

“There is not much to see here, Miss Nancy,” replied Trimmer; “I suppose it is only that old place you talked about.”

Miss Nancy looked at her beseechingly. “And don’t you like it? But, Trimmer, mayn’t I stay a few minutes, and look?”

“Well, you may stay while I walk to the corner and back,” said Trimmer.

Miss Nancy thanked her thankfully; and Trimmer turned away, with the somewhat old reflection that there was no accounting for the fancies of children. What Miss Nancy could find to look at, she failed to see; and indeed exactly where the attraction did lie does not appear. Could we precisely define all those odd fascinations of our childhood, to which we still look back pleasantly,—if sometimes a little sadly! for alas, there are no such dreams now-a-days!

Miss Nancy stood oblivious to all else, clasping the bars of the gates, with her face pressed to them, gazing in, with her very heart in her eyes, upon a meadow so yellow with buttercups that it was like a field of gold, upon a path leading through it to a low stone wall and another gateway, of which the gates were open, as if they had not been closed for a long, long time. Miss Nancy could see within. She saw a wide old courtyard paved with stone, filled with yellow sunlight, where the pigeons came down, and fluttered and strutted; she saw mellow walls, latticed windows, twisted chimneys, peaked roofs, overhanging gables, and apple and pear trees all pink and white with bloom. Behind, the rolling uplands where the sheep pastured, and the hanging birchwood falling down to the level meadows, and before the field of the cloth of gold, where the buttercups grew, and in the midst, the house of the Thankful Heart.

*(To be continued.)*

