

the village library, most conscientiously day after day.

True, she had many weak and weary days, and her labor was often dull and irksome; but she turned her mind to the good ahead, and worked persistently on. With her out-of-door life, her cough disappeared as by magic. The color sat daintily upon lip and rounding cheek, and her form was fast becoming erect and symmetrical, while her gait was already firm and elastic.

She roamed the fields and woods like a nymph of the forest. She worked, she sang, she laughed, and the delight of all knew no bounds, to see her, as grandpa expressed it, "as chirp as a bird and as lively as a cricket."

Each day gave her added vigor, until she was able to return to school. What a delight to take her place in her classes, to study without weariness, and be assured she was what she called herself, "Kate's hope and Uncle Joe's security."

Time flew busily and merrily; graduation day had come, and with it a throng of spectators filling the hall of the Academy.

There sat Grandpa Stearns, his hands clasped over his cane and his chin resting on them; and close by, Kate, joy fairly flashing from her eyes. Out in the aisle, in a large arm-chair, her feet on a stool, a fleecy shawl about her shoulders, was grandma, for Uncle Joe had insisted that this was "a family affair," this speech of Helen's.

We may imagine, however interested others were in the seven essays, there were three who waited impatiently for the time when the valedictory was announced, and Helen Stearns stepped forward.

She had always been a favorite with her townspeople, and such a sympathetic chord of gladness and pride ran through the audience, that they greeted her with a round of applause. Surprised and confused, the rosy flush that covered her face made her yet more lovely to look upon.

It is the strong who can best keep their own counsel, and not even Kate knew the subject of her valedictory.—"Make the Most of Life." The closing words,—"Be as well as you can, and then you will do as well as you ought," were in sentiment worthy of the congratulations that followed.

It had been whispered about that Helen's "Most" meant a chance to teach, and it seemed a Providence that the story came to the ears of a stranger present, who was looking for a lady to take charge of the girls' room of his school. He had been pleased with her thought of "more strength for girls," and her own heroic endeavor to conquer physical weakness. After a conference with the Principal, he was introduced, and secured her services at a good salary.

Eighteen months have passed away. It is the first day of the New Year. Within the home of Grandpa Stearns, all is hurry and expectancy. Grandma has recovered from her lameness, and is helping to prepare an unusual feast.

Evergreens are festooned all around the old kitchen walls, the table is spread with the "company dishes" grandma had when a bride, old-fashioned, big blue-edged dishes.

There are five plates; Kate has counted them over and over, to make sure that Helen is really coming home. The dear Helen! how she has missed her all these months, and how the knowledge of her success and her happiness has cheered her own homely labors!

"They're a comin'," said grandpa. "I hear the sleigh-bells."

Grandma took off her glasses and put them on the shelf. "Pears like I kin see 'bout," she said. "I'm nothin' like as old as I was three years ago, when that morkize was a hanging over our heads. An' you, grandpa, are gittin' young too, and all chirkin up a' walkin' off 'bout your cane, like a young man."

There was a little consultation between the girls when the greetings were over, and the platter laid for Uncle Joe hid a roll of bills very like those that "saved the farm."

Uncle Joe and grandma had a secret too, for under Kate's plate was a sealed letter addressed to herself.

When the blessing was asked, there were two people who were very much surprised, Uncle Joe at the entire amount of the loan—six hundred dollars; and Kate!

"Read your letter aloud," said grandpa. "It's just New Year wishes."

Kate thought at first that she would cry, then concluded to laugh, and handed the little drama by coming up behind Uncle Joe and putting her arms about his white head.

It wasn't any wonder, for this is the letter:—

"MY DEAR NIECE, KATE STEARNS.—
"The good book says, 'She that tarried at home divided the spoil.' You helped 'save the farm,' by taking care of it, just as much as Helen by earning money. I want to do my part, and so please accept this check of two hundred dollars, to help you study art. And remember the very best art in the world, is the art of being the good, faithful, cheerful worker you have been. With the best New Year's wishes of
"UNCLE JOE."

"Seems like singin' Old Hundred's the properest thing we can do," said Grandpa Stearns.

Wrongly Translated.—The story is an old one of the party of tired travellers who entered a house decorated by a peculiar sign and demanded oysters. "This is not a restaurant," said the courteous gentleman who met them. "I am an aurist." "Isn't that an oyster hung outside the door?" "No, gentlemen, it is an ear."

Minnie May's Dep't.

John's Wife.

If I say "Yes" to thee, John, can I thy love retain?
For I'm no beauty, dear; there's plenty call me plain.

Lilies and roses don't blend their tints in my face;
I have no witching blue eyes, no wonderful grace;
But I have health, and truth, and youth, and I love
no other but thee,
John, thou must take me all in all, or else thou
must let me be.

I am no scholar, John; of art I could not speak;
I could not pose or dress, and look like an ancient
Greek;

I'm not aesthetic at all; I do not paint or play;
Nor could I write tale or poem, no matter what the
pay;

But I can keep the house-place bright, and I love
no one but thee;
John, thou must take me all in all, or thou must let
me be.

Come to my heart, dear girl! Give me thy sun-
browned hand.
Fairer art thou to me than the fairest in the land.
Dear little womanly woman! Love shall be my
share—

Love is better than witching eyes or sunny hair;
Love is better than beauty or wit; love is better
than gold.

For love is not found in the market-place; love is not
bought and sold.

MY DEAR NIECES:—

Many complain of the lack of social enjoyment in their neighborhood, but, perhaps, they do not reflect how little they have ever contributed to it themselves. Now that the long evenings afford an opportunity of enjoying social intercourse with friends and neighbors, many a happy evening can be spent with little expense or trouble. Apart from dancing, which is well enough in its way, there are other ways of amusing a party of friends, and sometimes more acceptable, as other persons can join in the fun. First on the list comes charades, and if there is any talent for acting among the young people it will come to the front. If there is none, charades may not be attempted as they require to be well done to be pleasing. Tableaux are easier to get up, and require the exercise and display of some artistic taste in posing and grouping. Single figures might be attempted at first, and as the young become more practised, groups might be tried. Take, for instance, "Ceres," goddess of the harvest. A bright-haired girl is required, and if not very tall stand her on a box or footstool. Take off the bodice as the neck and arms will be required bare. A wreath of wheat ears and red poppies is placed on the head. (The poppies can be made from dark red tissue paper.) Take two white sheets, holding one against the back and another in front of the figure to be draped, pin them together on the shoulders, bring the arms out between them and pin the sheets under the arms also; tie a cord around the body close under the arms or just below the bust, let the rest of the drapery fall in graceful folds to the floor covering box and all; in one arm is carried a sheaf of wheat, and in the right hand a reaping hook which can be cut from bright tin. A long garland of wheat and poppies falls from one shoulder across the front of the drapery. It will be better for beginners to copy from a picture until more familiar with draping and posing. I have given but a rough description of this one so as to give a general idea how to work.

Now, let us take two figures, that scene from Longfellow, with which almost every grown person is familiar, where John is sent to plead the cause of the captain, and stands before the sweet Pricilla in awkward bashfulness when she says, "Why don't you speak for yourself, John?" Pricilla is dressed in a short, plain gown of grey,

black or white. A white kerchief crosses her bosom, and a white, close fitting cap and white apron completes her costume. John wears a full Quaker suit, long coat, long pocket flaps, deep cuffs, and white ruffles at neck and wrists, shoes with buckles, and long stockings with short breeches complete his costume. In his hand he carries a "broadbrim." A spinning-wheel, some wool and a stool, are some of the necessary furnishings of the room. A novel that a number in the same neighborhood have read will furnish any number of scenes and will require no costuming beyond every day dress. Now, to show these pictures properly, a door must be near where the participants can get to and fro behind the scenes; so the readiest way is to screen off an end of the room where a door is, by stretching a wire across and hanging a pair of curtains upon the wire by rings which will readily slip backwards and forwards when the tableau is ready to be shown. Several pretty tableaux would be a very pleasing variety to an entertainment for a Sunday School or Church social, and may be taken from scenes from Scripture if preferred.

A novelty, in the form of a pumpkin party, was recently given by an American lady. The invitations were written on yellow paper, all the lamp shades were of yellow tissue paper, the lady's dress was ornamented with yellow flowers, so was the refreshment table; they were made of yellow tissue paper also, and pumpkin pie was one of the dishes on it. At the close of the evening a large pumpkin was brought in on a tray. Each guest was given a blank card and pencil, and was requested to guess the number of seeds which the pumpkin contained. A prize was given to the one who guessed nearest, and another prize to the one farthest away. The nearest guess was within sixty-nine of the correct number.

You see my dear nieces how many and varied are the ways which we can spend a few hours in innocent and harmless amusement.

MINNIE MAY.

Prize Essay.

Minnie May offers a prize of \$2.00 for the best article on "Good Manners." All essays to be in our office by the 15th March.

Fashion Notes.

This is the season when the tasteful woman adds pretty accessories to her more or less worn winter costume, and by skilful combinations of fabric or garniture, renders them as attractive as new gowns. Sleeves of novel color or shaping, wide hip-pockets added to the lower side fronts of the basque, and a few deft and dainty touches about the shoulders and throat will give a most surprising air of newness to a toilette.

An almost universal crusade has been inaugurated against earrings, while glittering finger-rings are more favored than ever.

Black plush mantles are worn in all lengths. They may be perfectly plain or decorated with applique of braid, silk or satin. Sometimes the sleeves are made of brocade the color of the wrap.

Velvet cloth is a handsome fabric for jackets and wraps, but the slightest exposure to rain or snow will injure its beauty.

Blue jackets with gilt buttons are now fashionable, and they will be now more generally worn either *en suite* or with contrasting colors.

Tallow, applied warm, will soften and finally cure corns and bunions.