won't it be rich to stand here and see him dip his hand into it! He'll go to looking the first thing, for what was in his satchel, when he finds it is open."

By this time it was open. And it was rather stupid to find that there was nothing in it, after all, but long sheets of thick, stiff paper, closely written, some of them folded, and some of them not.

"Whatever are these?" Aleck said, looking puzzled. "What does little Dick do for a living, anyhow?"

Nobody knew. He was a new boy, who passed the school-house regularly at certain hours of every day, always with this satchel on his arm. The boys gave very little attention to the papers, except to each take one, to flour



ish around little Dick's ears when he should have dipped his astonished hand into the molasses.

Then two of them went across the street to the grocer's to get a quart of molasses, and borrowed a pitcher to put it in, telling the clerk that they forgot to bring one from home.

It wasn't true, to be sure, but then you know it was April fool day, and, for some strange reason, there *are* people who think it isn't wicked to lie — on that day.

Back came the boys with their molasses, and with much glee it was poured into the satchel.

The whole performance was carried out just as they planned. Unsuspecting Dick ran around a corner after his

satchel, was astonished and alarmed to find it open, dived his hands in to see if the precious papers were safe, and drew them quickly forth again — molasses dripping from every finger — amid the wild shouts of the delighted scamps, who flourished the yellow looking papers about his ears, and danced, and yelled like a party of Indians, just in from camp. It was extremely funny, wasn't it? No wonder they were delighted and proud of their wit and wisdom when they could produce such great results as these.

But there are two sides to every story. This was the beginning of the "April fool." What a pity that the four boys should have been so busy yelling, that they had no eyes for a tall gentleman, just across the street from

them, who stopped and looked at them very carefully for as much as a minute, then went backward a few steps, and talked with another tall man, who wore a long coat with gilt buttons on it.

The two gentlemen crossed the street, and the one in blue coat and brass buttons laid his hand on Aleck Stone's arm before one of them saw him. Then they greeted him.

"Jolly!" said Aleck, turning quickly to see who had him by the sleeve. But he did not speak as though he thought it was very jolly.

"My land!" said Tommy Jones, as if that had anything to do with it. One of the others whistled Yankee Doodle, very softly, and they all stood still and waited for what came next.

"What is going on here?" said the

APRIL FOOL.

policeman, in that calm voice which is so terrible to hear at such a time as this. "Whose satchel is this, boys, and what have you been doing with it?"

"It is only Dick Wheeler's old satchel," Aleck explained, eagerly; "and we have only been having a little fun, because you see it is April-fool day."

"Yes, I see it is," the policeman said, still speaking in that quiet voice; "and I see some boys who have been April-fooled. This is not Dick Wheeler's old satchel at all. It happens to belong to Judge Markham. Now what is all this stuff on these papers? Molasses! I declare. Whew! You are deeper fooled than I thought. Well,

Judge Markham, what will you have done with them?"

It is a pity that we haven't the pictures of the four boys as they stood with woe-begone faces and sticky fingers, eyeing the judge.

"Well," he said, slowly; "it is a troublesome business. Those papers are spoiled, you see. So is the satchel, for that matter. They ought to go to jail for awhile till they get a little common sense. But seeing they are only 'fools' according to their own account, we will have to let them off I think by paying the damages. That satchel is spoiled, but I won't be hard on you boys, I'll throw that in; it cost me twelve dollars to get those papers copied, and put in order, and that you will have to pay."

Twelve dollars! and they hadn't twelve cents to their names. April-fool boys are the kind who hardly ever have any money in their pockets.

Their fathers every one said that the boys must earn every cent of the money, and stuck to it; I am not sure they knew Judge Markham called on the fathers and advised that, and did not charge any fee for his advice, but such is the case.

The potatoes that were dropped, and the weeding that was done, and the water that was brought, and the cows that were driven to pasture, before each boy had three dollars to give to Judge Markham, would make your backs ache to think of, much more to do it all.

Finally, there came a day when the

APRIL FOOL.

boys were going a Maying; they did not live in that part of the world where it is as likely to snow on the first day of May as to do anything else; they lived where there was actually a chance to set up a May-pole and frolic around it and have a good time; so the first day of May came to our four boys, and they were invited to the May party.





MORE ABOUT THE APRIL FOOLS.

THERE came a bright spring day toward the close of April, and they went to the woods together; Aleck and his sister Trudie, and her dear friend Lora Greenwell. Young Willis Stone happened to be at the woods on that same afternoon, and, as they rested on the ground, he jumped a mossy log, and sat down beside them. He was



older than they, but a very good friend of theirs for all that. He had news to tell.

“There’s a jolly plan afoot,” he began, pulling tufts off moss, and tossing them at Trudie, by way of amusement, while he talked.

“There’s to be a May party, don’t you think! A real, old-fashioned, jolly time. All the boys in the first grade are to be asked, and all the girls in Miss Nelson’s class; so that takes in all of you, doesn’t it? There’s to be games, and a May pole, of course, and a regular old supper on the lawn, and a magic-lantern in the evening; what do you think of that?”

“Who gets it up? Where is it?” said girls and boys, in the same breath.

“But there’s the funniest ‘if’ to be

put in the invitations," went on Willis, paying no attention to their questions. "They are to be printed on real note paper, and gotten up in style; but they're to say that every boy is put on his honor—I suppose the girls are, too, or else he thinks they are above needing it, but I don't; some of 'em. Well, they are to think over everything they said and did on the first day of April, and the boy who told a lie for fun, or did a mean thing for fun, is on his honor as a gentleman to decline the invitation. Now, did you ever hear the like of that! Luckily it doesn't put me out, for my father is awful strict about such things; how is it with you?"

Aleck looked gloomy, and both of the girls stared hard at him.

“I’m safe, so far as the lying goes; I don’t tell *lies*,” he said, quickly; “but about the meanness; well, I don’t know; there’s that one scrape; I can’t say as I think there was anything so dreadful *mean* about it; it’s given us lots of trouble; *I* think we ought to stand about square on that; I don’t know what the other boys will think, but it seems to me we won’t be obliged to say that it was exactly *mean*.”

“What was it all? I was away, you know; and I only know the story in snatches.”

“Why, you see —” began Aleck, but just then Trudie made her ringing voice heard:

“Do, for pity’s sake, Willis, tell us where this wonderful party is to be. If we girls are to come in, we might at

least be allowed to know who gets it up."

"Didn't I tell you?" asked Willis, good-naturedly. "Why, it's Judge Markham; the old judge, you know. The party is to be up in his grounds; that's a prime place for a party, and the judge does things up in style, I tell you."

Aleck gave a long, loud, disappointed whistle. "It's all up with me," he said, "and with the rest of those fools who helped me; *we* can't go."

"Why not? You say it wasn't mean."

"Oh, well, you see, why it was the old judge himself; the law papers were his, you know, and of course we can't go to his party; he remembers the whole story."

“But, Aleck,” persisted Trudie, “what of it, so long as you don’t think it was a mean thing to do? What difference does it make because the party is at Judge Markham’s?”

“Oh, dear!” said Aleck, shaking himself, “girls are such muffs! Of *course* it makes a difference; we can’t *go*, and that’s the whole of it; and I hope there won’t be another April-fool in forty years; let’s go home.” And the May party came off, and those four boys got their elegant, gilt-edged invitations, and staid at home, every one of them! But to this day those two girls can’t understand, since the boys were sure that their April performance was not *mean*, why they could none of them appear at Judge Markham’s! Can you?



TONY'S LESSON.

CHARLIE has a new drum ; his foolish father bought it for him a few days ago, and has been sorry for it fifty times since. One day Charlie took his dog Tony out for a lesson. He was very anxious to have a procession, and teach Tony to carry the banner. For this purpose he got an old broom stick, and tried to make Tony stand on his hind



feet and hold the broomstick over his right shoulder.

He worked hard at it, and gave careful directions, pointing with his finger exactly as his mother did when she wanted him to be very attentive; but Tony was stupid, or obstinate, or something.

He was used to carrying things with his mouth, and he was *not* used to carrying them over his shoulder; he shouldered the broomstick very well, as soon as he was told, but the minute that Charlie began to drum, down went the broomstick and Tony jumped up, and shook himself, and whirled around after his tail, as fast as he could.

I regret to tell you what happened next; Charlie lost all patience with him; that is strange, because you know

boys very seldom get out of 'patience, but Charlie was a peculiar boy.

“Oh, pshaw!” he said, and he jumped up with a very red face. “You are nothing but a stupid old dog; you haven't a grain of sense! there isn't another dog in town I know, that I could not teach to do that, only just you. I wish father would sell you. It isn't because you are stupid, either; it is just because you *won't*. You ought to be whipped till you mind, I believe.” And then he gave poor Tony two or three not very gentle blows with the broomstick. His father's study window opened just then and father called :

“Come, Charlie, time for arithmetic;” and Charlie went; but he was tired, and worried, and someway the

TONY'S LESSON.

arithmetic did not get on as well as usual. Over and over he tried the same example, and father explained as carefully as he could, and Charlie tried hard, but still the answer would not come.

"I can't do it; and that's the whole of it," he said at last, and his face was very red.

"Charlie," said his father leaning back from the table; "I wish you would go out and get me that old broomstick, that I see lying under the window."

Charlie looked up with a puzzled face. "Yes, sir," he said, rising, "but, father, what can you possibly want with it in the study?"

"Why, I want to give you a good thump or two with it; I know very

TONY'S LESSON.

well you could do that example if you liked; it is just because you *won't*; and I believe you ought to be whipped till you mind."

Over the first part of this sentence, Charlie's face looked so astonished and indignant that his father almost had to laugh; it was plain that Charlie was not used to hearing such language applied to him.

But by the time the sentence was finished, he bent a very mortified face over his slate; he recognized his own words, and somehow they sounded worse than he had any idea they would; he felt very much ashamed.

"But, father" he said at last, without looking up from his slate, "*I'm* not a dog, you know?"

TONY'S LESSON.

“Oh,” said his father “is *that* the excuse? Now I hadn’t imagined that Tony was expected to know more than you; I thought because he was a dog and you were a boy, the argument would be the other way; but if Tony, being a dog is more to blame than you are I have made a mistake. To be sure, part of the reasonable work of a dog is to carry a broomstick on his shoulder and it is very silly in him to pretend that he can’t do it; while arithmetic being something that a boy has nothing to do with, and that he will never have any use for, he is not to blame for any amount of stupidity—no, I mean obstinacy; for, of course, it can only be obstinacy.”

The red face bent over his slate grew

TONY'S LESSON.

redder, and his fingers worked away in silence for a few minutes; then he said, with a gleam of triumph:

“Well, sir, there’s the sum, and it’s right too. Father, I didn’t mean to be hard on poor Tony.”

“Then I advise you to tell him so; for if he has any sense his feelings must be very much hurt; I’m sure mine were; and I didn’t feel the blows either.” So Charlie went out to make friends with Tony.





THAT LETTER.

“Ho!” said John Morris, as he met his little cousin Nellie. “I’ve got a letter and you’ve got a letter—that’s good—we can go to the office together. Is yours to go, or has it just come?”

“No; it’s to go,” Nellie said. “But I’m not going to take it now; it won’t

THAT LETTER.

be mail time for a long while. Come down on the square first, and let's have a game with my new hoop."

"Not till I get my letter tucked away safe," John said.

"Oh, come now; when we get tired playing in the square it will be time enough to go, and then I will go with you. I know it isn't time for the mail. What's the use of being in such a hurry?"

"There's use to me; mother called to me, after I started, and said, 'Go first to the post, Johnny; don't stop for anything else.' So you see I've *got* to go first."

"Oh, well, mamma said to me that I must go to the mail first, for fear I might lose my letter; but I shan't lose it, and if we get around in time for the

THAT LETTER.

letters to go, that is all they want. Do come on — I'm getting awful cold."

"I *am* coming on," said Johnny, taking long steps ahead. "Don't you know, Nellie Miller, that mothers don't want us to mind what they *mean*, only what they say."

"Oh, you're a real old grandfather," said Nellie, tossing back her hair impatiently. "That's just exactly the way your Grandfather Fuller talks; mamma says you grow like him every day, and I believe it."

"That's nice, anyhow," said Johnny. "Everybody knows he is just the nicest man in the city; if I'm like him, I think more of myself than ever. Now, see here, I'm going straight to the post with this letter; after that I will go to the park and stay a whole hour if you

THAT LETTER.

want me to; but I *won't* go before, and there's no use coaxing me."

"You always *will* have your own way," muttered Nellie, as with no very pleasant face she turned slowly around and followed him. Since he wouldn't go with her she had decided to go with him. It was so much nicer to have company than to poke off alone. But as she went, she muttered, "I don't think it is being very good to be so selfish and to have your own way all the time."

"This isn't my way at all—its mother's," Johnny said, and then he whistled a little to give Nellie a chance to get good-natured. It was really a very short walk to the nearest post-box, and in less time than it takes me to tell it,



THAT LETTER.

both these letters were popped in, and the two cousins turned and ran like tops to the park.

Meantime, Nellie's father, Mr. Miller, thought he would call on his brother-in-law, Mr. Morris; he found him in the library writing letters. "Did you get that letter off?" was the first question he asked.

"Not last night, I was too late for the mail, but I did this morning; John just took it to the post-office."

"John!" said Mr. Miller. "I wonder if you trust so important a letter as that to John—money in it, too."

"Why not?" asked father Morris, looking at his brother in surprise.

"Why not? why, because he is only a child, and is liable to lose it ten

times over; besides, it is very important that it should be in time for this mail."

"Plenty of time; the mail doesn't close yet for an hour."

"Yes, sir; beg your pardon, but it does. The mail changed yesterday, and there are not ten minutes before it closes. So if Johnny has loitered — as, of course, he has — or gone somewhere else first, or stopped to play with a friend, as they are always doing, you are too late, and we've had all our trouble for nothing. I should as soon think of sending a humming-bird to the office with an important letter as my Nellie; her mother always starts her an hour beforehand after anything."

John's father looked a little troubled. He wanted that letter to go. He

THAT LETTER.

stopped writing and bit the end of his pen-holder a little and thought. "I didn't know the time-table had changed," he said. "I wonder how I could have been so careless about that?" Just then he heard a step in the hall, and he called, "Helen!" and Mrs. Morris opened the door and peeped in.

"Good morning," she said to her brother.

"Helen, had Johnny any other errands?"

"Yes, two on his way home; but he has permission to play in the park for an hour before he starts for home."

"There!" said his uncle, in vexation; so much for our rush after that money. Too late! That's a shame, I declare."

"What is it?" asked mamma.

THAT LETTER.

“The letter Johnny took.”

“Oh, that’s all right; I told him to post it directly.”

“Did you?” said his father. “How long has he been gone?”

“Why, about twenty minutes.”

“Then the letter is safe in the box by this time,” his father said, looking pleased and glad. “John is just as sure to go to the post first, before he stops for *anything*, as the sun is to rise to-morrow morning. We can trust him with ten thousand dollars or ten millions. He will do just exactly as he is told every time.”

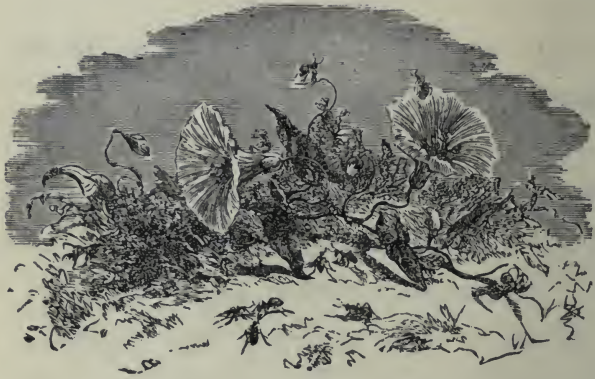
Do you want to know what his uncle Miller said to this? He looked thoughtful for a few minutes, and then he said over half aloud and half to himself :

THAT LETTER.

“A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches.”

Where do you suppose he found those words, and what made him think of them just then ?





TWO TAILS.

THEY met at the street corner, right under the big tree — not the tails, but the two boys with their ponies. Harvey Wood was just ready to mount his, and Robert Lowrie halted to say good-morning.

“Where are you going to ride with-



out any hat?" Harvey asked, and Robert laughed.

"My hat blew off as I came around the corner," he said; "and I am going to ride after it. Harvey, have you been trimming your pony's tail?"

"No," said Harvey, looking around at it. "Why?"

"It looks shorter than usual; I thought it was longer than mine."

"So it is—as much as three inches longer."

"No, sir! Not by a good deal. You just go around and take a look at mine; you'll find it is a good deal the longest. I didn't think it was, but I see now as plain as day."

"You must see with your eyes shut, then; I tell you I *know* mine is the

longest. What's the use in disputing when a fellow knows a thing."

"That is just what I think. Why don't you stop disputing? If you don't know it now, you can very easily; just step around behind me and see; then you will be convinced in a twinkling."

"Just as if I hadn't seen your horse's tail many a time," Harvey said, with a lofty toss of his head. "It is no such great sight, I am sure that I should take the trouble to walk around for a view of it; I wish you would move off out of my way."

"I'll do that with all my heart," Robert said; "I was going to ask you to ride out to Uncle Robert's with me after apples, but you are in such a queer humor this morning, I doubt if

you would be good company, so I'll bid you good-by, and while I ride off you can get a good look at my pony's tail."

At this Harvey sprang into his saddle in an instant, and wheeled his horse quite round so that he could see nothing of Robert or his pony. Then the two rode off in opposite directions.

It was three days afterward that Harvey's sister came into the sitting-room and said:

"Why, Harvey, did you know that Robert Lowrie had a party this afternoon?"

"Yes'm," said Harvey, without looking up from his book.

"How is it that you was not invited? I thought you and he were very great friends."

TWO TAILS.

“It all comes of his pony’s tail being longer than mine,” Harvey said, after a minute of silence, and he looked up with a half-ashamed laugh.

“What a remarkable reason,” his sister said.

“Well, you see, we had a dispute. I said Tony’s tail was the longest and he said Brownie’s tail was, and we both went off in a huff; it turned out that he was right, for I had Ned Ellis measure Brownie’s tail—without letting Rob. know—and it’s a whole inch longer than mine.”

“All of that?” said his sister; “I should have thought you would have made haste to tell Robert how much you had wronged him.”

“I mean to, now that this party is

done with. You see, I was afraid he would think it was all because I wanted an invitation."

The next morning Robert got a note; it read like this:

"DEAR BOB:—Now you've got done with your party, I don't mind telling you that you were right and I was wrong; your horse's tail is the longest; not much, to be sure, but an inch, and that is something. I would have told you before, but I was afraid you would think I wanted to be invited. Let's be friends; it's poky to ride alone.

"HARVEY.'

It was queer, but after Harvey had left this note in the office with a penny

stamp on it, Mr. Lowrie's man stopped his team and beckoned him to come there.

“I've got a letter for you that I was to be sure and deliver to-day,” he said.

Harvey tore it open, and this is what it said:

“DEAR HARVEY:— It isn't worth quarrelling about; Brownie's tail isn't so much longer as I thought; it's just a trifle longer—not worth noticing. I would have told you before, only I was afraid you would think I couldn't have a party without you. I don't *want* another without you. It was stupid. Let's make up. ROBERT.”

“After all,” said Harvey, thoughtfully, as he folded his note; “we made

TWO TAILS.

a big fuss about nothing, and I lost a party in the bargain; I won't be so silly again."

But, dear me, I am afraid he will. Boys are apt to be silly over just such things.





RED RIBBON.

OLD JOE stumbled and grumbled along through the dusky streets. He felt very cross and unhappy—it seemed to him that he had not a friend in the world, and, somehow, it didn't make him any happier to think that it was his own fault. He had just come from

Bickford's saloon, where he had spent the last dime he had. He knew his wife and little Katie would be watching for him, and wondering whether he would bring them anything to eat. How could a man feel happy under such circumstances?

"Won't you have a red ribbon?" asked a soft voice, close to his elbow.

"Have a *what*?" asked Joe, and he growled so loud that it almost frightened little Effie Mason, but she spoke up brightly :

"A red ribbon, sir; it will do you *so* much good."

"What, in the name of the sun, moon and stars, do I want of a red ribbon do you suppose?" I would rather have a cold potato."

"Oh, Mr. Burns, it will *help* you get

potatoes, nice warm ones, and clothes, and everything — and it won't ever let you drink anything more, only strong coffee and tea, and nice sweet milk, and such things."

Old Joe gave a sort of sneering grunt—he didn't understand little Effie at all; but he didn't believe there was anything on earth that would keep him from drinking something else besides these things; and, poor fellow, he did not understand that there was any power in heaven that could do it, either. Still, he couldn't help wondering what the little girl meant.

"Where did you get a red ribbon that would do such wonders?" he asked, looking down on her.

"Out of the box, sir, There's millions of 'em; and all the people are



putting them on — they look very pretty. May I pin it on for you? This paper goes with it; and you have to write your name down there first, and here is a pencil.”

They were right under the bright gas-lamp, in front of Effie’s home. She had been watching for old Joe. He took the bit of paper, and, holding it to the lamp, so that his bleared eyes could see, he made out to read:

“We, the undersigned, promise not to buy, sell, or drink as a beverage —”
“A pledge,” he said, dropping the paper as though it were hot.

“Yes, sir,” said Effie, and she stooped and picked it up. “Here is a pencil, and you can lean the paper against the lamp-post to write — that is the way Uncle Warren did. His name is the

last one down. I've made the ribbon into a pretty knot—it is very bright.”

What could be the matter with old Joe's eyes? He rubbed his coat-sleeve across them, but they blurred again. He looked at the paper again—“Uncle Warren! eh?” Yes, there was the name in bold letters: “Warren Kingsley.” He was the wholesale grocer. Old Joe had never in his life before had a chance to put his name on the same paper with that one!

“Poor little thing!” said Effie's mamma from the window; “how disappointed she will be! The idea of her thinking that old Joe would sign the pledge! I tried all I could to keep her from going out to him, but she seemed to think she *must* do it.”

While she was saying this, old Joe

was turning the paper up-side down, and wrong-side out, and every way, looking at it. Suddenly he planted it against the lamp-post, dashed after the pencil, and with careful hand slowly scrawled his name. "Joseph Burns," right under Warren Kingsley's!

"There!" he said, drawing a long breath, "I've done it; now bring on your hot potatoes."

"They're sure to come," said Effie, softly clapping her hands. "They always do, when people wear red ribbons"—and she pinned the bright knot to his ragged button-hole.

Mother and little Katie, looking out of the door, wondering if father would come home, heard the familiar step. It seemed a little steadier than usual.

"I haven't a thing," he said, pushing

into the room; "not a thing! But we'll have hot potatoes for dinner to-morrow, and every day afterward, mind that! I have made up my mind. The little girl said they followed the red ribbon, and they *shall*."

"The red ribbon! said mother, and she looked around eagerly, and saw the knot shining on the ragged button-hole. Do you want to know what she said? She clasped her hands together, as if she were praying, and she said:

"Oh, thank God! Thank God!" She would rather have seen him with that red ribbon on, than to have seen his hands full of gold.



DID MAGGIE TELL THE TRUTH?

SHE had a dreadful pain; "perfectly awful," she told her mother; so mother bustled about, and got some hot water ready, and plumped her pink feet into it. Then she got down a certain bot-

DID MAGGIE TELL THE TRUTH?

tle from the highest shelf in the pantry, and poured out a spoonful, and put some hot water and sugar in it, and brought it for Maggie to drink.

“There! swallow that,” she said, “as quick as you can, dear; it always helps you. There is some one knocking. I must run to the door; see if you will have it down by the time I get back.” Away she went, leaving Maggie making wry faces at the cup and spoon.

She knew just how that horrid stuff tasted; she had taken it before; she *hated* it, that was why she had endured the pain so long, because she dreaded to take a spoonful out of that bottle.

“I don’t believe it does me a speck of good,” she said, shaking the cup and hoping the horrid stuff would spill out. “This hot water would cure me with-

out it; I feel better now than I did. I do wish I needn't take it; seems to me I can't swallow it."

A sudden thought came to her. Why shouldn't she give it to her feet? Perhaps that would do just as well as her mouth; to be sure they couldn't swallow it, but there was no telling what they would do; they couldn't swallow that hot water, either, but putting them in it helped her pain.

"I mean to try it," she said, and hearing her mother shut the door just then, she hurried, and pitched the medicine into the foot-tub.

"Good girl!" said mother, looking in at the empty cup, "you'll be better now in a twinkling. I'll tuck you now in bed."

But she didn't get better in a twink-

ling. She kept feeling worse and worse; she lay still as long as she could, for fear there would be another spoonful of medicine for her, but at last she began to roll, and toss, and cry with all her might.

“I don’t see why that doesn’t help you,” said poor troubled mamma; “it always did before. If I had some one to leave you with, I would run down for the doctor; I’m sure I don’t know what else to do for you.” Maggie made no answer; she could only roll and cry.

At last papa came home. “Why don’t you give her some of the drops?” he asked.

“Why I did,” mamma said; “they didn’t help her at all; I don’t understand it; they always helped before. I



DID MAGGIE TELL THE TRUTH?

am afraid to give her any more, it is such powerful stuff. I think the best thing is to go for the doctor right away."

So the doctor came. He felt her pulse, and asked a good many questions; and when mamma told him about the medicine that hadn't helped her, he said:

"Perhaps it has lost its strength; I'll fix her something;" and what did he take out of his case, but a bottle full of the same horrid drops!

Maggie was fairly caught now. There was no tub of hot water to throw it in; there was nothing for her but to swallow it, making faces all the time; but in less than an hour after taking it, the pain grew less and less, and at last she didn't feel it at all.

“She is all right now,” said the doctor. “You better empty out what is in your bottle and let me fill it again; it must have been left uncorked, and lost its strength.”

So Maggie saw the bottle brought, and emptied out, and filled again, though she knew every drop would have to be paid for, and that it was not *very* cheap medicine, but it really had gone so far that it seemed as if she *couldn't* tell now; they would think she was dreadful.

The pain had lasted so long, and the doctor had given her so many of the drops, that she was very weak and sick all night, and all the next day; she couldn't raise her head without being dizzy.

“If she had had some medicine at

DID MAGGIE TELL THE TRUTH?

first, that was good for anything, she would have escaped this attack," the doctor said, when he came to call on her.

How could she tell him that she gave it to the foot-bath, instead of to her stomach? When she got able to sit up, she thought about it a great deal. She tried to decide whether she had told a story or not; she didn't *say* that she took the medicine; in fact she didn't say a word about it; and yet she couldn't help feeling as though she had deceived mother.

She had had a horrid time, anyway; and as she leaned against her bed, and thought that this was the day the girls were going after wild flowers, and to eat their supper in the woods, she felt very dismal, and she decided that

DID MAGGIE TELL THE TRUTH?

whether it was a story or not, it didn't look right nor feel right, and that she wouldn't be caught doing such a thing again.

In fact as her brother Bob would have said: "It didn't pay." What I want to know of *you*, is, whether you think Maggie told a story?





GERTIE'S SOBER TALK.

“MAMMA,” she said as they walked down the mossy path, “I stepped on an ant, just then.”

“Then you took away what you can never give it again, my darling.”

“What, mamma? I didn’t take any thing away from it.”

GERTIE'S SOBER TALK.

“Yes, you took its little bit of a life. I presume it was running along in a hurry to get home and give the little ants their supper, now they will have to go without any supper, and they will watch for their mother, but she won't come.”

“I didn't mean to dead her,” Gertie said, looking thoughtful. “What made her die, mamma? What *is* dead? Where did the life go to?”

“It went out,” mamma said, thoughtfully; thinking that Gertie was getting where it would be hard to answer her questions.

“I don't understand,” Gertie said; “what *made* it go out—just because I stepped on it? What was its life made of, and how did it get out?”

“My darling, I can't explain so that

GERTIE'S SOBER TALK.

you will understand; I mean the ant is dead, you know."

"Mamma, if anybody had stepped on me, would I be dead?"

"It might kill you."

"Then, mamma, where would the life go out of me? Would the *life* be killed?"

"Don't you know, Gertie, about your soul, how it lives in your body, and when your body dies, the soul goes out of it and goes up to Jesus."

"Did you ever see a soul, mamma?"

"Why, no, Gertie; no one can see a soul, except God."

"Then how do you know I've got one?"

"Don't I know, Gertie, that you love me, and that you can talk to me, and understand what I say, and that you

can think? It is your soul that does all these things."

"Do ants have souls, and has the one I killed gone up to Jesus?"

"Why, no, dear child; don't you know I told you that only people have souls."

"I don't see how you know, if you can't see them."

"Gertie, can't I see there is a difference between you and the ants? They never talk to me, nor tell me that they love me; they don't know how to study or think."

"Mamma, you said that ant was hurrying home to get her children some supper; didn't she *think* she would do that? Maybe she told the little ants that she loved them; maybe she has gone to heaven, and is there this min-



GERTIE'S SOBER TALK.

ute; I hope she has; I don't want to put out her life, and not let her have it any more."

Gertie's mamma drew a little sigh. Of what use was it to talk to Gertie, since she asked so many questions that no one could answer; and thought that she knew more about these strange things than any one else did?

"I'm sorry I killed her, anyway," Gertie said, after a minute of silence. "I wish she had a soul, and maybe she has; I mean to ask Jesus to give her one, and take her to heaven, and keep her for me till I get there. When will I go, do you suppose? Perhaps I shall go to-morrow. Do you think I will?"

"Oh, my darling, I hope not," her mamma said, and she put both arms

GERTIE'S SOBER TALK.

around her, and held her close; they had sat down under the big tree to rest; Gertie looked up in great surprise.

“Why, mamma, you said it was the nicest place in the world; don't you want me to be in a nice place?”

“But dear little Gertie, what would mamma do down here without you?”

“Oh!” Gertie said, with a satisfied air; “I wouldn't go without *you*; I'd tell the angel I couldn't *possibly* go without mamma. You needn't be afraid, mamma dear. When I go, I'll surely take you with me; and I won't step on any more ants, because perhaps they haven't any souls, and that would be too bad.”

And Gertie leaned her head on her mother's shoulder to rest it a minute, and there she fell asleep, and dreamed

GERTIE'S SOBER TALK.

that the angel came for her to go to heaven. But mamma, with her arm around her tight, prayed to Jesus to let her keep her darling with her, here, on the beautiful earth.





DAVID.

HE was a young boy, who took care of his father's sheep. He had three brothers in the army. One day his father said to him :

“ David, you may take three pecks of parched corn, and ten loaves of bread, and go down to the camp and give them to your brothers. And you may take a present to their colonel ; take him ten of these nice cheeses, and

DAVID.

take good care to look how it is with your brothers; whether they fare as well as they should; see what they say about it."

So the next morning David got up very early and started; first, he took care to see that somebody was found to see to his sheep while he was gone. When he came up to the camp he saw that the two armies were getting ready for a battle. He left his corn, and bread, and cheese, in the care of a man who had charge of all those things, and ran forward and spoke to his brothers.

While he talked, who should come up but a great hero of the enemy's army. A man so much taller and larger than all the others that they called him a giant. He was all cov-

ered with great heavy armor ; even his head was covered by a brass helmet, and he said :

“ What are you all coming out in battle for? Choose a man and let him come out and fight me. If he fights me and kills me, then our army will own themselves beaten, and they will be your servants; and if I kill him, why you will be beaten, and must be our servants.”

Now every soldier on our side was frightened when he heard this, for they were dreadfully afraid of this tall, strong man. So what did they do, but run away, every one of them. They hadn't the least desire to fight with this man, and settle the war in that way.

David all this time had been standing where he could hear it all, and he

DAVID.

was very angry. He thought the army was full of cowards. He asked them what they were afraid of?

Didn't they believe that they were fighting for the right, and couldn't God take care of them? Who was that giant that he should fight against and conquer people who trusted in the great God?

Then the soldiers told him that the man who would kill the giant should be in high favor with the king, that he should be rich, and should belong to the king's own family.

It so happened that the one who stood near enough to hear all this was David's oldest brother; and it made him very angry; he seemed to be jealous of his young brother. He spoke to him very crossly. He said:

“What did you come down here for? What did you do with the sheep that you ought to be taking care of, and have left in the woods? I know what you came for. You are proud, and you are naughty, and you have come down to see the battle.”

David didn't get in a rage as you might suppose he would; he answered very meekly:

“What have I done? Isn't there good reason for what I have said?”

Then he turned quite away from his angry brother, and began to talk to the rest of the soldiers.

If you want to know what more he said and did, you must get a book called “Samuel,” and look in the seventeenth chapter, where this story is finished.



MARVIE'S STRUGGLE.

MARVIE is the one in the center of the group; they all gathered around her like bees around a rose, and all talked at once as girls are apt to do.

“Oh, what nonsense!” some said; and others, “Marvie Nelson, you’re a real little Miss Fudge;” and “Oh, Marvie, Prof. Woodard didn’t mean such a little bit of help as that!”

As for Marvie, she was very quiet

MARVIE'S STRUGGLE.

and had a far away, thoughtful look in her eyes, as you see in the picture. She was one of the best scholars in the parsing class, and she was one of the most accommodating girls in the school; at the same time she was a conscientious girl.

There was no absolute rule against helping each other with the parsing lessons; there was simply the desire of Prof. Woodard that the class would avoid leaning on each other. Over and over again he had said very much the same thing:

“Now, young ladies, there is a chance for you to be nothing but parrots if you desire. You have only to select one of those scholars who seem to parse by instinct rather than knowledge, and get her rendering of the les-



MARVIE'S STRUGGLE.

son, then, if you have good memories you can parse as well as she can, and at the end of the term you will know just as much about parsing as you do now and no more."

Now Marvie didn't know what to do; it seemed such a little thing to ask and such a mean thing to refuse:

"Exactly as if you didn't want anybody to know the lesson but yourself, and that is just what the girls will think of it, you may depend." This was what that hateful Satan whispered in her ear.

"But you know you would not help them with Prof. Woodard looking on, and none of them would receive help knowing that he would find it out; you see it must be wrong." This was what her well-taught conscience whispered

MARVIE'S STRUGGLE.

in the other ear, and the end of it all was that she playfully shook them all off. "No, girls, I can't; as long as I think that Prof. Woodard meant that we ought not to take or give help, it would be wrong for me to do it, you know."

They were not offended; they were not even disappointed; they hadn't really expected anything else; but they laughed at her and called her "Miss Fussy," and "parsoness," and all those silly names that school girls are fond of using, and so contrived to use the time that neither she nor they had a chance for further study.

So it chanced that Marvie herself was not as well prepared as usual. She was in the very midst of a long, bewil-

MARVIE'S STRUGGLE.

dering sentence, and with some hesitation and much blushing had said :

“Objective case and governed by to,” when there came an emphatic knock at the door which Prof. Woodard answered.

While the talk went on at the door, Marvie raised her eyes and met the great handsome ones of Stella Bancroft looking right at her, and as she looked Stella shook her brown head. Now Stella was one of those parsers who never was known to make a mistake, and had the reputation of staying in the parsing class because she enjoyed hearing her own silvery voice glide over different places that perplexed the others.

She was wrong, then. Marvie had

MARVIE'S STRUGGLE.

more than half thought so. But what was right? She kept looking at Stella until the latter's mouth formed itself into an unmistakable word and that word was "dwells." She looked nervously back over the long line. Was there such a word, and what had it to do with her? Sure enough, nominative after dwells, that was it.

"Well, Miss Nelson," the professor said, returning from the door, "you were giving the case, I think."

"Nominative after dwells," said Marvie, quickly, and received her usual bow and smile of approval. The recitation was over; then came the reports, and while the names were being called, Marvie was in a whirl of thought. There were two talking; there always are.

MARVIE'S STRUGGLE.

"I corrected myself."

"You mean Stella corrected you."

"Well, I knew right away that I had made a mistake."

"But you didn't know how to right it."

"I am not so sure of that if she had given me time."

"You know very well that the class recitation is not the time to prepare the lesson, and you are perfectly certain that if some one hadn't knocked you would be marked with a mistake." Then Marvie changed the style of argument.

"What will the girls think if I report in that way? They are all half vexed anyway because I didn't help them; they will be sure to think that I could have had no other motive than to

be ahead of them. None of them know anything about it now. I believe for their sakes I ought not to report." Then the other voice:

"Oh, oh! Marvie Nelson ought not to tell a lie for the sake of the good influence on your classmates."

"It isn't a lie," said Marvie, indignantly, but she didn't argue any more. Presently, running down the long list, Prof. Woodard came to her name, and her answer was clear and distinct:

"One mistake."

He looked up astonished. "Why, Miss Nelson, I think you are mistaken; I heard none."

Marvie's voice was lower, but still distinct:

"I was prompted."

"Oh!" there was a cold, hard sound

to Prof. Woodard's voice. "I am very sorry that the young ladies have not interest enough in their progress, and respect enough for me to refrain from giving and receiving aid."

"There," said Marvie's enemy, with a loud buzz in her ear; "I hope you are gratified with the mischief you have done yourself and others."

But there was a whisper in the other ear. "You know you have done right."

For all that she went home feeling sad; she had been the means of doing harm to the girls. What would they think of her? None of them knew the circumstances, and they would think that she had actually gone to some one for help, and yet had pretended to be too conscientious to help them.

She could not explain, she thought,

MARVIE'S STRUGGLE.

for that would seem so much like trying to excuse herself. If she had only said when Prof. Woodard came back that she had made a mistake and that it had been corrected.

“It is bad business,” she said, with a sigh, “and I’m afraid some of them will not trust me again.”

Just at that moment Lily Bates and Anna Moshier, two of the giddiest girls in the picture, went down the walk together, looking quite subdued.

“I believe in Marvie,” burst forth Anna at last; “I never quite did before; I mean I believe it is real true honesty and nothing else. I used to fancy that she would just a very little rather be the best scholar and not have so many coming near to her standard. But she might just as well have passed

MARVIE'S STRUGGLE.

for perfect to-night as not; in fact, I think she was almost silly not to. I saw the whole performance, and I don't think she could help Stella's shaking her head. But all the same; it shows that she is in solemn earnest, and I for one am not going to plague the life out of her to help me any more."

If Marvie could have heard her I think she would have been reminded of the "All things work together" verse.





ADDIE'S BOUQUET.

THEY were all on the piazza, Uncle Harvey and Laura and mamma. Mamma was watching over Addie as her busy little feet slipped in and out of the tall grass. Laura sat apart and looked sad and disconsolate. Uncle Harvey stood near her and had been talking with her.

“I *am* discouraged,” she said, in answer to something that he had been

ADDIE'S BOUQUET.

asking her. "It is nothing but discouragement. I don't see that I improve in any way."

"But I don't see how a Christian can be quite discouraged so long as she can pray," he said.

Laura looked sadder still, and shook her head.

"I don't find the comfort there that you do, Uncle Harvey. I try, but you don't know anything about it. It seems to me that there is nothing but sin in my prayers; sometimes I think it is wicked for me to pray at all. You can't think how my thoughts go wandering all over the earth; even when I am praying, I think of my clothes and my school and of vacation, and, oh, of a thousand things that I don't care for and don't want to think about at all.

ADDIE'S BOUQUET.

The more I try the worse it seems to be."

Just at this moment little Addie clambered up the piazza steps, with the help of her two fat hands, although one was full.

"Here, mamma," she said, "here; Addie did bring you a bouquet," and she went with great delight and laid the contents of her baby hand in her mother's lap. It was such a funny bouquet. Some sprays of grass, a turf of white clover, a red maple leaf, and mixed with it sticks and dried leaves, and the dead branch of a little tree. Mamma took them with loving words, and happy smiles, as if they were rare and beautiful. Then, while she talked to the baby before her, she gathered out the dead leaves and branches, laid



ADDIE'S BOUQUET.

the delicate red of the maple leaf against the white clover, and look! in a minute out blossomed the bouquet —so dainty and pretty that Mrs. Hart passing just then stopped and said, “What a charming little thing you have there; and all made out of trifles.”

Uncle Harvey and Laura sat looking on, and suddenly Uncle Harvey's face brightened.

“Do you see the bouquet, Laurie?” he said. “Isn't it beautiful? Do you know I think that our prayers go up to God in just about the same condition that the bouquet came to your mother, the best of them filled with the dried leaves of sin; but don't you know who stands between us and God? What if He so arranges our weak and imperfect

ADDIE'S BOUQUET.

words that they make a lovely bouquet to present to his Father. A lady in the temperance meeting said almost precisely that yesterday; and little Addie has given us a practical illustration of it."

"That helps me," Laura said, after a moment; "Thank you, Uncle Harvey."





“GIVE ME A BITE.”

Now, I have a true story to tell you about a parrot. Do you know Mr. Bushnell? He is a missionary in Africa. Only a few years ago he was in this country making a visit, and one day I was at his father's house spending the day with him. Among other interesting things that he had brought home with him were ever so many parrots. They looked so funny stand-

“GIVE ME A BITE.”

ing around out in the yard! Two or three of them hopped on the branch of a low tree, just as these two in the picture are, and others were marching around the yard.

We were all out in the pleasant yard; I had a lady with me who had never heard a parrot talk, and she wanted so much to hear one. She said she could not believe it possible that they could talk.

So Mr. Bushnell tried in every way he could think of to get the parrots into a conversation. But it is wonderful how much they sometimes act just as little children do.

Did you ever try to get your little bit of a brother to say his cunning verse (that he says for you so sweetly) to your friend who has come in to see



“GIVE ME A BITE.”

you? And could you coax him to do it? If you could, give him my love, and tell him he is a remarkably good little boy.

But these parrots just stalked solemnly around, winking their queer looking eyes at us, and not a single word would they say.

“Well,” Mr. Bushnell said at last, “if you will not speak, you must keep still. I suppose, since you really don’t know enough to do as you are told, we must excuse you.”

So we went away and left them to sulk alone. Then we went to the orchard and gathered some of the largest and juiciest apples you ever saw, or, anyway, they were the largest I ever saw.

Coming back to the front door again,

“GIVE ME A BITE.”

instead of going into the house we sat down outside, some of us on the piazza and some flat on the grass; it was such a lovely summer afternoon.

The lady who had never heard a parrot speak, was standing very near the branch of a tree where these two are perched. She had forgotten all about them, and was leisurely eating her apple, and joining now and then in the talk, when suddenly a shrill little voice right at her elbow said:

“Give me a bite!”

Who in the world could that be? There wasn't a child to be seen. The rest of us began to laugh, but she turned her astonished head around in search of the speaker, turned just enough to let him get a good chance at the apple for which he had so politely

“GIVE ME A BITE.”

asked, and what should he do next but seize it, and holding it with his foot, proceeded to take great bites of it without leave or license!

After all, he behaved as well as he knew how, I have no doubt; it is a nice thing to be able to say that. One thing you may be sure of, that lady is perfectly certain that parrots can talk!





PRETTY SOON.

QUEER name, isn't it, for a little girl? Not half so pretty, one would think, as "Ivie," which was the name mamma gave her when she was a baby. The trouble was that "Pretty Soon" fitted her to a dot; she said it fifty times in a day. No wonder her brothers took to calling her that, and her

schoolmates took it up. It didn't seem possible to ask her to do *anything* to which she would not answer "pretty soon."

It was a real warm afternoon, and she had scampered out to the garden to see if she could find a breeze. That was not to be found, so she took a rake instead. It lay there in the grass, looking so tempting, and it seemed as though it would be such fun to rake up the newly cut short grass.

So she tried it; it was real fun. She went on—playing she was a poor widow with eleven children, and everything they had to eat was what she earned raking hay; and she had to make dresses out of dried burdock leaves for them to wear.

"Ivie!" came a call, sounding faintly

through the long yard. Ivie knew it was mamma. "Ivie, see here, daughter!"

Yes, that was mamma; oh, dear! what could she want; it was such fun out there, and she was just planning what to use for shoes and stockings for her eleven children; it couldn't be that mamma was in a hurry.

"Pretty soon," she shouted back, and paused, with her rake in hand, to wonder whether such a thing would be possible as to knit stockings out of long whisks of hay, suppose there were no other way to clothe those eleven children, couldn't it be done?

"Ivie!" shouted brother Penn's voice, from the front door, "mother wants you."

"Pretty soon," said Ivie. It didn't



seem half so bad to say that to Penn — she was used to it — and she went on with her dreaming, till, having planned the stockings, and decided that shoes *might* be made out of cat-skins, if one couldn't do any better, and could only manage to get the skins, she woke with a start to remember that it really was mamma who called, and that she had stopped calling and gone back into the house — so had Penn. Ivie dropped the rake and ran to see what was wanted.

Mamma sat by the window, sewing, and Penn was just licking the last drop from a saucer; another stood beside it, half full of what looked somewhat like white soap-suds.

“Did you want me, mamma,” Ivie asked, meekly.

PRETTY SOON.

“I called you,” her mother said, sewing away; “Aunt Kate stopped on her way home and left a dish of ice cream for us. I divided it between us, but yours has melted, I am sorry to see. It was very nice.”

“Now, if there was one dish that Ivie liked more than another it was ice cream, and as it didn’t grow on the rose-bushes and couldn’t be raised in the hay-fields, she didn’t have it very often. Only think of this great saucer, more than half full, and all melted.

“It tastes just like boiled custard that hasn’t got half cold enough,” she said, taking sorrowful little sips of it, and looking as if she would like to cry.

“Yes,” her mother said, “I suppose so; the fact is, ice cream is one of the

PRETTY SOON.

things that will not wait for "Pretty Soon." It is with that as with a great many other things—it must be attended to *now*. If ice cream were all that you had lost and made other people lose, by waiting until "pretty soon" to attend to what is wanted right away, I should be glad.

Ivie sipped away at her custard and looked mournful, and kept still; there was really nothing to say for herself; she was surely the only one to blame. She thought crossly of those eleven children, and resolved that they should go barefoot all their lives before *she* would knit them any stockings, and I'm afraid they would; for, you see, unless she improves, instead of doing it when the time comes, she will wait until "pretty soon."



HENRIETTA'S SISTERS.

THERE were three of them, and they were just as full of mischief as any three beings that you ever heard of. They were not real sisters either. One was a cousin, but the mother had adopted her, and the little ones called themselves "cousin sisters." It was New Year's eve; all three of the small misses had taken a nap in the middle

of the day, for the express purpose of sitting up until nine o'clock on New Year's eve. There was nothing special to be done; most of the fun and all of the stockings had been attended to on Christmas, but for all that there was a strong feeling in the minds of the little people that things ought to be different on this day from others, else what is the use of having New Year come at all.

They came to grief, though, half a dozen times before seven o'clock. There were so many things that they wanted to do that they couldn't; and there were so many things that they didn't want to do that had to be done, that by the time the clock struck seven, Addie sat on the stool behind the door, and Alice and May occupied each a cor-

ner of the sofa, and none of them were to stir for ten minutes.

“It serves me right,” Mother Talbot said, sitting down to breathe and eyeing the culprits severely. “I guess I have learned a lesson; when you three get the promise of sitting up until nine o'clock again, it will be when you are seventeen at least, or when I am foolish. I declare I'm just tuckered out.”

Miss Henrietta sat by the drop-light hard at work. There was to be a New Year's sleigh-ride next day given by their German teacher to his class — a sleigh-ride and a supper afterward at the Harlem House, ten miles away. The class was large, twenty-four as merry boys and girls as could be found in the town; no wonder that Henrietta's eyes sparkled at the thought.

HENRIETTA'S SISTERS.

She was making a new lace ruff for the occasion; some of the girls were to wear entirely new dresses, and it was safe to conclude that the most of them would have on dresses that were new that winter; but Henrietta's last year's dress was still doing duty, for there was really very little to spare for dress in the Talbot family.

When you remember that Henrietta was just fifteen, the age in which the dress fever generally comes on in full force, you will understand how long she had puzzled over this question and had a hard struggle to make herself satisfied and happy with nothing new but a ruff of soft, filmy lace for the New Year's ride.

She looked up when her mother spoke and saw each of the solemn lit-

HENRIETTA'S SISTERS.

tle faces from their corners, and fore-saw all the trouble that there would be between that time and nine o'clock. Then she looked down and saw her ruff just commenced, and her ribbon to be bowed, and the rips to be sewed in her gloves. How busy she must be! There was a sound of laughter in the parlor. If Laura and Emma and Rob, the young lady sisters and brother, only hadn't company they would do something to interest the children.

"Poor little things." This she said to herself while she sewed. When the ten minutes were up, she called the trio to her, and there was much whispering and much clapping of hands on the part of the wee ones; and finally the ruff was tucked into mother's drawer

HENRIETTA'S SISTERS.

and the whole party went to the kitchen.

They were going to have tableaux; and they were to be actors, and the company in the parlor, and father and mother, too, were to be invited out to see them.

Was there ever a more delightful New Year's eve than that? The kitchen was a grand place for tableaux; it was large and dim, and there were two nails in exactly the right place for hanging the curtain; they took a sheet from mother's bed for a curtain. Then they proceeded to make Addie into a tableau.

When the curtain was ready to rise, she looked just as the picture does that I have put in this story. The way she came to look like this was because she

wanted one sleeve bowed up with Henrietta's sash and she wanted Emma's sun hat on; she had dragged it down from its nail in the attic that very day, and she thought it fitted right in here; then she saw a big apple on the table and she wanted to have that in her hand; so, though the tableau was not in the least like what Henrietta would have made it, she had started out to please the children and she wasn't going to let a difference of opinion spoil her fun. What in the world to name the tableau she didn't know. As the actors seemed to be full of ideas she tried them.

"Let's call it 'The Winter Night,'" said Addie.

Henrietta laughed. "Why," she said, "how does that fit?"



HENRIETTA'S SISTERS.

“Oh, it sounds so pretty! You know Rob said they had that at their tableau. I want to be the ‘Winter Night.’”

“Suppose you say the winter blossom,” said Henrietta, looking lovingly at Addie’s sweet face, blossoming out from one corner of the winter kitchen.

That was pronounced fine, and the company and family were invited out to see. That tableau was a success; but behind the scenes Alice and May got to quarreling because they both wanted to hold little Laura Emma Henrietta, so she could see. May tucked the doll under her arm and Alice pulled; then May cried; the flesh and blood Henrietta felt like sending them all off to bed in disgust, but instead she said:

“Why, here, let us make a tableau out of that; no, a charade. We will make them guess the word; that is the way they do in charades;” so the two were arranged just as you see them here, and the company guessed that the word was “cry,” and then they guessed it was “baby,” and finding that these were both wrong, they were finally told that it was “snatch the baby,” and they all agreed that it was strange they should not have thought of that.

The next time Henrietta meant to carry out her own ideas, she put the doll in the cradle and coaxed Alice to sing, in the sweetest of baby voices, the cradle song. “Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber.”

There were some things in the tableau that she didn't arrange. May said

HENRIETTA'S SISTERS.

her dolly hadn't been in one picture yet and must be in, and, although she was all ready for her bath, in she came; Kitty, also, came on tiptoe and took her place all unknown to anybody, but the company pronounced this the best. What do you think?

It is a pity that I haven't time to tell you about the other tableaux; they had dozens of them. Mother hadn't the heart to break in on their fun at nine o'clock; so it was striking ten when they, three pairs of rosy lips, waited to kiss Henrietta and tell her she was the best girl in the world.

A DIALOGUE.

Mother.—“I suppose I ought to sew on Henrietta's ruff; she has left it, to

take care of the children and she wants it to-morrow."

Father.—"No, no, don't do that, I don't like to see a self-denying act spoiled by being paid for right away."

Mother—"Why, you don't suppose she did it for that, do you?"

Father.—"No, and we mustn't teach her to expect rewards for kindness; that is false doctrine. She will get along without the ruff and be just as happy as the rest.

Mother, laying aside her needle and sighing a little, "Well, I don't know, I hate to have her disappointed; but, as you say, people mustn't get a habit of expecting pay for what they do. My land! if I should get pay for all my doings I'd be rich."



HENRIETTA'S SISTERS.

In her room Henrietta bit the thread from the last finger of her mended glove and stuck the needle on the cushion. She could wear her old collar, but it wouldn't do to go with ripped gloves, and she knew well enough that there would be no time in the morning, for there was company staying in the house, and it was hard work for her to be spared at all. She took up her little book just to glance at the verse for New Year's day; she knew very well what to-day's verse was; hadn't she been practicing on it in a small way all the evening? What, a Bible verse having anything to do with playing tableaux with her baby sisters!

Yes, indeed, it had; but for that Bible verse the tableaux would not have

HENRIETTA'S SISTERS.

been played. There was a happy smile on her face as she said it over softly, not to awaken the smiling Addie whose rosy cheeks lay on the pillow next to hers.

“For even Christ pleased not himself.” That was the last verse for the old year; so she just peeped into the new book — one of her new Christmas presents — and you should have seen the glow which lighted up her face as she read:

“Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.”



OLD JACK.

POOR old fellow! He was one of the dearest old dogs that I ever knew. He was black and white, strong and graceful, a good hunter when there was no gun to be seen or heard. He never, in his old age, liked a gun — for once he had been shot, and he knew enough to try to keep away from that which had once hurt him.

OLD JACK.

I wish everybody were as wise, don't you?

When I was a little boy he used to sleep on my bed and keep my feet warm in winter. When I was sent of an errand he always wanted to go with me.

How clean he used to keep! Why, you could never get him to lie on anything that wasn't clean.

The boys liked my old four-footed friend almost as well as I did. I guess some of them thought more of him than they did of me.

It was real fun for half a dozen of us to get together—old Jack counting one—and to play "Hide and Go Seek."

One would put his hands over Jackey's eyes, and he would hold as still as



a mouse till he heard the hoop, then no one of us could hold him longer, but away he would go in search of the hidden ones, and would find them quicker than the one who waited and listened with him.

I could tell you many queer stories of my dear old Jack, but must not now.

He was older than I—a little more than fifteen years. Then his teeth fell out and he could no longer climb into a chair. They said he must die, but I could not bear the thought. One day I was sent to a neighbor's on an errand and when I returned poor Jack was gone.

He had been sent away and killed, I suppose, though no one told me so. I had few friends then and do not

OLD JACK.

know that I ever had one more faithful than this four-footed one.

I wept many tears over his death, and feel sadly now to think that I shall never, never see him again; for he hasn't any soul, you know, to live forever.





BABEL.

ROBERT MONROE leaned his elbows on the table, and his head on his hands, and studied this picture very carefully.

“Mother, where was Babel?” he asked at last.

“Where was what?”

His mother was putting a new ruffle on her black alpacca dress, and paying attention to it.

“Why the Tower of Babel, that those old fellows built, you know.”

“Bless me! child, I don’t know. Don’t you study geography in school? You ought to know where it is.”

Robert sighed. “We study geography,” he said; “but I guess we haven’t got to this place yet. We had South America to-day. What did they make it for, mother? Just to see how big a thing they could build?”

“I wonder if that is a true bias?” said mother, holding up a width of alpacca, and she and Aunt Helen discussed it. “Dear me! as if *I* knew anything about the Tower of Babel!”

This last, in answer to a second question from Robert.

“Helen can’t you give that boy a

little of your wisdom? You are a graduate."

Miss Helen laughed. She was working a cat, on a sofa pillow. "I'm like Robert," she said, good-naturedly; "I didn't get to that. If it were a French word, now, I could translate it for you; I really don't know much about Babel. Why don't you look in the Bible? That will tell you about it."

"Whereabouts," said Robert, promptly drawing the big Bible toward him.

"I'm sure I don't know. Somewhere in the Old Testament, I guess. You will have to look for it."

"The Old Testament is a big book," Robert said, and he sighed again. And he turned the leaves, patiently at first,

and then with growing impatience, while mother and auntie gave themselves up to the care of the ruffle and the worsted cat.

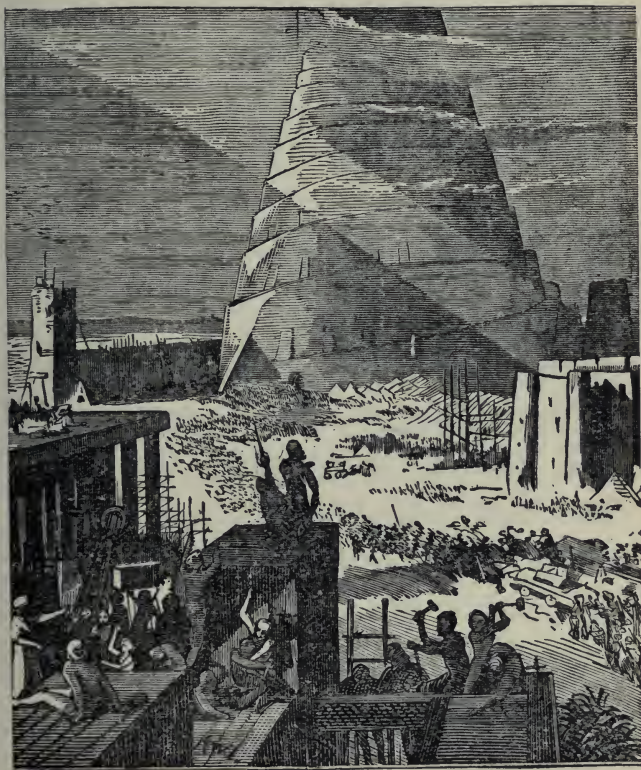
“This cat’s toes are horrid to make,” said Aunt Helen, at last; “can’t you find it, Robbie? I really wish I could help you. Let me see; isn’t there a Bible dictionary somewhere?”

“There was an old one up-stairs in the attic, but I’m sure I don’t know where it is now. Would you gather this a little fuller if you were me?” This from mother.

“I’ve got it!” exclaimed Robert, gleefully.

Not the dictionary, nor the ruffle, but the story of Babel.

“Look, Aunt Helen, it is in the eleventh chapter of Genesis. I began



at the beginning, at last, and looked at every chapter until I got it. What a queer story. I wish I knew more about it; is this the same tower, mother?"

"I suppose so. I never heard of but one."

"And is it standing now? How I would like to go there and see it. They were going to have it reach up to heaven; I wish they had, and then a fellow could have gone there, and climbed up on it, and so got to heaven so much easier than being *good* for everlastingly. I wish I knew more about it. The boys said it had images in it made of gold, forty feet high; but the Bible don't say anything about that. Mother, isn't there a book somewhere that tells more about it?"

“ My land! child, I don't know. What is the matter with you to-night? You act as though you thought I knew all about those old heathen and their towers. Ask your Sunday-school teacher. What are Sunday-school teachers worth if they can't answer puzzling questions?”

Aunt Helen gave a little scream of dismay. “ Don't put that into their heads,” she said; “ I am a Sunday-school teacher, please remember, and I'm sure I don't know anything about the Tower of Babel. And here it is Saturday night, and I haven't looked at my lesson; and this cat not done; oh dear me! I believe I shall have to give up that class.”

And though Robert and I staid another hour in that pleasant back parlor,

BABEL.

and saw that the ruffle hung beautifully, and watched the cat's tail grow, stitch by stitch, we neither of us learned any more about the Tower of Babel.





HOW MATTIE PUNISHED HERSELF.

“OH, mamma,” she said, “need I go to school this morning? I don’t feel very well.”

Now Mattie had a bad habit of saying this, when she felt a little sleepy and dull, and didn’t want to take the trouble to go to school. Mamma had ~~often~~ answered her:

“Oh, yes, I guess you are well enough

to go; here is a big orange to take for recess." And then Mattie would get well right away and go. But mamma did not like to have her do so, and this morning she said, "Yes, if you are not well enough to go, you may stay at home."

So Mattie, very much delighted, curled herself among the cushions of the lounge, and read her new Sabbath-school book. She didn't play with Rob a bit. When he coaxed her, she said:

"Oh, don't bother Mattie, Mattie isn't very well to-day."

Mamma watched her a good deal, and found she was well enough to spring up whenever the bell rang and run to the door like a top, and she was well enough to eat two apples, and a

date or two, and at dinner she ate as heartily as ever; but after dinner she went right back to her story.

Pretty soon mamma came in, dressed for a ride, with her hat and sack on, and little Rob by her side, dressed in his new brown suit with bright buttons.

“Why, mother!” said Mattie, “where are you going?”

“We are going out to Auntie Milton’s to spend the afternoon and take tea,” her mother said.

Mattie dropped her book, and clapped her hands as hard as she could. “Oh, oh!” she said, “you are going to take me along; oh, mamma, you are, aren’t you? you always do.”

You see Auntie Milton lived about three miles away, in such a lovely country home, with beautiful grounds, full

HOW MATTIE PUNISHED HERSELF.

of trees and flowers, and there was a croquet ground, and a grape arbor, and there were swings, and there were peach trees, with plenty of peaches growing on them, and there were two good boys who each had a little pony. Oh, it was the very nicest place to go to in the world.

“Why, I was going to take you,” said Mattie’s mamma; “at least I meant to do so, until you told me this morning that you didn’t feel very well. Of course if you didn’t feel well enough to go to school, you are not well enough to frolic at Auntie Milton’s.”

“Oh, mother,” said Mattie, and her cheeks were very red, “I feel well now, just as well as I ever did in my life.”

Mother shook her head. “I don’t see that you look any different from

what you did this morning," she said. "In what way do you feel different? besides, if you were not well this morning, I don't want you to go."

"I *was* well," said Mattie, looking down and picking at the corner of her book. "I wasn't sick, mamma, only I felt lazy, and not like studying; not so *very* well, you know, but not sick."

Mamma looked very sober. "That is worse than all," she said; "if my little girl makes believe get sick every time she doesn't feel like study, why, of course, I cannot know when she *is* really sick."

Then how ashamed Mattie felt; she cried very hard, and said she didn't think about it's being a story, that she didn't mean she was really sick, and



asked mamma to forgive her, which, of course, mamma did.

But forgiving her and letting her go visiting were two things; so she had to sit curled up there by the window in a dreary heap, and watch the carriage drive away with mamma and little Rob, and leave her alone. But she had the comfort of thinking it was her own fault. I don't believe Mattie will forget to speak "just exactly the truth" next time.





A CHRISTMAS FROLIC.

“ FAITH, and I wouldn’t be bothered so with the tramps! Lazy fellows they are with their bothering stories, not a word of it true, I’d be bound. If the master would just lave it all to me, I’d be off wid ’em in less than no time. It’s too soft a heart he has for his good, and that’s a fact.”

• I suppose Bridget Maloney, who

worked in Judge Chambers' kitchen, had been known to say that twenty times within a week. Nellis and Laura had heard it over and over again, till now they laughed as soon as she began and said they could finish that sentence for her.

"I'd just like to try her some time when papa wasn't here," Laura said; "I shouldn't wonder if she would give me a cold bite, for all her crossness."

This gave Nellie a thought. "Let's try her," she said. "Let's rig up in the horriest old fashion that ever was, and give her a call. If we wait till evening, we can fix so she won't know us, and then we'll see."

The idea grew and grew; they were wonderfully tickled with it; it was so near to Christmas, that they felt as

though they must be doing something extra all the time. They concluded to be traveling musicians; Nellis took Laura's old concertina, which had laid away in the attic for so long that Bridget wasn't acquainted with it, and Laura found packed away an old plaything of the baby's that tinkled sweetly, and with a little twisting looked like a musical instrument. Then they rigged up, as Nellis called it. A queer-looking fellow he was certainly when he got himself dressed! No one would have imagined him to be Judge Chamber's handsome son. As for Laura, she tried to look as badly as he did, but you can see for yourself that her little face looking out from the old-fashioned hood looks real sweet and winning. At last they were ready; and,



THE CHRISTMAS FROLIC.

as good fortune would have it, it was Christmas eve. Also it snowed.

“What fun!” said Laura clapping her hands, when Nellis reported this last fact; “she’ll never turn us out in the storm without any supper.”

So they went. “What’s all that?” said Bridget, stopping in her work of toasting bread for the family supper, and running to the door to listen, “Tramps, I’ll be bound, and the Judge isn’t in; it’s meself that’s glad of that same; not a blissed mouthful will they get out of Bridget this night, with their doleful stories and their grinding music. Faith, and it’s a boy and a girl; nothing but a baby she is, to be sure; and it’s storming hard. What is the likes of her a doin’ out in such a snow-storm? What do you want, boy?

Stop your howlin' on that thing, and tell a dacent story, if you can."

"We've come out to try and earn our supper, ma'am," said Nellis, in the weakest of voices; "my sister and I. We want to earn an honest living, ma'am. We've had nothing to eat this good while, and we're very hungry."

"Ye ought to be ashamed of yerself to take that little girl out in the storm, great big fellow that ye are," said Bridget, in wrath.

"My little sister likes to go where I do," said Nellis, speaking very truthfully; "she often cries because she can't go with me. Would you please give the poor child a bite to eat in return for the music, ma'am? I'm sure she is very hungry, and I'll play my best to pay you for it."

“Kape your music to yourself; I’d rather pay ye for kapin’ quiet. But I’ll get ye a bite to eat, and that’s a fact; my name isn’t Bridget Maloney if I don’t.”

“She’s gone to the pantry,” said Nellis, peeking in at the window. “She is going to give us those chicken bones to pick; goodie! and a great slice of bread and butter too; and half a ginger-bread! Isn’t this rich?”

“Nellis, was it exactly the truth when you told her we hadn’t had anything to eat in a long time?”

“I should think so; it’s four hours if it’s a minute; and I don’t believe I ever was hungrier. Hush up, little sister, I must get back my whine, she’s coming.”

“Here!” said Bridget, thrusting a

THE CHRISTMAS FROLIC.

good-sized paper bag stuffed full, out at him, "take that and be off wid ye. It goes against me to feed you; I have enough of that to do when the Judge is at home. But I don't want the little thing to starve; here's tin cents to buy her some milk and a warm loaf for her Christmas breakfast; and then you better go to work choppin' wood like a dacent boy and earn her livin'. Now tramp."

And tramp they did, almost bursting with laughter; down the back yard across the street, down to the corner of Hall Street, and then raced back under the shadow of the great houses up their own avenue to the front door, and in through the sitting-room up to the nursery; wild with glee, and the

desire to show mother their supper and tell her the fun.

Bridget Maloney hung up her stocking that night, and there was one thing in it that she thought was the greatest mystery that ever happened to her.

It was a long time before she found out about it. You will understand it at once. It was a note printed in Judge Chambers best hand, because Bridget could read print. This is what it said:

“Miss Maloney, blessings on your kind heart for remembering the poor and feeding the hungry; behold your ten cents has turned to gold and come back to your hands.”

Sure enough! nestling in one corner of the paper was a piece of money

THE CHRISTMAS FROLIC.

about the size of her ten-cent piece, and all of shining gold.

They explained it to her, because Judge Chambers thought she must not be deceived, but she acted as though she only half understood it; and, someway, she has given over grumbling, because the Judge is sure to feed the tramps when they come to his door.





NELLIE'S TROUBLE.

It was *such* a nice, sunshiny afternoon, and the lake looked so still and beautiful. Nellie felt as though she had never wanted a ride on it so badly before. There lay the boat, close to the wharf, not locked at all; the chain just slipped around the post to keep the little boat from slipping away. What was to hinder Nellie's ride? Why just this: her mamma had said, again and again: "Now, Nellie, re-

NELLIE'S TROUBLE.

member you are not to go in the boat without papa, or Uncle Dick, or brother Harry; somebody a good deal older than yourself who knows how to manage a boat."

Nellie had heard it so often that she knew just what words her mother used. Yet here she stood, looking at the boat, wishing that she could have a ride; papa and Uncle Dick were in the city, and brother Harry not yet home from school. Nobody to take Nellie for a row on the silver lake.

"I could go alone just as well as not," said Nellie, "if mamma only thought so. I know just exactly how to row; papa always lets me row when I go with him. I do wish mamma wouldn't be so 'fraid; papa isn't. I just believe I'll take a *little bit* of a

NELLIE'S TROUBLE.

ride, to show mamma how nice I can do it. If she only finds out how well I can row all alone, she wouldn't be afraid any more. She didn't say anything about it in two weeks, and I am a good deal older than I was two weeks ago. I do believe I'll just take a little *speck* of a ride."

So she took an oar, and steadying herself by it, hopped into the boat; and unloosing the chain, paddled off; all the time saying to herself; "I'm a good deal older, you see, than I was when mamma said that. Two weeks makes a good deal of difference, sometimes."

Now, perhaps, you think something dreadful happened to Nellie? that she got drowned, or almost drowned, or at least *very much* frightened? Nothing

NELLIE'S TROUBLE.

at all happened to her; she took a little bit of a ride, and came back safely, and fastened the boat, and went to the house; nobody saw her, nobody knew anything about it. Oh, then you think Nellie was happy? Not a bit of it; I think she never felt more unhappy in her life. She could hardly eat any supper; she felt as though there was a great lump in her throat. She was willing to go to bed even before it was time. She hoped she could go right to sleep and so forget that lump, but she couldn't get to sleep; she tumbled and tossed, and turned her pillow, and finally cried outright. What was the matter with Nellie? Oh, dear me! she knew she had done wrong; she knew she had disobeyed her dear mother; she knew Jesus saw her all the while.

NELLIE'S TROUBLE.

and knew all about her. There was only one way for poor Nellie to get rid of the lump in her throat, and the dreadful feeling in her heart. She called mamma and told her all about it; and after she and mamma had had a talk, she slipped out of bed, and down on her knees, and asked Jesus to forgive her. After that little Nellie could go to sleep; but it was a good while before she wanted another ride on the silver lake; and she had lost all wish to go alone.





LEAFY FERN.

LAURA WASHBURN worked steadily away at her drawing lesson, talking while she worked. Miss Alice and she were alone in the drawing-room. This was an extra lesson she had, in object drawing, after the rest of the class were gone.

“This fern is *awful* hard to draw; don't you think so, Miss Alice?”

“That depends,” said Miss Alice, smiling. “I dare say it is rather hard for you.

“I don’t care if it is hard, it’s pretty. What do you think, Katie Lee says she wishes she could make a fern out of gold to take to the Fair; she wants something prettier than anybody else has, and she says there is nothing so pretty as ferns. Isn’t it queer, Miss Alice, that people can’t make even such little bits of things as ferns? We have to wait for them to grow.”

Miss Alice didn’t hear a word of that; she was busy thinking about her little sister Leafy, and the tears she shed, when she found she would have to give up the Fair, because she was the only one of the company who had nothing to sell. They were

LEAFY FERN.

too poor to buy some fancy articles for her to sell again, as other mothers had done for their daughters, and Leafy had no money to buy worsteds and card-board to make pretty things out of; in fact, they were very poor indeed. It took all that Miss Alice could earn to support the invalid mother and keep Leafy in school. Besides, if she had something to take, there was her one white dress, grown very shabby, not at all like the other little girls. But Miss Alice kept on looking at the fern that Laura was copying. She had an idea; as she looked, her eyes kept growing brighter and brighter; and when she went home that evening she said: "Now, Little Leafy, you needn't look sober any more; I have thought of a way

LEAFY FERN.

out of the trouble. You shall go to the Fair, and you shall look as nice as any of them, and have something pretty to sell besides."

Now it is the night of the Children's Fair; and I am going to introduce to you Miss Leafy Fern. That was the name she had on the programme; for you must know that twenty little girls, each, had chosen a name, and was dressed to represent her name. Leafy had on the white dress that was thought to be shabby; who could ever think so again! All around the skirt there was a row of lovely green ferns, pasted on, to look exactly as though they were growing in the woods. Another row of smaller ferns grew above them; the waist, and the sleeves, and the neck were trimmed with lovely

LEAFY FERN.

little bits of ferns, with here and there a touch of moss, and a bright red berry peeping out. Leafy's curly yellow hair was crowned with a wreath of ferns, and mosses, and scarlet berries. She stood behind a little table covered with moss, and ferns springing up all over it, while in the center was the very fern that Laura was copying, growing in its glass case. On the table were little bits of pasteboard frames, for pictures, the pasteboard all covered over with tiny ferns; then there were crosses of ferns, made on card-board, some of them, and some of them pasted on rough little knots of wood; there were little baskets made of pasteboard, covered with moss, filled with earth, and tiny ferns really growing inside. There were half a dozen little bits of rare



LEAFY FERN.

vases, that were nothing more than oyster shells, covered with moss and fern, and a bright berry with a green leaf or two growing in them. You never saw anything more lovely than Leafy's table.

"Oh! oh! oh!" said the ladies; "isn't that just lovely?"

"That is really refreshing!" said the gentlemen; and before the evening was half over, Laura Washburn came to her teacher with a bit of news.

"Miss Alice, what do you think! Leafy has made more money than a single one of us; and she says her things didn't cost a cent; and ours cost a lot, we have spent all our pocket money on them."

"That's a pity," said Miss Alice. "I hope you will make more than you

LEAFY FERN.

spent ; perhaps you will it is early yet."

But her eyes shone. She was glad that Leafy was doing so nicely. It paid well ; for all she was rather sleepy ; for I may as well tell you that she had sat up until midnight, every night for two weeks, making the pretty things that didn't cost a cent.



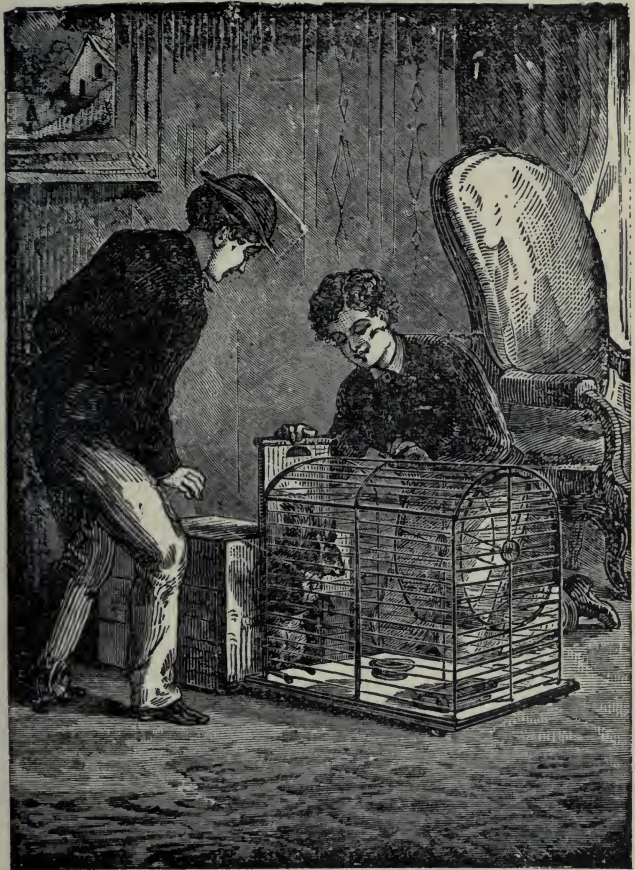


PATENTS AND PETS.

IT was the most industrious day they ever had in their lives: that one in which they made a new door for the new cage; a door gotten up by themselves on an altogether improved plan, and on which they told each other they could certainly get a patent, for there was nothing like it in Millville,

and they didn't believe there was anywhere else in the world. The satisfaction reached its height, when having made all the arrangements, they moved his squirrel-ship in his little common looking house, across the room, and touched the spring that held the sliding door, and up it went! "Worked like a charm," they both said in a breath; and the squirrel entered into it with all his heart, or at least with all his feet; for he walked serenely in the minute the door was raised, and each boy drew a long breath of delight.

"I tell you!" said Robert, shaking his curly head; "that was a lucky moment when I thought of that new cage, and my patent door is as great an improvement as we have had this year, I think." There was one unlucky



word in that sentence : it made a row of ugly looking seams on his brother Ned's forehead.

“Your patent?” he said, and his voice exactly matched the frowns. ‘That’s cool, I must say. I should, think I had as much to do about it as you had ; I wonder who woke you up at midnight, and told you how the screws could be fixed so they wouldn’t crowd against the hinge.’”

“Ho !” said Robert, and you can’t think how contemptuously his voice sounded. “The screws were nothing ; anybody could have thought of them ; I dare say I should, without being waked up in the middle of the night for it ; the thing was to think of the *plan*. It’s altogether new, you see, and my squirrel is the only one in town

who will have a cage like this in a good while; for I don't intend to tell other fellows how to make it." That hateful little word again! Ned had not known that two letters *could* make anything so ugly.

"Anybody would think you owned the world!" he said at last; "the squirrel is mine as much as it is yours, and it stands to reason that you must know it."

"Didn't I catch it and bring it home, and take care of it for a whole half day, without your knowing that there was such a creature in the house?"

"Well, didn't I set the trap and watch all the evening? Just because you got there first in the morning and found it, you call it yours. I say that is mean; and I wouldn't have helped

you make the cage, nor told you a thing about the screws, if I had known that you could do so mean a thing as that."

That was the way it commenced; but bless your heart, it didn't end there; quarrels never end as easily as they commence.

These two brothers, who had worked together so pleasantly all day, grew crosser and crosser every minute, and their frowns on their faces grew so large that the baby when he came in search of them was afraid to stay, and ran back to mamma.

The end of it was, no, I mean the middle of it was, that their voices grew so loud and angry, that father came out to inquire the trouble, and after telling them that he was ashamed

of them both, he decided that the squirrel belonged to one as much as the other, and that he must hear no more nonsense about it if they wanted to keep him.

Very little more was said; but a great deal more was looked.

These brothers got through supper and a long evening, and finally went to bed side by side without having spoken a single word to each other; they even both knelt down according to the way that they had been taught to do, and said, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," and never once thought what a horrible forgiveness that would be, if God should really forgive them, just in the same way that they were forgiving each other.



Robert woke first in the morning; but he had not slept off his crossness. He dressed and went away without making the least effort to awaken his brother, and he didn't go near the squirrel's house.

"If he's Ned's he may feed him!" he muttered, "I ain't going to!"

Now queerly enough, Ned, when he came out into the pleasant yard, felt just so, and said about the same thing.

"Rob may have his old squirrel for all me; I shan't trouble myself about his breakfast!"

Between them both the squirrel was the one who seemed likely to suffer the most. Because of this silly way of doing things, it was not till noon that Ned felt he couldn't stand it any longer without a peep at the fellow, so

he went slyly round to the back of the house where the cage had been set.

Just at that minute Robert had made up his mind to see whether Ned had done his duty well, and there the two boys met. They hadn't seen each other since breakfast time.

Both of them thought they would feel rather foolish at meeting each other; but they suddenly saw something that took away all thoughts of the quarrel from them.

"He's gone as true as you live!" Robert exclaimed; and Ned said in the same breath:

"I say, if he hasn't opened the door himself!"

"Ain't that mean!" said they both.

"Was he all right this morning?"

Ned asked, and Robert suddenly began to feel foolish, as he said :

“ I don't know. I haven't been here before to-day.”

“ I thought you always feed him the first thing in the morning ? ”

“ So I always did ; but I thought if he belonged to you, you might feed him yourself.”

“ That's exactly what I thought,” said Ned, and then those two simpletons looked at each other, and each felt that he had acted so much like a baby, that he could not help laughing.

“ Whose is he now ? ” asked Ned.

“ And who has the honor of getting up the patent door that he knew so well how to open ? ” said Robert, and then they both declared that they had

acted like a couple of idiots and lost their squirrel in the bargain.

“Because,” said Robert, “it’s no ways likely that he was gone, when I got up this morning, for it was pretty early; and if I’d come out here first thing, we would have had him. Well, it serves us right, but I believe that patent door can be made to work yet; let’s study it up.”

“All right,” said Ned, and they went in to dinner.





SAFE LITTLE EFFIE.

SHE came bounding down the steps all ready for school.

“Come across,” called her little friend, Johnnie Bates; “I’ll wait for you.” Right in front of her, were two dancing horses.

“I can’t come across the street, said Effie, “till the horses pass.”

“Oh pooh!” said Johnnie, “clip across; you’ll have time, the horses are standing still; they don’t mean

to go on yet; 'fore I'd be such a coward!"

Down sat Effie plump on the stone step. "I can't come across till the horses go by, not if they don't go in a week," she said. "My mamma said, never cross the street alone, if there is a horse to be seen; and I'm not going to." Just then the horses, that a man was trying to manage, became frightened at a kite that some boys were playing with and broke from him; away they went, right over the very crossing that Effie would have taken! Effie's mamma ran to the door, pale and trembling; she had seen those dreadful horses fly by!

"Oh, my darling! she said, putting



her arms around Effie; "what *danger* you have been in!"

"Why mamma!" Effie said, looking up at her mother with her eyes full of wonder; "I don't think I was in a *speck* of danger; you told me not to cross the street when I saw horses, and of *course* I wouldn't; so how could they hurt me?"





DAISY'S TALK WITH HER CAT.

“DEAR me! what a naughty kitty you are; I do wish you could talk. If you were a little boy brother you could talk, and then it would be so nice. I want you to learn this pretty verse: ‘Children obey your parents.’ If you knew anything, you would know that I’m your parent, and you ought to obey me. Kitties must have stupid times going around and saying ‘mew’ all the time. I wonder why they can’t talk? They have



mouths and tongues. What *does* make the difference? It just seems as if they could talk words if they only tried. Now kitty come; try to say, "Children obey your parents. It is just as easy to say as 'mew' if you only think so."

"Ha! ha! ho! ho!" laughed Daisy's brother Robert, peeping in at the door. "It is easier to 'talk' it, than it is to do it, I guess, both for cats and girls. 'Children obey your parents;' why don't you do it? Didn't mother tell you never to let that kitty get on the lounge."

"Sure enough," said Daisy; "I never remembered it at all; get off, kitty, right away." Kitty jumped off in an instant. "I declare," said Daisy, "she can *do* it if she can't say it."

DAISY'S TALK WITH HER CAT.

"Then she's ahead of you," said Robert; "you can *say* it and can't *do* it, you see."

Then Daisy sat down to think about it.





“SIR CHARLIE.”

“BLESS me,” said nurse looking up, just as she was ready to give young Paul his bath, “who have we here?”

“Sure enough,” said the chambermaid, stopping her work about the bed, while Paul drew the spread over him; he didn’t like company when he was going to have a bath.

As for Sir Charlie, he looked about him in astonishment. “Where’s the

“SIR CHARLIE.”

cars?” he asked, and he stamped his cane on the floor with a thud.

“The cars! bless me, they are on the track, I dare say, or whisking along over it. What does the morsel mean? Where did you come from, my man, and where are you going?”

“I’m going a journey; grandpa’s gone to heaven, and he hasn’t taken his cane, and he can’t walk a speck without his cane, and I’m going to take it to him. I’ve coaxed and coaxed mamma to go with me, and I couldn’t get her to, so now I’m going alone; grandpa shan’t be without his cane any longer. Isn’t this the depot?”

And before they answered him, the nurse and chambermaid both had to laugh, and yet they took, one her apron, and the other the corner of the

sheet, and wiped away what looked like a tear.

“ Did you ever hear the like in all your life?” said nurse.

And the chambermaid said, “ Poor lamb, I do wonder, now, where he belongs? How ever shall we find out? ”

Charlie thought they acted rather queerly. “ Say,” he said, “ isn’t this the depot ; it *looks* down here, from Uncle Ned’s windows, and I heard the ‘ toot, toot,’ and I thought it must be time to go? Can’t you show me where the cars are? I’m all ready ; I’ve got on my new hat with a feather, and my white ribbon bow like mamma wears. Grandpa will be very glad to get his cane again ; he can’t walk a step without it, and he has been

“SIR CHARLIE.”

gone a long time, and if you will show me the way, I'll be back before bed time.”

“Only do hear him,” said nurse; “whatever will we do with the little darling; his mamma must be 'most crazy. Tell me what your name is, and where you live, that is a pretty dear.”

“My name is Sir Charlie, and I live with papa and mamma in the big house behind the trees, and we miss grandpa *so* much. I want him to come back, but mamma says he doesn't want to, 'cause he is so happy there. But to-day I found his cane, and I'm going to take it to him, and coax him to come back. Maybe he will, for me, 'cause he always did what I wanted him to.”

“SIR CHARLIE.”

Well, they had a great time; Sir Charlie couldn't say what his other name was; he had another name. Oh, yes, “pet,” and “darling,” and “blessing,” and a host of others, but his ‘truly name,’ as the children say, they couldn't find out.

Papa went down town every morning, but so did ten thousand other papas, so that was no guide, and he was in such a hurry, and flew first to one window and then another, and asked so eagerly for the cars, that the women were at their wit's end, and dreadfully afraid that he would slip away while they were trying to think what to do.

At last little Paul, who had been staring at him, suddenly found his tongue, and asked some questions:

“ SIR CHARLIE.”

“ Does you wear a blue coat with bright buttons, and go to Sunday-school, and bring a penny, and say a verse? ”

“ Why, yes,” said Sir Charlie, “ I go every Sunday, and sometimes I take a big silver penny.”

“ Then you are Charlie McMartin, aren't you? ”

“ 'Course,” said Sir Charlie, “ that's my other name, didn't I tell you? I forgot, then ; but I do please wish you would hurry and show me where the cars are, so I can go to heaven before my mamma finds me. I want to surprise her; she will be so glad to find that I have been to see grandpa, and got back all safe.”

You can guess the rest of the story; how this dear, foolish little bit of a

boy was coaxed into a carriage, and whirled down the street, to the big house behind the trees, that had “McMartin” on the door-plate, and how mamma hugged him, and kissed him, and laughed, and cried, both at once, while she tried to explain once more that dear grandpa had gone where he was young and strong again, and had no need of a poor little cane.

“What made you think it was Charlie McMartin?” they asked little Paul, after the excitement was over.

“’Cause I thought he was the boy who always had his verse, and remembered his penny, and had ten hundred bright buttons on his coat,” said Paul, “and I knew *that* boy’s name was Charlie McMartin.”



A CHANCE WORD, AND WHAT IT DID.

“I’LL take one of them kind,” Sim Bates said, and he reached out one lank hand with a piece of money in it, and nodded his head toward a basket of oranges that looked larger and plumper than the rest. Mrs. Spriggs, the owner of the inviting looking store, leaned over the counter to make sure of her money, before she got the

orange, but she shook her head at the order.

“Can’t have one of *them*,” she said in a decided tone, and with a strong emphasis on the “them.” “You’ll have to take your pick from one of the baskets behind you; first-rate oranges they are, every one of them; sweet as sugar, and as juicy as molasses.”

“Why can’t I have one from the basket? They look larger.”

“They are *picked ones*, my lad, and I can’t afford to let you have one.”

“Picked ones! ain’t they all picked? I want one of the very best; it is for Kitty, and she is sick; I’m willing to pay their price.”

Still Mrs. Spriggs shook her head.

“It can’t be done” she said. “They

come here from the Willard House most every day for oranges. We are handy to them, you see, and this basket is full of picked ones; the biggest and nicest I've got. They pay more for 'em, and they won't have any at all unless they can get the best; so I have to keep a lot on hand just for them."

Sim Bates was obstinate.

"I'll pay you just exactly as much as the richest one among 'em for one orange," he said, decidedly. "And my money is just as good as theirs; so hand one along; it isn't often I buy oranges."

"That is just the point," Mrs. Spriggs said. "Now you see they are buying all the time, and of course their money is better than yours, be-



cause they have got lots of it, and because they can get the best things any time, and they *will* have them. I can't spare even one; if I begin to take from that basket for such folks there will be no end to it; don't you go and be a ninny, and make a fuss about an orange. You won't scrape money enough together to buy another in a year, and you may as well put up with the specked ones; they are the best *you'll* ever get. A boy that loafes around billiard saloons and rum taverns, all day and all night, ought to put up with specked oranges, and be glad to get them. One of these days you won't be able to buy them."

Mrs. Spriggs was growing angry. She was wasting a good deal of her valuable time over the sale of one

specked orange, so she revenged herself by telling Sim some plain truths. Her only son leaned against the counter, with a wide open mouth, and stared and giggled.

“The idea of *you* making a fuss about a nice orange?” he said, in glee, and the tone in which he said the word “*you*” would have done credit to an orator. Sim drew his hand back slowly, the money still in it; he had not got an orange, but he had a new idea. There was a difference between his money, and the money of the fine people who came from the Willard House. Even when he was willing to pay for the best, it seemed he couldn't get it. A man must not only have money but clothes, and position, and all that belonged to those things. He

didn't put it in this way, and yet some such ideas struggled feebly into his brain. "I guess I won't take none at all," he said slowly and quietly, without the least touch of anger in his voice. "I'll make up my mind, which I'll have after this—the specked oranges or the picked ones and when I decide, I'll call again."

He had the advantage of Mrs. Spriggs, for she was angry. The idea of taking so much time from her sewing to sell a miserable little rotten specked orange, and then not selling it. She gave Sim a loud and long "piece of her mind," telling him some more things about himself that were more true than pleasant, but he put both hands in his pockets and walked down street—whistling, and doing

something else that was very new business to him — thinking very hard. Little Kitty went without the orange that he had made up his mind to bring to her, but it was the best thing that ever happened to Kitty Bates, which she will be sure to tell you, if you call at the seminary, on Willard Square, and ask her about it.

I wish I had time to tell you all the little details of that thinking; all the little steps which Sim went down, as he tried to understand what made him such a great, rough, ignorant boy whom nobody cared for, and as for being respected, why he couldn't even buy a "picked orange" when he had the money. Mrs. Spriggs had told the truth. He spent his days and his evenings in the precise way that she

had said, and there was much more to it all than she knew. Sim knew all about it. On he went, down the avenue, around Market Place, up Clinton Square, thinking. It was just as he got back to Mrs. Spriggs again, having been around a very long block, that he took both hands out of his pockets, and shook them at the fruit in her dusty window, as he said:

“I’ll have *picked* oranges after this, mum; see if I don’t.”

That was only nine years ago; Sim was seventeen then. A great many things have happened in those nine years of which I have no time to tell you. The city where Mrs. Spriggs lives has grown and changed; but that little forlorn spot where she kept her dirty fruit store is still left to her.

It is still just around the corner from the "Willard House" that used to be; it is "Willard Seminary" now, and the seminary girls — among whom is Miss Kitty Bates — come daily to buy oranges and nuts. Yesterday Mrs. Spriggs had what she called "a streak of luck." A gentleman, in fine broad-cloth, and with a watch and chain, and many other marks of what Mrs. Spriggs called "style," stopped at her door.

"Good-morning" he said, pleasantly; "have you any 'picked fruit' to-day?"

"Yes, sir!" Mrs. Spriggs answered, promptly; and wondered what it was in his voice that reminded her of a long time ago. "This basket, sir, is 'picked,' and is the nicest oranges

you'll find in the city. I keep them for the quality-trade; never let one of the common kind have one of 'em."

"What is the entire basketful worth to you, Mrs. Spriggs?"

Such a wholesale way of doing business as this almost took Mrs. Spriggs' breath away, but she hastily named a price that was large enough, and the gentleman closed the bargain at once, and drew out a well filled pocket-book.

"Then you may say to Miss Kitty Bates when she calls—you know Miss Kitty?"

"Yes indeed, sir, she is one of my best customers."

"Very well—you may say to her that her brother bought that basket of fruit for her, to bestow upon her sem-

inary friends, and you may have your boy take them around to the seminary for her, if you please. I see he is on duty. Good-morning, Bobby. You may remember, Mrs. Spriggs, that I called here some nine years ago for an orange, for my Sister Kitty; but you objected to selling me one from the picked fruit. I have great reason to thank you for that, as I decided then to try for 'picked fruit' in the future. Bobby, my boy, if I were you, I would follow your mother's good advice, and not be content with specked oranges and specked character all my life."

And the gentleman laid his card on the old lady's counter, and went his way.

A CHANCE WORD, AND WHAT IT DID.

“Simmons L. Bates, M. D.,” read that astonished old lady. “Well now, if that ain’t Sim! well I never! no never in my life!”





I WILL BE WITH THEE.

LILY leaned against the bed, picture in hand, and looked earnestly at the faces there; a little child hold of some one's hand, and an angel leading the way. "Tell Lily all about it, mamma," she said at last. "Lily don't understand."

Mamma sighed wearily. "I'm sure I don't understand, either; she said. "What is it all about?"

"Mamma, I don't know. It's Willie's lesson; but he doesn't know it yet, either. He says they will teach it on Sunday, but I can't wait till Sunday. Willie says they went right through the water and were not drowned; but I think that must be a mistake, because, how could they, mamma? Little bits of children, and all."

Mamma raised her tired head from the pillow, and tried to look at the picture. "Do you know where Willie's lesson is?" she asked.

"No, mamma; only it is about some people who went into the water. Went right through it, you know; and they had an ark with them; and that

is what took care of them. What is an ark? Willie says it is a box; but that can't be so, because how could a box keep them from getting drowned?"

Mamma began to understand it, though Lily did not. "I think I know the story," she said. "This ark was something that God had given them to show them that he was with them. They were God's people, darling, and were doing just what he told them; so he took care of them."

"What did they want to go through the water for mamma?"

"Because the water was right in their way; they couldn't get where they wanted to without passing right through that water."

"Where were they going, mamma?"

"They were on their way to the

I WILL BE WITH THEE.

beautiful country that God had promised to give them for their own."

"Mamma, why didn't God dry the water all up? Then they needn't have been a bit afraid."

"I don't know, darling; there was some reason why this was the best way; but they had no reason to be afraid after God had promised to walk right along with them."

"Well, mamma, I wish he would walk along with folks now; then bad things wouldn't happen to them."

Mamma lay back on her bed with a tired smile; away down in her heart she wished the same thing. I will tell you something about Lily's mamma, that Lily herself did not know. God had sent her word that he had her beautiful home up in heaven ready

for her, and was very soon going to send an angel for her to lead her home, and she knew that she would have to step her feet in the river that we call death before she could get home; for some reason he had seen best to put this river right in her way, instead of drying it up. Sometimes this made her sad.

Lily spread the picture out on the floor. "Mamma," she said, "may I read this big letter verse at the bottom of this picture? I can."

Now, Lily's reading was peculiar; she could put her fat little finger on a letter and tell you, after careful looking, what it was; and when she reached a blank space she expected you to pronounce the word for her. So she began to read for mamma,

“WHEN.” “When,” said mamma. “THOU,” said Lily; and mamma pronounced; so, through the long verse: “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.”

“Who does it mean, mamma?”

“It means *me*,” mamma said, with shining eyes, “and *you*, darling, and all of us, but especially me. Do you know, little Lily, that God has sent something better than an angel to comfort me? He sent me a message of help, and the messenger was my little daughter.”

Lily didn't quite understand her mother then; but she is a young lady now, and her mother has been in heaven for fifteen years. Lily is going

I WILL BE WITH THEE.

to teach the lesson that has this verse for a golden text, to her class next Sunday; and I know she will teach it well, for she thinks it is the sweetest verse in all the Bible. She knows now, why it comforted her mother.





LITTLE HANDS.

TEN little tongues all going at once. You never saw such a whirl as they were in. Blue eyes and brown eyes and black eyes flashed and snapped. The fact is the little people were all angry. Listen: this is the way they talked.

LITTLE HANDS.

“*You* can’t do anything.” “We can, too! ‘I say you’re too little.’ “I say we *ain’t*.” “It needs people who know how to do things, and *you* don’t.” “We *do*, too. *You* don’t know how to do things.” “We can do as much as you can.” “We know how to sew and make pincushions and dress dolls.” “So do we know how to dress dolls,” “Oh! Oh! You don’t; you would make frights of them.” “We do, too. We *wouldn’t* either; you’re as mean as dirt.” And then came tears and stamping of little feet and all the tongues sputtered at once, and you couldn’t understand what any of them said, which, perhaps, was fortunate, since they had no pleasanter words than those we have heard. The trouble was, there was going to be



LITTLE HANDS.

a fair; the Sabbath-school was getting it up. Now people are very much given to getting angry over fairs. This time the difficulty lay in the fact that the infant class wanted to help. Why shouldn't they? But the scholars who had last year graduated from the infant class felt large, as such scholars are apt to do, and declared that the little people were *too* little to help in any way.

Into the midst of all this hurly burly came Miss Marion, the teacher of the infant class, one of the main *workers* in the fair business. Miss Marion, with her energetic hands and quick brain, with the wisdom of eighteen sunny years and a loving heart, to help her out of trouble.

“Why why!” she said stopping

LITTLE HANDS.

short. "What is all this about? What *can* be the matter? Daisy crying. Lora with her red lips in a pucker. Kate looking ready to eat somebody up. I *wonder* what has happened?"

"Miss Marion," sobbed Daisy, "they say we are too little and we shan't help at all, and we will, and we ain't so now. Can't we?"

"I think very likely," Miss Marion said, trying not to laugh. "Oh, now please don't all talk at once, because I can't understand any one here. Lily is the youngest, she may tell me." And pretty little Lily slipped her hand into Miss Marion's and put the whole story in a nut-shell.

"We want to help with the dollies or something; we don't like to be left

out until we grow big, it's such a long time to wait."

"Of course it is, and we couldn't think of having you wait; you shall help, every one of you. Let me see; who dresses the little bits of dollies?"

"Our class," spoke two of the 'old girls' in the same breath. "Very well; now those little dollies shall all have handkerchiefs, every one of them—the cunningest little things, just two inches square, like this"—and Miss Marion measured with her fingers. "I'll furnish the cloth, beautiful fine cambric, and cut out the handkerchiefs and you must hem them, each of you one, that will be enough for the twenty-five small dollies; we'll pin them to their sides with little

LITTLE HANDS.

specks of pins, and they will look lovely."

Wasn't every little face aglow with smiles after that, and weren't their twenty-five dear little forefingers pricked several times before those handkerchiefs were finished? The work is all beautifully done now; every little three-inch dollie has a neat little handkerchief pinned to her queer little side; they are being packed in a box now, ready to go to the hall, for to-morrow is "fair" day. Lily's brother Rob, because he can count things over twice and get the same answer, has been allowed to pack them, to be sure that they are all there, four or five of the more eager ones have staid to watch each dollie disappear into her corner, the rest have run after Miss

LITTLE HANDS.

Marion to assure her for the two hundredth time that they "did the hemming every bit themselves, only mamma turned the corners." I forgot to tell you that Miss Marion's last bit of kindness was to let the twenty-five little ladies come to her house to pin each with her own little fingers a handkerchief to one little dollie.

"What a bother," said Mrs. Chester Bacon. "No one but Marion Danforth would ever have undertaken such nonsense; the dolls do look cute though, and the little midgets are half wild over being allowed to help. I shouldn't wonder if the ridiculous little dollies would sell for several cents more because of their absurd handkerchiefs."

"You may be sure of that," said

LITTLE HANDS.

Mrs. Holbrook; "each of the twenty-five mothers will be sure to buy one at the highest price, besides thinking forever after that Miss Marion is the loveliest young lady in existence. I am not sure but it pays sometimes to take a good deal of trouble for people."





TWO HELPFUL DAUGHTERS.

ONE was fourteen, and one was four. Edith, the oldest, had just dressed Louise, the baby; that is, "all but finishing," as she said, and stood her down to wait, while she went for a clean dress from the clothes-press.

TWO HELPFUL DAUGHTERS.

While she was dressing Louise, she had been busy planning all that she was going to do to help mother that day. It was wash day, and the girl would have a great deal to do, and Edith was very anxious to be like a grown-up daughter, and take a great deal of care off her mother.

Miss Emeline, her most-admired young lady friend across the way, was very fond of telling how hard it would be for "mother" to get on without her help, and Edith had a great desire to make it hard for *her* mother to get along without her. So on the road to the clothes-press she stopped and made up her mother's bed. To be sure, it had not aired enough yet, and was all humps and hollows, so that it would have to be made over before it

TWO HELPFUL DAUGHTERS.

was slept in; but then it would be such a surprise to her mother to come up-stairs and find it made! For the same reason Edith assorted and put away a pile of clean clothes that lay on the stand. What if she did put the sheets in the wrong drawer, and mix her father's socks, mended and un-mended ones, all up together; wasn't she being a help to her mother?

Meantime the spirit of helpfulness came over Louise. "Dear me!" she said, "if Edith hasn't gone off and left the sponge in the wash-bowl. Mamma told her to wash it out and put it to dry. I s'pose she forgot it; I s'pose she would like it if I should do it for her." So Miss Louise pushed a cushion to the table and mounted, and began to wash out the sponge; that is,

TWO HELPFUL DAUGHTERS.

she held it in the water until all the little pores filled, and then she hugged it up to her and squeezed it slowly, until a stream of water trickled down her clean waist and skirts.

“It don’t smell clean,” she said. “I wonder which bottle has the ’monia; that is what mamma uses to clean it with? I’ve seen her. “I ’most guess this is it.” Out came the cork and in went a goodly supply. But it wasn’t ammonia.

“What a smell!” said Louise, curling up her pug nose. “Worse than castor oil; it makes me think of lamps. That’s the sewing machine medicine, I guess. Maybe this is it.”

In went another dose. Of this smell Louise took long whiffs, and pronounced it good. It ought to have



been, for it was two dollars a pint, and only used for handkerchiefs.

“It’s lovely,” Louise said; “but I don’t believe mamma would like this sponge to drink it all up. What a thirsty sponge it is! Edith said once it was alive; I believe it is now, and is all made of mouths. Now it is spitting. It is my little girl, and I have just given it a dose of castor oil, and it is spitting it out.”

And, tickled with this idea, Louise let it “spit,” not only all over herself and her mother’s shawl, that Edith had left on the chair, but all over the floor as well. A little astonished at last at the muss she was making, she sobered down and went back to her hunt for “monia.”

TWO HELPFUL DAUGHTERS.

The next thing was a loud and pitiful squeal:

“Oh! oh! Dear me! Oh, mamma! mamma! Come quick! my eyes are put out!”

The ammonia was found at last, and proved too much for her. The fumes of it had gone down her throat, and up her poor little nose, and into her eyes. You never saw a more frightened, strangled, draggled little girl than mamma found when she dropped fork, and spoon, and meat boiler, and ran at the first scream.

“Edith,” said mamma, as that helpful young lady got down on her knees and mopped up the carpet, while mother tried to get the spots out of her shawl, and Louise, in a dry night-dress, shoeless and with red eyes, sat

TWO HELPFUL DAUGHTERS.

in the big chair and looked on, "how did all this happen? Didn't you hear me tell you to rinse the sponge and put it away the first thing?"

"Yes, mamma; and I was going to just as soon as I had Louise dressed; but I went to the clothes-press to get her other dress."

"Why had she to have another dress? Wasn't her red one in order?"

"No, mamma; those buttons, you know; I haven't got them sewed on yet. I was just going to do it when I came across that tidy of yours that wasn't finished, and I thought I would do that, and I forgot the buttons."

"The tidy *could* have waited another ten minutes," mamma said, gravely. "But I don't understand it

TWO HELPFUL DAUGHTERS.

yet; Louise surely couldn't have had time to do all this mischief while you were going to the clothes-press and back."

"No, mamma; but I saw your bed wasn't made, and I stopped to make that, and to put away the clothes. I wanted to be helpful." And Edith stopped her mopping long enough to wipe away two mortified tears.

"I never make my bed so early in the morning," her mother said, still speaking very gravely. "I think it is an unhealthy habit, besides not being a *very* neat one; and, Edith, if you *could* learn one simple lesson, I think you might in time become quite a help to me—that is, that the most helpful people in the world are those

TWO HELPFUL DAUGHTERS.

who can be depended upon to do what they are *told* to do.”

I hope you will not think that this mother was too hard on her young daughter; but, for fear you will, I shall have to confess that she was often troubled with just such help as this.





GETTING READY FOR CHRIST- MAS.

“DON’T you believe it!” said Dick, stopping in his work to comfort his little sister. “Of *course* we are going to have a Christmas supper—as good a one as Joe Dunlap will have, I’ll be bound. Just look at that pile of wood I’ve got done—all fixed up there ready to use. I’m sure to get seventy-five



GETTING READY FOR CHRISTMAS.

cents for this work ; and then I'll clip down street, and you'll see what a supper we'll have. I'll get a great big loaf — two of 'em — and a pint of milk, and a little molasses, and two herrings, and a gingerbread! There! what do you think of that? Won't it do for Christmas? Just you run home and sweep up the room, and make the fire bright, and have things ready when I come, and see what a nice time we'll have."

"Well," said Patty, "I will ; and I'll wash off the hearth, and rub the knives, and make things look real nice and splendid."

"Do," said Dick ; "that will make everything taste better — and I'll tell you just what we'll do, let's ask little Janie in to supper. Her father's awful

drunk to-night, and she won't get anything unless we look after her. I'll get three herrings, and we'll give her one. That's a fact, it's Christmas, and we'll be extravagant for once."

"Well do," said Patty; "and I'll lend her my pink apron, so she'll look nice. Mine will do for me; I washed it yesterday."

"That's a nice girl. Now clip it so you'll be all ready—I'm most done."

And Patty, who had come in tears because Joe Dunlap had twitted her with the fact that she couldn't have a Christmas supper, went home with a bright face, and swept the floor, and washed off the hearth, and made things look nice in the bit of a room where she and her Brother Dick lived all alone.



LAME NANNIE.

HER name was Hannah ; but she was so little and pale-faced, and looked so much younger than she was, that somehow Hannah seemed too big a name to suit her. I don't know as Nannie is any smaller, but "it sounds littler, you know." Her Sister Mary always used to explain.

Poor Nannie! she had never run a step in her life, and never would; the

most she could do was to hobble along with a crutch, and she couldn't do that when it was slippery or very cold. How they did bustle about in that family! "Come, children," mother would say as they jumped up from the breakfast table, "there's a great deal to do to-day, and it is getting late; so step spry." Then they flew about. There was a large family, and plenty to do; the boys pumped water, and filled the pails, and fed the hens, and the girls cleared off the table, and brushed up the crumbs, and set back the chairs, and picked up books and papers, and in a very few minutes after breakfast they were ready to have prayers. But during all this bustle Nannie sat in her easy chair and looked on. Perhaps you think she was



LAME NANNIE.

real glad that she didn't have any of the work to do, and could just sit still and rest. But I can tell you if there was any one thing more than another that Nannie was very tired of doing, it was *resting*. She just ached to hurry about that large pleasant kitchen and help. So useless she felt, and so much in the way! Though they all loved her very much, and no one thought of such a thing as her being in the way; but she felt so, all the same, and sometimes the great tears used to roll down her cheeks when she remembered that it would always be so; nothing for Nannie to do. I mean that was the way she used to feel. But one morning, mother said something that set her to thinking.

“ It does take you children so long

to find the place," she said, and she spoke almost crossly, for the bread was waiting, and the irons were waiting, and the cream was waiting, and I don't know how many things were waiting for this busy mother. She was talking about their Bibles and hymn-books, for in Nannie's home they each had a Bible and a hymn-book, and at prayers each read a verse in turn and then they all sang a hymn. It was a pleasant time and every one enjoyed it; but the getting ready took quite a little time, for the Bibles were sure to hide under some papers, and the hymn-books were some on one table and some on another; and then Johnnie never could tell where Second Peter or First John were to be found, so, as mother said, it took so long to get

LAME NANNIE.

ready, that they had very little time for reading. It was a nice thing for Nannie that she said so. Nannie's face began to grow thoughtful, and then to grow bright, and what do you think happened the very next morning? Why Nannie with her two crutches, went about, peeping under the papers, on the shelves, on the two tables, and gathered every Bible; then she got the lesson paper, and found the morning reading, and found the place in every single Bible; and the hymn put down for the day, she looked out in every hymn-book; and there they were, a nice row of Bibles opened and turned on their faces to keep the place, and a hymn-book lying open on each Bible.

LAME NANNIE.

“Why isn’t that splendid?” said mother.

“I declare! this is a real help. Who would have thought of it, but our Nannie?” said father, as he took the big Bible.

“Why, Nannie Brown, you’ve done more to help along, this morning, than any of us!” This was what Sister Mary said. And as for Johnnie, he was so glad that he hadn’t got to hunt up the twelfth chapter of Hebrews, that he said: “That’s jolly of you, Nannie; I’ll bring you an apple this noon: see if I don’t.” And this was one way that lame Nannie found to help.



TROUBLE.

It was Richard Johnson who was in trouble. He wanted to go in swimming — mother didn't want him to. More than that — she said he should not.

He felt so cross about it that it seemed as if he must be angry at somebody.

“There is no use in talking about

it," mother said; "you can't go, Richard, and that is the whole of it. Your father said himself that the pond was dangerous for young people — it was so deep in spots — and if all the boys in town go, that is no reason why you should."

But it looked like a reason to Richard. Why should he get drowned, any more than all the boys in town? However, he had to give it up. There was this good thing about Richard, he had no idea of slipping away like a sneak, after mother had said "No." He went to the barn to feed Frisky. Now Frisky was his own pony, and he thought as much of him as a boy could. For all that, he was inclined to be cross at Frisky sometimes, just for the reason that he had a high



TROUBLE.

temper, and allowed himself to be ugly to anything, or body, that he happened to meet while he felt so; unless it was somebody that he didn't dare to be cross to. It was a pity that he wasn't afraid of Frisky. Once, after he had scolded, and even whipped, the pony, his father said, "Now, see here, Richard, I didn't buy this pony for you to abuse. If you can not treat him well, you can not have him. The first time I find you being cruel to him he shall be sold."

What a pity Richard didn't remember that as he went toward the barn! Frisky was so glad to see him. He came up and rubbed his brown nose against Richard's shoulder, and said, "How do you do" as plainly as a horse could.

“Get out!” said Richard. “Keep your dirty nose off my coat.” But Frisky didn’t mind. Why should he? Hadn’t he been taught to put his nose right there? He kept poking his head in the way, and whinnying, and rubbing his nose against Richard’s shoulder, and against his hand, trying in every way to get a pleasant word; but Richard sulked, and slapped him, and ordered him to “stand around;” and at last, when Frisky didn’t mind quickly enough to please him, he took the horsewhip and hit him a sharp stroke. Then how Frisky reared and plunged! This made Richard more angry still, and he hit him again and again. I don’t know how it would have ended if he hadn’t just then heard a stern voice say, “Richard, you may go di-

TROUBLE.

rectly to the house. Leave your horse with me, and don't touch him again." That was Richard's father, and he obeyed him at once, feeling dreadfully ashamed.

It was more than an hour afterward that his mother sent him to the woodshed after an armful of wood, and while there he heard a dreadful conversation!

A man came into the yard and said, "Good-evening" to his father, who was working in the garden.

"I called," said the man, "to ask some questions about your pony—the one that your boy rides. I want to get one like it for my son; I suppose you don't want to sell yours do you?"

"Yes, sir," said Richard's father; "I do."

This made Richard feel so awfully that he threw down the armful of wood, and ran into the house as fast as he could. Up to his own room, and shut the door, and then how he *did* cry!

“Poor boy!” said his mother, when the horse was actually sold, and went away with his new master; “I feel so sorry for him.”

“So do I,” said his father. “It was harder for me than for Richard. I believe; but I *had* to do it. I had told him that I would; and, besides, he was not a fit person to have a horse—he would have ruined him. A boy who can not govern himself, can not govern a horse.”



YOUNG PAUL'S CONSCIENCE.

“HEYDAY!” said farmer Winthrop’s son, “what have we here?” What they had, which astonished them very much, was a lame horse. David Winthrop held up his sick foot, and looked at it with a wise and troubled air; nothing was to be seen, but it was clear that a great deal was felt, for poor Ned, when he put it down and

tried to stand on it, shrugged his shoulders if ever a horse did, and held the foot six inches from the ground.

“How can a horse that was put carefully into the barn, at seven o'clock last night, on a clean floor, with plenty of straw for bedding, go and get himself as lame as that by six o'clock in the morning, before the barn is unlocked, that is what I should like to know,” David said, wrinkling his forehead and looking as old as his father, in his anxiety.

Young Paul looked at him gravely and walked around at his back, and looked at Ned with an anxious scowling face and whistled a little, but said never a word. For once in his life he was wiser than his cousin David. He was glad that Ned couldn't speak; he



YOUNG PAUL'S CONSCIENCE.

looked at him anxiously and was almost afraid, for a minute, that he might say a word, for Ned was such a wise young horse, who could tell what might happen to him in the course of his education. If Ned had spoken, he would have said: "See here, that young scapegrace of a cousin, who is visiting here from Boston, knows all about this; he took the key of the barn from its nail last night at eight o'clock, and put himself on my back, and rode as hard as he could gallop, up hill and down, over stony roads and smooth ones for a whole hour; he is such a dunce, he didn't know enough not to go down by the stone-quarry, and not to ride on the full gallop when he got there; and, one of those ugly three-cornered stones went sideways into my

foot, and is there now, I guess, by the way it feels, and that is the whole story." That is what Ned might have said, but he didn't; he only held up the sick foot and looked sad and discouraged.

"It's very queer," said Uncle David, an hour or two later, as he examined Ned. "If I didn't know now, that this horse was safe in the stable, locked up at seven o'clock, and was all right and comfortable, I should say he had hard usage last night; but what is the use of talking — I know he hadn't." Uncle David did not once look Paul's way; he had no thought of doing such a thing. The fact is, he trusted his nephew. Do you know how it feels to be trusted when you don't deserve any such treatment? Paul knows.

Maybe you think that his uncle found out all about it, and sent word to his father, and Paul had to go home, and the father had to pay for the horse, and all sorts of trouble followed? It is no such thing; nobody found out about it. How should they? Ned couldn't speak and Paul wouldn't, and the people trusted him. Perhaps you think he was happy, enjoying the rest of his visit to the country? Ah! there you are mistaken.

One day he went to Sunday-school, and the boy next him recited, in a loud clear voice, these words: "And Paul said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."

This made young Paul actually shiver; he looked around him like one

YOUNG PAUL'S CONSCIENCE.

frightened. Now he knew what was the matter. His conscience was before God. He had not thought of that; it had seemed to him that only Ned and himself knew about this matter, and here were two others: Conscience and God; I shall not tell you just what Paul did to make matters as he could; I guess you know. There is but one way to do it, and Paul understood that way as well as I presume you do.





I DIDN'T THINK.

KATE WILSON was the most provoking mortal that I ever chanced to know. She was thirteen years old, as bright as a new cent, pretty enough, and as quick-motoned as a bird, and yet I never knew anybody who was so little to be depended upon when there was any work to be done. She didn't

I DIDN'T THINK.

shirk it; oh no, she was the most industrious being that ever breathed. She always worked exactly when and where there was no need of it.

There had been a freshet. If you don't know what that is you are fortunate. But Kate's father and mother knew, I can tell you. Such a time as they had! The carpets had to come up in the parlors, the curtains had to be taken down, the furniture had to be moved, and everything put topsyturvy; but the worst of it was in the cellar.

Everybody in the house had to run down and help keep the vegetables and coal from sailing away out of the cellar windows; everybody in the house I said, but mind you Miss Kate was *not* in the house. While looking

I DIDN'T THINK.

out of the dining-room window, watching the progress of the flood, she discovered that Towzer's house was afloat. As quick as a wink she flew through the house, tumbling over Bridget in her haste, and hunted up her rubber boots. In two minutes more she was out at the pond, intent on saving Towzer's valuable life. He sat in the door of his house, and didn't seem to be particularly alarmed, but that was of course, because he had not sense enough to know the danger that he was in.

How in the world should she rescue him? She planned several ways that were all very well, except that they didn't work, and she was almost in despair until she suddenly remembered the noose that she had seen Jonas

I DIDN'T THINK.

make to catch the colt with. She rushed around like a wild girl for a few minutes in search of a rope, and finding none and feeling afraid that Towzer would be beyond help if she waited much longer, she decided that the end justified the means, and whipped off her apron and tore it into strips. Hadn't she read only the day before about a heroic boy who saved his sister's life by tearing up his shirt and making a string to let her down from a window? Why should she not be equally wise?

I may as well tell you that having taken careful lessons of Jonas in the matter of the slip knot she was entirely successful, and had the exquisite pleasure of drawing Towzer safe to land. She shut him in the carriage

I DIDN'T THINK.

house to reflect gratefully on his narrow escape, and ran to the house to tell her story.

“I saved Towzer’s life,” she said, eagerly, to the first person she met, who, unfortunately for the romance, happened to be her father.

“Saved what?” he said, rather sternly, and looking down severely on the dripping dress and draggled stockings, to say nothing of the belt of the apron, which still hung in fragments about her waist.

She was a good deal quenched by his sternness, but she nevertheless told her story with a good deal of glee. Her father did not look any pleasanter after she had finished.

“Where do you suppose your mother has been all this time?” he asked,

I DIDN'T THINK.

with severe dignity. "I can tell you if you don't know; she has been in the cellar hard at work, saving what she could of the fruit and vegetables, and the only daughter she has was out playing in the water and destroying her clothes."

"But father," Kate said, timidly, "I was saving the dog's life. I thought it would be cruel to leave him to be floated away and drowned."

"Saving the dog's life," Mr. Wilson repeated, scornfully. "Did it happen to occur to you that the dog was bought in the first place because he could swim like a fish, in the hope that he would succeed in keeping you from drowning yourself? Pray, how many times have you amused yourself

I DIDN'T THINK.

by sending him into the water after sticks? ”

Miss Kate hung her head in shame and vexation. “ I didn't think of that,” she murmured ; “ I was frightened, and I didn't think at all.”

Which I may as well inform you was the secret of the most of Kate's trouble and uselessness ; those words, “ I didn't think,” were forever on her tongue. At the same time I don't think her father took the *very* wisest way to reprove her, do you?





SUNSHINE FACTORY.

“OH, dear! it always *does* rain when I want to go anywhere,” cried little Jennie Moore. “It’s too bad! Now I’ve got to stay in-doors all day, and I know I shall have a wretched day.”

“Perhaps so,” said Uncle Jack; “but you need not have a bad day unless you choose.”

SUNSHINE FACTORY.

“How can I help it? I wanted to go to the park and hear the band, and take Fido and play on the grass, and have a good time, and pull wild flowers, and eat sandwiches under the trees; and now there isn't going to be any sunshine at all, and I'll have to just stand here and see it rain, and see the water run off the ducks' backs.”

“Well, let's make a little sunshine,” said Uncle Jack.

“Make sunshine,” said Jennie; “why how you do talk!” and she smiled through her tears. “You haven't got a sunshine factory, have you?”

“Well, I'm going to start one right off, if you'll be my partner,” replied Uncle Jack.

“Now, let me give you three rules for making sunshine: First, don't

SUNSHINE FACTORY.

think of what might have been if the day had been better. Second, see how many pleasant things there are left to enjoy; and, lastly, do all you can to make other people happy."

"Well, I'll try the last thing first; and she went to work to amuse her little Brother Willie, who was crying. By the time she had him riding a chair and laughing, she was laughing too.

"Well," said Uncle Jack, "I see you are a good sunshine-maker, for you've got about all you or Willie can hold now. But let's try what we can do with the second rule."

"But I haven't anything to enjoy; 'cause all my dolls are old, and my picture-books all torn, and—"

"Hold," said Uncle Jack; "here's a



SUNSHINE FACTORY.

newspaper. Now let's get some fun out of it."

"Fun out of a newspaper! Why, how you talk."

But Uncle Jack showed her how to make a mask by cutting holes in the paper, and how to cut a whole family of paper dolls, and how to make pretty things for Willie out of the paper. Then he got a tea-tray and showed her how to roll a marble round it.

And so she found many pleasant amusements; and when bedtime came she kissed Uncle Jack, and said:

"Good-night, dear Uncle Jack."

"Good-night, dear little sunshine-maker;" said Uncle Jack.

And she dreamed that night that Uncle Jack had built a great house,

SUNSHINE FACTORY.

and put a sign over the door, which read :

SUNSHINE FACTORY,

Uncle Jack and little Fennie.





MOLLIE'S THANKSGIVING.

SHE was on the way to the grocery. She had a broken-nosed pitcher, and was going for two cents' worth of molasses. Her face was bright, but it grew sober as she passed grandfather. His white head was bowed over his hand, and the blue old eyes were dim

MOLLIE'S THANKSGIVING.

with tears. Mollie stopped and laid a little hand lovingly on his white head.

“It will be a nice dinner, grandpa;” she said, and her voice was sweet and loving.

“We’ve got a little meal, and a little sour milk, and I can make a lovely johnny cake, and there are two cents for molasses to eat it with, and there are two potatoes to roast, and maybe I can get an apple to bake for sauce. Grandpa I think it will be a nice Thanksgiving dinner.”

“Poor darling!” said grandpa, wiping his eyes, “you are something to be thankful for, if the dinner isn’t. But I wasn’t thinking of dinner, Mollie. I know it will be good if you get it. Grandfather was thinking of his little boy Dick. It was on a Thanksgiving



MOLLIE'S THANKSGIVING.

day that he went away, seventeen years ago to-day. It makes old grandfather think of him whenever the day comes round; though there isn't often a day that I don't think of him, for the matter of that."

"But he's a going to come back on Thanksgiving day, you know; and what if this should be the very day. Grandfather, I'm going around by the depot after my molasses, then if I meet him, I can show him the way home."

But grandfather only shook his head. "It's a pretty thought, child, and I'm glad you've got it to help you through the days; but your Uncle Dick will never come home again. I feel it all through me that I will never see him on earth."

MOLLIE'S THANKSGIVING.

“And I feel it all through me that you *will*. Why I *know* he'll come. This morning when I prayed for him to come to-day for sure, I most heard the angel saying, ‘Yes, Mollie, he shall.’”

Grandfather smiled and sighed. “You've almost heard him a many times before,” he said; “but keep on listening, dear, it keeps your heart warm; and we'll eat our Thanksgiving dinner, and thank the Lord for it, and be as happy as we can, for there's many a body has no dinner to eat. I'm sure I don't know where ours is to come from to-morrow.”

Mollie shook her brown head. “Now, grandpa, you are not to coax me to keep these two cents and go without our molasses. I've set my

MOLLIE'S THANKSGIVING.

heart on a Thanksgiving dinner. I told Jesus I loved him very much for sending these pennies; and we don't want our to-morrow's dinner till to-morrow comes. I'm going now for the molasses, and I shall go around by the depot;" and she kissed her grandfather on his white hair, on his nose, on both sunken eyes, and kissing her hand to him as she ran across the street, she was soon out of sight.

"I wonder which street I would better go?" she said, stopping at the corner, and looking each way with a wise air. "If one only knew which street Uncle Dick *might* take in coming from the depot, one would know how to decide. I don't see why grandpa should think I am foolish in talking so; of course if Uncle Dick is

MOLLIE'S THANKSGIVING.

alive, he will come home some day, and it *might* be to-day. What if I have said so a good many times, it is true every day, and will be till he comes. I most know he is alive, for people always hear, some way or other, when their friends die. I'm going down Allen Street; that's the shortest road from the depot;" and she turned the corner so suddenly that she ran right against this tall man who had a large valise strapped over his shoulder, and a satchel by the hand.

"Softly, softly, my lassie," he said, as Mollie stopped out of breath. "You nearly tipped me over, to say nothing of yourself. Perhaps while you are finding your breath, you can tell me where to find Marham Street."

"Yes, sir, I can; I just came from



MOLLIE'S THANKSGIVING.

there. I live on that street. It is a good long way from here, and you turn up and down about every lane you come to. If you will wait till I go to the store for my molasses, I can show you the way. The store is just down that block, and across the road."

"All right; go ahead. I'll follow. So you are going after molasses, for mother to make a Thanksgiving cake, I dare say."

"No, sir," said Mollie, and her voice took a sober tone, and she shook her brown head with a sigh. "I haven't got any mother; she died when I was a little bit of a girl. I live with grandpa, and we never have any cake; we are too poor; but we are going to have a Thanksgiving dinner for all that. I will have that little, when it

MOLLIE'S THANKSGIVING.

only comes once a year. We have two lovely big potatoes roasting at the fire, and I know how to make perfectly splendid johnny-cake, and we are to have this molasses to eat with it, because it is Thanksgiving. I did mean to have a dessert, like grand folks. I was going to have two apples and make some lovely apple-sauce, but I had to give that up. Perhaps by next Thanksgiving, Uncle Dick will come home, if he doesn't come to-day, and then maybe we can have dessert too."

"Are you expecting Uncle Dick to-day?"

"Oh, yes; we expect him every day, but mostly on Thanksgivings, for it was then he went away."

"Where did he go to?"

MOLLIE'S THANKSGIVING.

“Out to Australia, sir; ever so many years ago; seventeen years ago to-day. Grandfather thinks he is lost, but I don't.”

Mollie was so busy picking her way across the muddy street that she didn't see the start the man beside her gave, nor the red blood that rolled over his dark face as he said: “What is your grandfather's name?”

“Elias Miller, sir; and he is the best man on the street; oh I guess he's the best in the city. I do wish Uncle Dick would come home and take care of him. If he knew how much he was needed he couldn't help it.”

“He'll come,” said the tall man, striding on very fast; “which is the way? Oh, you want the molasses; and while

MOLLIE'S THANKSGIVING.

they waited in the store, he picked out a dozen rosy apples and had them put up; Mollie watching with eager eyes. What if he should be going to give her one of them to pay her for showing the way. If he did, grandpa should have his dessert.

The end of this story is one that is very hard to write.

How can I tell you in a few lines about the walk home, and about how the tall gentleman carried the molasses, and said he would step in and see grandpa a minute, and how grandpa's eyes, dim and old as they were, yet knew in a minute that his own boy Dick stood before him, and how they talked and laughed, and cried, and had a wonderful dinner; every one of the twelve rosy apples bubbled into sauce;

MOLLIE'S THANKSGIVING.

nor how they moved the next day out of that street entirely into the nicest of little houses, and how roasted potatoes and apple-sauce came to be every day matters to Mollie, and how she made the dearest little housekeeper in the world. You see it can't be done; it sounds like a fairy story, but Mollie knows that it all happened.





FISHING.

STUART MILBURN did not feel very good-natured. "The whole world has gone crazy," he muttered; "anyway this little snipe of a village has. Why can't they let a fellow alone? I don't want them to look after me, and I don't feel in need of their interference either. I never saw such a time; I can't turn in any direction but some

old maid will ask me something stupid; and the girls are as bad, and the boys are worse."

Now, what do you suppose all this was about? You will be surprised when you hear, for no doubt you think from his picture that Stuart was a sensible boy.

The truth of the matter was just this: Stuart's home was in the city, but he had come to the country to spend the summer vacation at his uncle's, and have a good time. In his uncle's family were five cousins, three boys and two girls. Robert, the oldest, was five years older than Stuart, and, being a college graduate, Stuart looked up to him and respected his opinion. He, as well as the others, were Christians.

FISHING.

Now, it so happened that when the family of cousins heard that Stuart was coming to spend the summer, they entered into an agreement to pray for him every night and morning, and to do every thing that they could to get him to be a Christian. A most reasonable and unselfish thing, you will say. What would Stuart have thought of them if they had possessed any other good thing in this world, and had kept all knowledge of it to themselves!

But it was this very thing that had vexed him, and sent him off alone with Tiger, that summer morning, instead of joining the cousins in their fun. And yet they had been very pleasant about it all; they had not



FISHING.

tried to force him into doing anything that he did not want to do. I hardly know what made him so absurd.

“Stuart,” his Cousin Will said, “I wish you were going to Yale with me this fall.”

“I wish I were, with all my heart, old fellow,” said Stuart, with the utmost heartiness. “I worked like a Jehu to get ready to enter, but I didn’t accomplish it; never mind, just you look out for me next fall. I’ll be there as sure as my name is Milburn.”

“Stuart,” his Cousin Robert said, a little later, as they were coming up the walk together, “I wish you were going this road to heaven with me,” and Stuart answered nothing and looked annoyed and wished his cousin would let him alone. Now, if you see

FISHING.

any sense to that you see more than I do.

As to the "old maids" there was only one of them in his uncle's family, and as she was his own mother's own sister, and he had often been heard to say that she was the very best old aunty that a fellow ever had, one would think he might have excused her for wanting him to go to heaven where his mother had been waiting for him for three years.

However he didn't. It was her softly spoken sentence as they rose from prayers that morning: "I prayed for you all the time, Stuart," that had sent him off in a pet with his fishing rod over his shoulder.

"You may go along," he said to Tiger; "thank fortune you can't talk;

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if you could no doubt you would ask me to go to prayer-meeting to-night. What a preaching set they are! I wish I had known it, and I would have steered clear of them and gone home with Randolph. Well, I'll have one good day; there isn't a house within four miles of the point where I am going, and fishes can't preach. I will live in rest for one morning. We will have some good rational enjoyment all by ourselves, won't we, Tiger? And carry home a string of trout for Aunt Mattie, to pay her for looking so sober at us this morning."

Saying which he snapped his fingers cheerily at the dog, and sent him in search of a ground squirrel, and made believe that he was perfectly happy. What do you suppose came into

FISHING.

Stuart's mind and heart before he had held his rod in the water ten minutes, and followed him up with a persistent voice all the morning? Nothing so very new nor strange, nothing but what he had known ever since he was a little boy five years old, and had stood at his mother's knee, one summer Sunday morning, and said it to her; it was just this little verse: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

It was wonderful with what a clear voice that seemed to be said over in his ear. He looked around him once, startled, half expecting to see some one, and once he muttered: "I was mistaken, I see, about the fishes; they have caught the preaching fever, and can do it as well as any of them."

But afterwards there came a wiser thought; those were the words of Jesus Christ; what if he were repeating them in his ear. Did he really and truly want him, Stuart Milburn, to follow him?

“Pshaw,” said Satan, “that was said to the fishermen at Galilee hundreds of years ago.” Still came the mysterious sentence: “Follow me;” “fishers of men!” he said over aloud; “what a strange idea. Worth while, though, to catch men. I should like to be able to lead people. They wouldn’t be led, though, I suppose any more than I will.”

Over and over sounded the verse, “Follow me.” Stuart grew very grave. The moments passed; a fish

FISHING.

jerked and rigged at the end of his line in vain; he did not notice it. Tiger jumped at his heels and talked loudly in his way, but the fisher paid no attention. An important question was being settled.

Suddenly he jerked out his rod, threw back the fish into the water and wound up his line.

“Come, Tiger,” he said; “let’s you and I go to the woods and find the boys; I have made up my mind to ‘follow.’”

Up in her own little room at home, his Cousin Sarah, who was just Stuart’s age, and thought he was almost perfect, locked her door and prayed this prayer :

“ Dear Jesus : He has got vexed

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at us all and gone off fishing, by himself. Don't let him have a good time at all; don't let him have any more good times until he finds them in thee."





RAY'S MORNING.

THERE is a little nestling among the bed-clothes, and then a ringing voice says: "Well, mamma, here I am; good-morning. Shall I tell you a nice pretty story this morning, while you comb your hair?"

"Oh, yes, indeed."

"Well, once there was a man named Peter, and a naughty king named Herod put him in prison. Prisons are

RAY'S MORNING.

great big stone houses with iron windows, where they put naughty men. Peter wasn't naughty, but King Herod was; and he fastened him to two soldiers; he put chains around his wrists, you know, and then around each soldier's wrist. Then they locked the doors and locked and bolted the great big gate, and went away. Peter went to sleep; and in the night he heard some one say to him, 'Get up, Peter, quick; and put on your cloak and come with me.' Then Peter opened his eyes, and there stood an angel; then he hurried and put on his cloak and his belt, and they went out, he and Jesus—the angel was Jesus himself, you know—and they went by the soldier, and the soldier didn't say a word; and Peter wondered and wondered how

they would get through that big gate that was locked up so tight; but when they came to it, open it swung — there didn't anybody touch it at all — then they went through and went down the street, and pretty soon Peter turned around to say something to Jesus, and he was gone! He had gone back to heaven, I suppose.

“Down street a little ways there was a woman lived, and her name was Mary, and she had a prayer-meeting at her house; ever so many people came to prayer-meeting, and they prayed to Jesus to take care of Peter and let him get out of prison. Peter knew there was a prayer-meeting, so he thought he would go to it; and he knocked at the gate (they had to knock at the gate when they went to see

RAY'S MORNING.

Mary), and a girl named Rhoda went to see who was there; and instead of letting him in, she ran back and said: 'Oh, don't you think, Peter is at the gate.' Then the folks said: 'Why, no, he isn't; Peter is in prison, and the door is locked, and the soldiers have the keys. You are mistaken.' But she said: 'No, I ain't mistaken; I *know* it is Peter.' So they 'sputes about it and Peter kept knocking, knocking, and pretty soon some of them said: 'Come, let's go see who is knocking, that Rhoda thinks is Peter;' so they went to the gate and there they saw him, and they knew him and they were so glad to see him; they opened the gate and let him in, and they all wanted to talk to him at once, but he beckoned to them to keep still,

RAY'S MORNING.

and then he told them how Jesus came down out of heaven and woke him up, and got him out of prison. Isn't that a nice story, mamma?"

"A splendid story, darling; and every word of it is true. That was your own Jesus that you pray to, who took care of Peter and helped him out of prison."

"I know it am, mamma; I know all about him. Now, shall I tell you another story?"

"Oh, yes; I like your stories when they are as nice as this one."

"Well, now listen; this is my other story and it is all true:

' Neighbor Phinney had a turnip,
And it grew behind the barn;
And it grew and it grew, an'
And it ne'er did any harm.

RAY'S MORNING.

‘ And it grew, and it grew,
As, until it could grow no better,
Then Farmer Phinney took it up
And put it in his cellar.

‘ And it lay, and it lay,
Until it began to rot;
And his daughter Sarah took it up,
And put it in a pot.

‘ And it boiled, and it boiled,
As long as it was able; •
And his daughter Mary took it up,
And put it on the table.

‘ Then Farmer Phinney and his wife,
When they sat down to dine,
They ate, and they ate,
And they thought that turnip fine.”

“ There, isn't that a nice story,
mamma? ”

RAY'S MORNING.

Mamma, feeling a tremendous distance between that story and the last one, concludes that it is time to give the boy his morning bath, and kiss his little tongue into quiet for a few minutes.





NETTIE'S VISIT.

IT was July, and the great city was very hot. Day after day the fiery sun rose and blazed away with all his might on the dusty pavements and heated houses. All the people too who could were leaving the city.

But the poor were obliged to stay, no matter how the sun beat down into their narrow streets and small stifling rooms. There had been no

NETTIE'S VISIT.

rain for a long time; many people were sick and dying, and the world looked very dark to some of them. Mrs. Holmes lived high up in the top-most rooms of a tall block of buildings. Her rooms were small and hot, for the sun shone into her windows and upon the roof all the long day. She was a seamstress and a widow with one little daughter, Nettie.

Mrs. Holmes was very sad and troubled, for Nettie had not been well all the spring, and now she seemed like a little wilted flower; no strength, nor appetite, though mamma denied herself everything that she could to get nice little things to tempt her darling. The doctor had said she must have change of air, must go into the country. He might just as well have

NETTIE'S VISIT.

said she must go to Europe, for Mrs. Holmes had no dear old home in the country waiting to welcome her; no uncles, aunts and cousins, writing "When will you come?" So she sat through the long afternoon and tried to sew as well as she could with the heat, and the flies, and her sad thoughts.

Nettie was lying on the bed asleep, her little face as white as the pillow.

"She is going to slip right away from me, and leave me alone," the poor mother groaned to herself. "Oh, Father in heaven, help me!" she cried. "Show me what to do for my dear little daughter." The help was nearer than she thought.

"Mamma," said Nettie, sitting up very suddenly, "I had a nice dream; I guess I was in the country, for there

NETTIE'S VISIT.

were trees all around, and green grass, and birds singing; and such beautiful flowers! Are there any flies there?" she said, as she brushed a troublesome one from her face.

The tears came in her mother's eyes, for she remembered dimly the pleasant cool rooms, darkened by blinds and shade trees, where scarcely a fly dared set its foot, but that was long ago.

Mrs. Bertrand lived in the city, too, and she was a widow also. The difference between her and Mrs. Holmes was that Mrs. Bertrand had a great deal of money, and lived on the broad avenue, in a stone house, with marble steps. She lived there winters, but as soon as the first warm days came she packed all her handsome dresses into her trunks, and started for her house

NETTIE'S VISIT.

in the country, a lovely spot on the shore of the bay. There she spent the pleasant summers, rambling over her beautiful grounds, resting under the shade trees, or sailing on the bay. Now, she was not selfish and cold-hearted, if she *was* a rich lady; she truly loved the Lord Jesus, and loved to do his will. So it happened that while Mrs. Holmes sat in her attic, and begged the Lord to send her help, that Mrs. Bertrand sat in her beautiful home, gazing out on the blue waters, and off to the misty hills and rosy sky. Her heart swelled with thankfulness, and she asked the Lord what to do next for him. How easy it is for God to answer people's prayers, if they would only believe it!

She sat and thought a long time of

NETTIE'S VISIT.

different persons, wondering what she could do for them. But the thoughts that came oftenest, and would not go away, were of poor sick little Nettie, and her sad young mother.

"Yes, I'll do it," she said; "I wonder I had not thought of it before." Then she went to her writing desk, and wrote a letter and sent it off.

Now let us go and hear it read.

"A letter for me!" said Mrs. Holmes. "How strange! Who would write to *me*?"

The letter was from Mrs. Bertrand, and it said: "I want you and Nettie to come right away and spend the summer with me. I am sure the fresh air will cure her." But that was not all. There was money enough sent to pay their expenses, and buy them each



NETTIE'S VISIT.

a traveling dress, and some other things.

I can't tell you much about how Nettie screamed for joy, and how her mother cried, then both laughed, and both cried; but I know that not long after two very happy beings dressed in gray, took the morning boat and were brought safely to Mrs. Bertrand's door. Then how they rode and sailed, and took long rambles, and gathered flowers, and thought the time spent in sleep was wasted.

The favorite seat was in the balcony, where Nettie could watch the sea-gulls come and go, and where you may see them all this minute, Nettie, and her mother, and Mrs. Bertrand, with her basket of flowers. Nettie's cheeks are getting round and rosy, and it is

NETTIE'S VISIT.

hard to say who is happiest of them all; but Mrs. Bertrand must be, because you know it says: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."





WARREN'S VERSE.

HE is a little bit of a fellow. He can't read any more than a mouse can; but he is very fond of standing in this way, beside his mother, while she points to the words and pronounces them; then it is easy to read them.

Last Tuesday morning he was reading this verse: "A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that re-

gardeth reproof is prudent." There were two listeners to this lesson. Warren's father in the study was having a great hunt after some papers, but in his haste he couldn't help stopping to listen to the sweet little voice repeating the long words.

"Mamma," he called at last, "seems to me that is a long verse, and one almost beyond the little man's understanding isn't it?"

Mamma laughed. "I think so," she said, "But the trouble is Warren doesn't; his sister Laura has been learning this verse, and he wants to."

In the little reading-room opening from the study, Uncle Warren, a gay young chap who was boarding at his sister's, listened and laughed over the words that sounded so queerly, coming



from the baby lips. Over and over they were repeated: "A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent." As he listened Uncle Warren's handsome face grew sober, he was writing letters, and many papers were strewn before him. He took up one of them and read it over:

"Dear old fellow:— You have buried yourself in your sister's arms long enough. Don't be tied to her apron-string, come down to-night, we are going to have a real jolly time in Joe's room. Mum is the word."

Uncle Warren laid it down again and took up another. It read:

"Don't allow yourself to be caught in places where everything is to be kept secret. When boys begin to

keep their pleasures from their best friends, it generally shows there is something wrong. I've been a little worried about your evenings. I hope you will be prudent as to how you spend them. Remember you are your father's only son."

Over the first reading of this letter, Warren had said, "Poh! Fiddlesticks! He thinks I am a baby," and laying it down had begun a reply to the other, that read thus: "Dear Dick:—I'll be on hand, though I don't suppose our governors would like it much."

Little Warren, in the other room, went on struggling with the long words, "A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent." How exactly to the point it was, even about the pru-

dent part. It startled him a little. He tore Dick's letter into little bits, while he listened and thought. Then he took up his father's letter once more and read it over slowly; then with a sudden decided movement, he tore the letter he was writing into halves, and put it into the waste basket, and rapidly wrote this in it's place: "Dick: — I can't come. My father wouldn't approve; neither will yours. In haste, Warren."

Then he went out and kissed little Warren on his nose, on his eyes, on his chin, three times for each; and that was all that either the little boy or his mother knew about the work that had been done in the library.



BROWN TOMMY.

NOT Tommy Brown, but Brown Tommy. He was all in brown from tip to toe. His hair was brown by nature, and the sun had browned his face and hands. His eyes were a lovely dark brown. He went on a journey on the cars with his mamma, and this is the way he was dressed. He had a brown merino dress, kilt

BROWN TOMMY.

skirt and jacket, with rows and rows of brown buttons all over it; there were two pockets in the jacket; his brown cloth gloves were peeping out of one, and the corner of his handkerchief, that hung out of the other, had a brown flower on it. His stockings were all brown, and his waterproof cape that was hanging on his shoulders was just the color of his stockings. Then he had a Centennial hat, three-cornered, such as old soldiers used to wear a hundred years ago; it had a long brown plume on it. This was Brown Tommy.

How did he act? Well, not so nicely as he looked, I am sorry to say. On the cars, in the seat before him, was a lady who tried to talk with him, but he saw fit not to answer any of

her questions. She seemed to think he was a timid little boy, who must be coaxed into knowing her; so she talked on, in a pleasant winning voice. At last she turned to his mamma, and said: "Your little boy *can* talk, I suppose, or is he too young?" Just that moment, up spoke Brown Tommy, and what he said was: "Did you ever count all the buttons on your dress, or don't you know how to count so many?" This seemed to astonish the lady very much. Her dress was trimmed in the new fashion, with rows and rows of buttons, and Tommy, who is rather mixed up in his counting, seemed to think that it would take a very smart woman to count them all. Having once found his tongue, he kept on pouring out the questions till

the lady must have wondered what had become of his timidity. He asked her what was the name of the place where she lived, and how many churches there were, and whether she went to church every Sunday, and whether she sat as still as a mouse. By the time they reached their journey's end, Brown Tommy and the lady knew each other very well; at least, he knew all about her. She said she had never been asked so many questions before in her life.





FRED'S HOUSE.

COMPLETE, to the very crowning piece, is the elegant edifice which, for the last hour has been slowly rising under Fred's cautious hand. So absorbed has he become that he does not see the danger which threatens his completed work. See the eager;

intense expression of his face and the careful poise of the hand that is placing that finishing block. In a moment he will raise his head and gaze proudly upon his success. Katy has been watching the progress of the work, but just now her attention is diverted. Topsy, the cat, has come in, and Katy, has neither eyes or thoughts for any thing else. She is watching kitty, but with no idea of the mischief about to be done. Tom, too, has been watching, and he had not only seen the cat, but his eyes twinkle with fun in anticipation of the catastrophe. Wouldn't you suppose that the elder boy would warn his younger brother and sister of the fate that threatens their beloved castle. Not he. That is Tom's great fault, he delights in teas-

FRED'S HOUSE.

ing Fred. Indeed, I suspect that he and Topsy have held a private council to arrange the details of this storming of the castle walls. At least he does not interfere. He knows that a softly uttered sc-at would be sufficient, but he chooses to let the work of destruction go on, and just as Fred lifts his head with a deep sigh of relief and satisfaction Topsy pushes over and entirely destroys the stately edifice which cost such an expenditure of time and thought. Poor Fred! For just one instant he sat as if he was a stone, then, quick as thought, block after block was pitched after the offending pussy; then as Tom laughed he aimed his weapons at that young fellow's curly head, setting up in the meanwhile a series of yells that brought



FRED'S HOUSE.

mamma from the next room. She found a scene of confusion and was for some time unable to find out just how matters stood.

“Tom,” she said, “can’t you look after your brother and sister a little when I am so very busy?”

“Why, mother,” answered Tom, while his cheeks flushed a little, “I was reading. I thought they were having a good time with the blocks.”

“Fred, stop screaming;” but Fred was too much grieved at his misfortune, too angry at Topsy, and both grieved and angry at Tom’s teasing laugh. I say too grieved and angry to listen to his mother’s command. He was marched into the little room off the dining-room, perched up in a high chair and left alone, to cry it out.

FRED'S HOUSE.

Tom resumed his book, but somehow his enjoyment of the story was gone. He saw the disappointed face of Katy who had never stirred from her stool. His mother's tones were sad as she said in passing through the room on her way back to the kitchen, "Let me know if Fred stops crying and calls for me."

Though the yells ceased, he kept up a sobbing that went to Tom's heart.

"And I might have prevented it all," he said to himself. "They were having such a good time, and just for the sake of a little fun I let it all be spoiled, and made mother feel badly. Dear me! who supposed that Fred would make such a stir. Mother feels dreadfully about Fred. I heard her tell father that she was afraid Fred's

FRED'S HOUSE.

temper would be his ruin. Oh, dear me! if a fellow could only think of things before they happened half the time he wouldn't do them." Fred, meantime, had stopped his tears enough to do some thinking:

"I wish I didn't be so silly as to yell and kick over everything," he told himself. "It didn't do a speck of good, and maybe it will make mamma cry. Oh, dear me!"

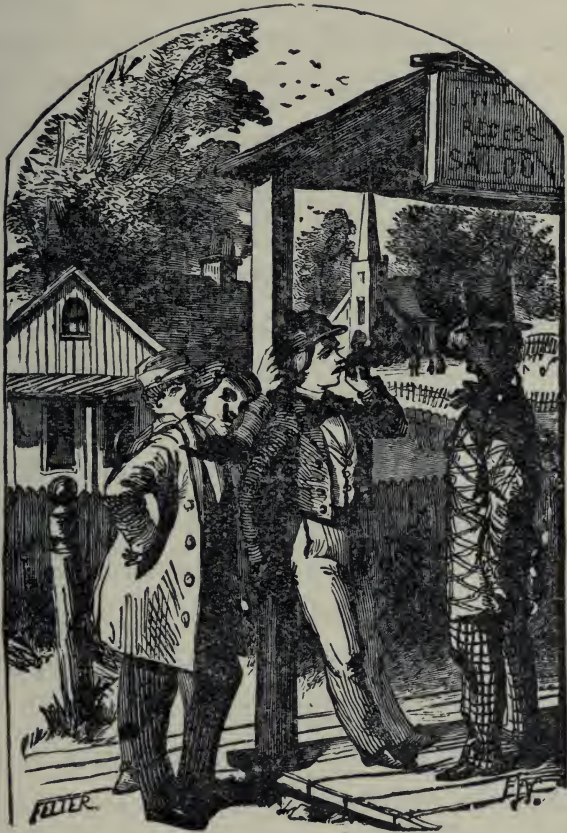
Moral: Think before you speak or yell, or even laugh.





“WHOSE SLAVE ARE YOU?”

YOUNG Robert Whitney shut a big black book that he had been reading, and went out into the street. His way led by a miserable one-story rum hole, which bore the name “Saloon” over the door. In front of this saloon, hanging about in various stages of loaferism, were three as miserable looking young fellows as Robert had ever seen. Now, Robert was a stanch



“WHOSE SLAVES ARE YOU?”

young temperance patriot, and one would suppose he would look grave and sad over such a sight as this. Instead of which, as he stared at them curiously, his face broadened into a laugh. “Upon my word!” he said, in slow surprise, “I’ve just been reading about you fellows, but I didn’t expect you to start up before me. ‘History repeats itself,’ they say; that’s evidently true. Who owns you?”

“What do you mean?” growled the roughest looking of the three.

“Why I’ve just been reading an account of some old fellows who lived in the dark ages, and they kept a lot of slaves, that they used to make drink, until they acted like fools or animals, and then sent them down into the public streets, so that their sons would see

“WHOSE SLAVES ARE YOU?”

them, and have nothing to do with the stuff. It was a real sharp idea, I declare, but I never realized it until this minute. I say, whose slaves are you?”

Now those three young loafers, strange as it may seem to you, had common sense; they were the sons of decent, sensible fathers, who had tried to bring them up as well as they knew how. The trouble was they had fallen among fools, and gotten an idea that to be manly was to smoke cigars and drink beer, at least, and as they lived in a fast town they had made rapid progress. I do not think they had ever before met a well-dressed, well-to-do, handsome young fellow of their own age, who had actually stood and laughed at them, as if they were a good joke, and were so far

beneath him, that he could afford to make fun of them to their faces. They had been cried over several times, but laughing will occasionally accomplish what crying will not; also, they knew Robert Whitney, if he did not know them. They knew he was a son of Judge Whitney and the leading fellow in his class; worthy of all respect.

“Whose slaves are you?” Well, that was pretty sharp! They were struggling all the time to prove themselves their own masters. It was actually that, more than the fun, that they were after. There was evidently a blunder somewhere.

Two of them had been drinking too much bad beer to realize these thoughts very clearly. But Ned White, the boy who stands the straightest, and is puff-

ing cigar smoke into Robert's face, was a historical scholar as well as Robert himself. He had been a good one. He knew all about the story of the slaves, but it had never struck him in quite that light before. The truth is, Ned had something to think about, and he went to work at it.





WHAT DICKIE BURNHAM SAW.

DICKIE wanted to go skating, but the simple truth is his mother wouldn't let him. She didn't believe in skates, they were likely to make people fall; nor in ice, for it sometimes broke and let people through. In fact, there

WHAT DICKIE BURNHAM SAW.

were a great many things that Dickie's mother didn't believe in. To tell you the truth, she was always looking out for something dreadful to happen.

"Well, can I go and look on, and see the rest have fun?" said Dickie, at last.

"Why yes," his mother said; "if you will bundle up, and be careful not to stand too long and get chilled, and get home before sundown." Please to take notice that Dickie's mother did not once think of being afraid that he might go on the ice, after all. There were some things that she was not afraid of. One was — that her boy Dickie would do a thing that she had told him not to do. What a proud mother she must have been! So Dickie went, and it is he who stands,



with his hands in his pockets, looking and listening to the fun.

“Did you have a nice time?” mother asked when he came home half an hour before sunset.

“Well, yes, rather,” Dickie said; “it was pretty cold, but I whistled part of the time, and that kept me warmer. I guess I had about the best time of any of them. Skating can’t be such fun as I thought it was. There were five boys and girls there, and they were all mad.”

“All mad! why, what about?”

“Oh, different things. Gertie Smith was there, and her brother Ned; they sat down to breathe, and I was right behind them and heard them talk.

Gertie was grumbling about her skates. ‘Old things’ she said; there

wasn't another girl on the pond who wore such awkward old-fashioned things. A mile too big for her, too ; and she did look so horrid in leggins—none of the rest wore them. She said she did just wish mother would let them dress as other girls did. Ned laughed at her awhile, and then he coaxed her to come on and have another skate, and she said she wouldn't—she had made up her mind never to skate any more till she could have things like other girls. I rather guess their mother had told Ned not to skate without her, for he kept coaxing and coaxing, and finally, he got mad and told her if she was going to sit there and sulk, he was going home ; so he took off his skates and home he went ; and, in a few minutes she went crying after him.

“What a nice way to wind up a holiday!” said Dickie’s mother.

“Then I went over to the other side of the pond — not on the ice, mother, but around by the edge — and there were True Jones and Millie Vincent skating together; they skate beautifully — both of them — they can make rings, and curves, and circles, and all sorts of things. They skated away for awhile, and seemed to be having a nice time. Pretty soon True wondered what made Gertie go home, and said she was the best skater on the pond; and Millie said she wore horrid skates, and True said he didn’t care if she did; there wasn’t another skater like her in town; she could go most as fast as he could, and no other girl he ever saw could. And Millie perked

up her little nose and said, Gertie couldn't skate a bit faster than she could—not a bit. So he said try a race then, and away they went; he went just like the wind and left her ever so far behind, and she was sulky enough when he got back; she told him she thought he asked her to skate with him, and she didn't think he was very polite to run away from her. And he said, why, when they were having a race he couldn't stay by her, of course, unless she could keep up. And she sniffed her nose and said, she guessed she would go home; and next week her Uncle Will was coming home, and she guessed he would see such skating then as *he* never saw before. And he said he presumed he had seen as good skating as her Uncle



Will ever had—anyway he was not so good in lessons as he was in skating, for his brother Horace was ahead of him in school. And she said, well his brother Horace had got to work for his living and needed to hurry up, she supposed, but Uncle Will could stay at school as many years as he liked. At that I don't know which was the maddest, and they both said they thought it was quite time to go home. Millie's little brother Ben was there skating with them, and he didn't want to go home yet, and he cried about it, and Millie boxed his ears for crying, and that made him mad, and they all went off home. True went on one side of the street, and Millie on the other, pulling little Ben by the hand, and he cried as loud as he could roar. The

rest of the folks were too far away for me to see whether they were mad or not, so I came home. Fred Cramer's dog was there too, and he and I were the only ones who seemed good-natured. Do you suppose it is the skates or what that puts them in such an awful humor?"

"I don't know," said his mother; "I guess its 'what.'"





DREAMING AND DOING.

SHE was about half dressed; in fact she could hardly be said to have gotten that far in her toilet, for her hair was uncombed, and her pink gingham dress lay over the back of the chair waiting for her, as also did her shoes and stockings wait under the chair; she, mean-

time, was where you see her, out at the back door, sunning her bare feet, patting her kitty, and humming a morning song.

They lived in the country and had no near neighbors, so Lily was lawless as to those things.

Up-stairs was her sister Esther, dressed and ready for work or for something, it was hard from her face to decide what; she looked unhappy and discontented.

“If I only had something to do,” she said, talking to the chairs, for there was no one else in the room, “something that was worth doing; baking day, and churning day, too; how I hate such work! It seems so strange that people who have aims and longings for higher and better things



should be tied down. I believe Mary just enjoys it all; only hear her. How she can sing on this warm morning I can't imagine. What a day it will be for baking!"

"Ting-a-ling!" went a bell through the house, and Esther started suddenly.

"Where in the world is Lily?" she said, fretfully.

Then she went to the door, and called, "Lily, Lily; Walter, have you seen anything of Lily? That child is enough to provoke a saint. There she is half dressed, and has gone no one knows where, and the breakfast bell ringing. I wish you would just see if you can find her. Isn't it a dreadful morning? so warm; it just takes my courage all away. I haven't any courage for my work anyway. I wish I

were you, with nothing to do but study, all day. Oh, Walter, I envy you your life; noble, self-sacrificing work before you all the time; work worth doing."

"As to that," said Walter, thoughtfully. "I suppose all work is worth doing, that is done from a right motive."

His sister smiled, scornfully.

"That is a mistake," she said; "what have I to do that amounts to anything in this world I should like to know?"

"You," said Walter, with arching eyebrows, "why, I don't know any one who has work of more importance; I am sure there is enough for twenty to do in this house."

"And when it is done what does it all amount to?"

Walter laughed.

“You let the various wheels in this establishment stop for one day; leave their work undone, and see how you would like the consequences. The next thing is to find the runaway, is it?”

From the window there floated up the sound of Lily's voice, singing, “I want to be an angel.”

Walter went to the window and called, “Lily, Lily, do you know you will never get to be an angel in the world, by sitting there and singing about it. The best thing you can do towards getting to that point is to come up-stairs and finish dressing.”

Lily laughed a little, and looked very foolish; but she slowly got up from her seat on the ground, pushed away the kitten, and presently came up-stairs.

It was one of Esther's duties to see that she was properly dressed. They two came late for breakfast.

Papa looked annoyed.

"Can not you get up in time for breakfast, Lily," he asked her.

"Papa, I was up real early; before Mary was, wasn't I Mary?"

The elder sister nodded.

"Then why were you not down in time?"

Lily looked down on her plate, and her cheeks grew rosy.

"She was singing 'I want to be an angel' to the cat," Walter said, with a little laugh. He thought it was quite time that this troublesome habit of Lily's was cured.

Her father looked sober.

"You were dreaming again," he said

“leaving your work undone. What if Mary had gone out-doors to sing ‘I want to be an angel,’ instead of seeing to the breakfast? The consequence would have been a very uncomfortable time for us all. What were you about, Esther, that you could not attend to this aspiring little girl, and see that she took some steps toward her desire?”

Esther looked down at her poached eggs, and up at her father, and her face was as red as Lily’s. Then she spoke, bravely: “The truth is, I was up-stairs wishing in my heart that I could be an angel, or a missionary, or something of that sort, had some work, you know, that seemed worth while to do which is the reason you haven’t toast with your eggs. I this moment re-

member that I promised to attend to it. I'm glad you didn't feel angelic in your nature this morning, Mary, or the breakfast would have been nowhere."

Mary laughed, good-humoredly.

"It must be in the weather," she said, "I never felt less like work than I did this morning. I didn't sing 'I want to be an angel;' I don't think I had heart enough for it; but I came across an old hymn in the back part of mother's Bible, that just exactly fitted:

'I would not have the restless will
That hurries to and fro,
Seeking for some great thing to do,
Or wondrous thing to know.
I would be guided as a child,
And led where'er I go.'

It quieted my restlessness, and made me willing to come down and stir up the cakes for breakfast."

The father smiled kindly on his family of motherless children, but gave a closing word to Lily: "Teach the cat, Lily, that the only way to get any happiness out of this world is to do the thing that ought to be done next, even if it *should* be to get ready for breakfast."





FLORA'S COMPOSITION.

SHE sat at one end of her father's study table; a sheet of paper spread out before her, and a lead pencil in her hand. Once in a while she gave a dreary sigh; her father at his end of the table was scratching away as if he were in a hurry. Occasionally he looked over at the listless little girl, and at last he spoke to her:

"I don't think you are being very industrious, daughter."

Flora's tongue, thus encouraged, went fast: "Well, papa, I guess you wouldn't be industrious if you didn't know what to do. I have to hand in my composition to-morrow morning and I haven't even a subject yet."

"Then I should think that would be a splendid reason why you should go to work."

"Oh, but, papa, I can't. I haven't an idea what to write about. Papa, I wish you had just a little bit of time to help me; just to start me, you know."

Papa sat thoughtful for a minute; then he pushed a book across the table to his daughter, as he said: "Very well, I'll help you on one condition. You are to do *just* as I say."

“Why, of course, papa! What am I to do first?”

“You are to open to a picture in this book. The first one you see as you open it, you are to write a description of.”

“But, father, what if I don't know a single thing about the picture?”

“I don't want you to know a single thing about it. If you open to one with which you are familiar, I give you leave to try again. You may write a story, or give an historical description, just as you please. But you must say nothing but what seems to you very likely to have been true from the appearance of the picture. You musn't speak again after the picture is found, until you are ready to read the composition to me.”

FLORA'S COMPOSITION

“But what shall I do if I haven't an idea about the picture that I find?”

“That will be your misfortune. But you have made me a promise, and now you are bound to do the best you can.”

With a little laugh and a little sigh, Flora drew the book toward her. The picture which you see in this story was the one to which she opened. I wish I had a photograph of the dismayed face that she wore, as she looked at it. But she was bound in honor not to speak. So presently she went to work. It was more than an hour after that she said a little eagerly: “There, I'm ready to read. It is just the queerest thing that I ever wrote, and I don't believe

there is a word of truth in it. May I read the original story, after I have read mine?"

"After you have read and explained yours," her father said laughing. This is her story:

MILLY MILBURN.

One day it snowed very hard. Milly was a little bit of a girl; she didn't know what snow was; she had never thought about it much, but to-day she began to think about it. In the greenhouse was a large plant, with white blossoms on it. Once Milly had given it a shaking, and the blossoms fell on the ground, just as the snow was doing. Milly thought that there was a big tree out doors, that somebody was shaking. She wanted to go out and

see it. So she pushed open the door and slipped out. She supposed that the blossoms would smell sweet, so she tried to catch some. She looked all around for the tree, but she couldn't find it. Then she looked up in the sky, and she thought the blossoms came from there. She knew that Jesus lived up in the sky, so she said: "Now Milly knows that is Jesus' tree that he keeps for the angels to play with, and the little angels are shaking it, so I can have some of their blossoms. I mean to catch some." So she tried as hard as she could, but they melted in her hand. She was very much astonished at this, and she decided that they were so sorry because they had to come away from the sky that they cried about it, and that was

the water that was in her hand. "Poor flowers!" she said: "Don't cry, Milly loves you just as much as the angels do." Just then her mother saw her from the window, out in the snow; and she ran out and said: "Why, Milly Milburn! what a naughty girl. You must have known better than to come out in the snow." Now the truth was, that Milly was so little she hadn't thought anything about that, and now she said: "Oh! mamma, the angels are throwing down flowers to me, and they don't want to come, and they are crying."

Milly's mamma was a very foolish woman. So, instead of trying to explain to her little girl all about the snow, she laughed and said:

"Oh, what a little goose you are!"

FLORA'S COMPOSITION.

Then she took Milly in her arms, and ran in the house.

“That is all, papa. Isn't *it* a queer composition?”

“Rather,” her father said, laughing. “I'm afraid you will have trouble in explaining it. For instance, what right have you to say that the mother was a very foolish woman?”

“Oh! I think she was a very foolish woman, indeed. Just look at her, papa. Of course it is cold weather, or it wouldn't be snowing; and Milly has a low-necked and short-sleeved dress on, and her mother is all dressed in fur.”

Flora's father laughed heartily. “That is very well put,” he said at last. “But what about the moral? I'm not sure that I see any.”

FLORA'S COMPOSITION.

“Ought all compositions to have a moral, father?”

“Why, I think it would be a great improvement if they had, else what is the use of reading them to other people?”

“Well, said Flora, after a minute, “how would this do for a moral? Milly had the croup in the night, and wore her throat done up in flannel, for a week. That would be a moral to the mother — not to dress her little girl in low-neck dresses in winter.”

“Or to Milly not to stand out in the snow, which?” said her father, who seemed to get a good deal of fun out of the composition.

“Oh! but she was so little, you know. I think her mother ought to do the thinking for her.”

FLORA'S COMPOSITION.

The moral was added, and father said the composition would do very well. Down in his heart he thought it was very good indeed, but I am sorry to say that he was one of those foolish fathers who are afraid to give their children well-earned praise for fear it will make them vain.





CORNIE BAKER'S NEW DRESS.

ARE you going to have two puffs on your overskirt, or only one?" This question Mrs. Baker called out from the sewing-room, as her young daughter flitted by.

"Why two, mother, of course; how queer it would look with only one."

"It is a good deal of work," Mrs. Baker said, and she sighed

“ I know that ; but when one has a nice dress, why one wants it made nicely.”

From the sewing-room came the sound of Miss Wheeler's voice, singing softly :

“ Heavenly Father, I would wear,
Angel garments white and fair.”

“ Miss Wheeler,” called Cornie, “ you think it ought to be made with two puffs, don't you ? ”

“ I don't know. I haven't thought about it. Do you want me to think ? ”

Cornie came and stood in the door and looked at her, in a surprised sort of way. “ Don't you think about your sewing when you are doing it ? ” she asked.

“ Well, not more than I have to in order to do it well. It would be hard

CORNIE BAKER'S NEW DRESS.

work to think about clothes all the time, you know. But about the puffs, that is the way most people think they must have them."

They went into the front room. Mrs. Baker and Cornie talked it all over—the puffs, and the flounces, and the gathered trimming; and all the time came that humming voice from the other room:

“Take away my cloak of pride,
And the worthless rags ’twould hide.”

“She has rather a sweet voice,” Cornie said. “Mother, I believe I shall have to get some more silk for this sash; it isn’t going to be heavy enough. I want it to wear over my white dress, you know, and it ought to be rich for that. Susie Grahame thinks she has the very grandest suit

in town, but I suppose there can be things made to look as well as hers."

And Miss Wheeler sang:

"Let me wear the white robes here,
Even on earth, my Father dear,
Holding fast thy hand and so,
Through the world unspotted go,"

Cornie shivered a little. "How she does harp on that hymn," she said, nervously; "I wish she wouldn't, I'm tired of it."

"Can't you let the poor thing sing," her mother said. "It is all the comfort she has."

"She might sing something besides that one hymn," Cornie said. But she didn't; she seemed to delight in that, and she sang it over and over, especially those two lines:

"Let me wear the white robes here,
Even on earth, my Father dear."

At last Cornie went and stood in the door again. "Do you like that hymn better than any other in the world," she asked, "that you sing it so much?"

Miss Wheeler looked up brightly. She had an old, rather faded face, but a wonderfully pleasant mouth and smiling eyes. "Oh," she said, "I didn't realize that I was singing loud enough to be heard. Yes, I do like the hymn wonderfully well; I sing it a great deal. It is natural that I should, you know, as it is all about dress, and I have so much to do with dresses."

Cornie laughed a little. "Not much to do with that kind of dress, I should say. The sort that you have to sew on is mostly the 'worthless rags,' I

should think. You see you have sung it so much that I have caught some of the words."

"It was this white dress of yours that made me think of it to-day," the little seamstress said. "It is so pretty, and I was thinking how much I liked white, and then, naturally, that made me think of my own white dress, and I began singing about it before I thought."

"It is not much like mine," Cornie said, with a little sigh. "Mine is all 'spotted' up with the world, even before it is made. I wish the world wasn't so full of dress, Miss Wheeler. Sometimes I am tired of it, and I should think you would hate it."

"I like dress ever so much," Miss Wheeler said softly. "I am never

tired of thinking about it. 'Clean linen pure and white.' I always did like white linen."

Cornie stood looking at her in silent wonder for a few minutes, then she went away, out of the dress-bestrewn rooms, down-stairs to the parlor, and turning over the leaves of the hymn-book on the piano, she found the words :

"Heavenly Father, I would wear,
Angel garments white and fair."

And read them carefully through. Up-stairs in the sewing-room Miss Wheeler stopped her singing, and sewed away steadily, with a little shadow on her face. "That is just like me," she murmured, at last. "I am always singing, but I never seem ready to speak a word for Jesus ; why

CORNIE BAKER'S NEW DRESS.

couldn't I have asked her how she was getting on with her other white dress that the hymn tells about? The poor lamb may need a word of comfort that even I could speak."

"Cornie Baker," some of the girls said to her, months afterward, "How came you to take such a sudden and decided stand; be so different, you know, from what you were before. You have been a Christian this long time, but not such a one as you are now."

Cornie was still for a minute, then she looked up with eager smiling eyes: "I found my help in the sewing-room among my new dresses," she said, brightly. "What a queer place to find help in!" one of them said. Cornie told them the story of the little

CORNIE BAKER'S NEW DRESS.

seamstress, and her hymn about dress, that she sang over and over, speaking her name with a tender voice and a tear in her eye. But the little seamstress knew nothing about it.



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