



The Family Circle.

WORK AND PLAY.

"Oh why did you call me, mother!
I was sitting beside the stream,
And watching the play of my sailing-boat
As she danced in a bright sunbeam,
And I tossed the pebbles in, one by one,
Till the water grew strong and high—
Then I cheered and cheered, till I almost feared
I should anger old Bessy hard by!

"But, mother, why will you sit and sew
Through the whole long summer-day?
You'll come and look at my sailing-boat
As she rides in her miniature bay?
And when I'm a man, and at sea, mother,
I'll not let you sit and sew,
But build you a ship, where the men, mother,
Shall cheer us wherever we go!

"But I cannot now stay if you won't, mother,
For I promised our Harry, at three,
To meet him down by the Squire's walk,
To climb the old chestnut-tree;
And I hear it's two by the minister's clock,
And my 'top-mast' not yet done;
But half-an-hour will finish that—
So—a kiss! and hurrah for a run!"

And the boy returned to his sailing-boat,
While the mother's eyes grew dim
With tears—to think of the coming years,
When she could not work for him;
And the coat is worn—and the coat is torn—
And a ship rides out of the bay;
But mothers must weep till they fall asleep,
And work while the children play!

Sunday Magazine.

WISHING TO BE A LADY.

A CHAPTER FROM REAL LIFE.

"Come, Nannie, child, it is your turn to-day to take care of the dining-room. Your sister Greta is attending to the work above-stairs, and Bridget is ready for her orders by this time."

Nannie's face, as she looked up from the book she was reading, did not express her usual energetic good humor. Yesterday she had taken tea with a companion of her own age a young miss of fourteen, who knew quite well, as she supposed, what was proper for a lady, and had filled Nannie's head with ideas that had been working there ever since.

"Why, mamma," said she, as she reluctantly took up the cloth to wash the breakfast china, "I don't see how it is that Greta and I must do so much house-work; I am sure papa is able to hire another servant. And just look at my hands!—all red and ugly; and and Bertha Speare says they will grow uglier and uglier if I am kept at drudgery all the time. Her hands are beautiful—and she wears the prettiest rings! She never has to wear calico morning-dresses either."

"Yes, Nannie, I understand all about it. Bertha Speare is a remarkably well-informed young lady. Drudgery will never do for such as you and her; I see, it is only fit for mothers and servants. Go upstairs now and put on your best merino dress and kid boots, and take down your curl-papers, and make yourself as fine as possible."

Nannie looked at her mother. It was a quiet, placid face she saw, but she knew by its expression that she was in earnest. Mrs. Lane's children were never mistaken on that point. Such a thing as disobedience was never thought of when she wore that look of decision.

So Nannie dropped her mop and went up to her room, wondering in her heart what her mamma could mean. She had only thought of having a little argument with her mother. Nannie was fond of argument and she had been forestalled so completely that she was puzzled. But on one thing she was clear: she must obey.

After she was dressed—and it took her much longer than usual to array herself, for she was rather nervous over it,—she shyly and reluctantly descended to the dining-room. There stood mamma, having had the cradle brought in, with the baby in it asleep. She was washing the china and talking to Bridget—the one servant,—who had been summoned from the kitchen.

"You see, Bridget," she was saying, "the marketing has just come in, and there's the beef to roast, and the cauliflower to prepare, and as for the pudding, I have had a watchful night with Mally, and shall have to give that up."

"Yes, ye do look tired, mum. But, by yer lave, master was spakin' about the pud-

ding, and Miss Nannie, she said she could make it."

"Don't you see Miss Nannie is all dressed?" said mamma, turning round. "We'll have to do without her, too, Bridget."

Bridget gave a queer, puzzled look at Nannie, who had just entered, attired in best afternoon trim at nine o'clock in the morning.

"Oh, I ask pardon," said she with the best, Irish manners, "I didn't know ye were going out. If it's going to town ye are!"

"Miss Nannie is not going anywhere," said mamma, quietly going on with her work. "That will do, Bridget."

Bridget knew when she was dismissed, but she was by no means satisfied. "It's queer, though," she said to herself, as she retreated to the kitchen; "Miss Lane's up to something. Ye'll never see that look on her when she isn't."

Mrs. Lane was a minister's wife—a country minister, who having a small private property of his own, besides his wife's still smaller portion, devoted his surplus money to the poor of his flock. The minister's wife was a wise little woman, and had concluded that in training her daughters to take their share in household cares, she was doing service both to the household generally and to them in particular. "Besides," she said, "I have the baby, and can leave him to no other hands; it is time you began to relieve me of such cares as take my time from him." As a general thing, both girls had been inclined to concur cheerfully, and took no small pride in doing well the part assigned them, and in papa's praise of their thrift.

But this morning Nannie had rebelled, and Mrs. Lane always met rebellion promptly. She now turned to Nannie, with her sweetest smile, and said: "You look very smart and ladylike, daughter. Now go into the parlor, this is no place for you dressed as you are. Go in and amuse yourself as you like best."

"But, mamma!" said Nannie, blushing deep with mortification, "I didn't mean—"

"Oh, my dear, I couldn't suppose you would say what you did not mean. You shall not spoil your hands, my love, and you shall not wear calico wrappers if you do not wish to. You are quite as worthy to be a lady, I hope, as Bertha Speare. Sit down and make yourself comfortable."

Greta was dusting the parlor, and mamma waylaid her. "Run Greta," said she, and fetch your sister that footstool, and turn on a little more heat. That will do. Are you quite comfortable now?"

What could poor Nannie do but say, "Yes," in the most feeble way, though in one sense she had never felt so uncomfortable in her life. She took up a book, more to hide her blushes than to read; but the letters had a way of running together. She went to the piano; but the keys refused to obey her nervous fingers. Then she tried to amuse herself by arranging the autumn leaves that filled the bracket vases. Presently a knock at the outer door announced a morning visitor. Greta admitted to the dining-room Mrs. Sage, the wife of a plain parishioner.

"Mornin', Miss Lane," said the gingham sun-bonneted lady, cheerfully, helping herself to a seat. "Pears to me you don't look over and above rugged this mornin'. Anything the matter?"

"Nothing, thank you, but a little fatigue; Mally kept me watching last night. Poor little fellow, his teeth trouble him." And Mrs. Lane bent over the cradle with a mother's sympathy; Mally opened his eyes and reached up his appealing arms. "Poor little Mally, mamma will take you in a moment—just as soon as she puts away these teacups."

But Mally—who was the best child usually, who had learned patiently to "wait a moment," knowing that his mother's promise never failed—was sick this morning, and a moment was an age to him. He pucker-ed up his little face and gave forth such a pitiful wail, that Nannie could not endure it. She left her vases and sprang to his side. "Come to sister, Mally darling," said she; "precious pet, come to sister."

But mamma was at hand also. "Nannie, my love," said she, "Mally would rumple your dress and disarrange your hair. Let him come to me."

"Pears to me," said Mrs. Sage, "you're very much dressed up this morning, Nannie. Goin' out, are you?"

"No, Mrs. Sage," said Mrs. Lane, with a comical look in her eyes, "Nannie is our visitor to-day. She is trying how it seems to be a young lady who does nothing."

"Oh!" said Mrs. Sage, half mystified. "If Mrs. Lane is punishing Nannie," she thought, "she is uncommon sweet and pleasant about it. I can't make her out. But I guess she knows what she's about. Mrs. Lane commonly does." And so she quieted her curiosity, knowing that Mrs. Lane would tell her just what she meant to tell, and no more.

Nannie, for her part, had retreated to the parlor, where she was about as miserable as a young lady in her best dress, kid boots, perfect frizzes, and nothing to do but to amuse

herself, could well be. She went back to her book; but how could she read, with her thoughts continually on her tired mother, her disappointed father, who was so fond of the pudding she had volunteered to make for him that morning? And poor little Mally! She began to see how really valuable and helpful a girl of fourteen can be to her family.

"It may be ladylike to be of no use," she said to herself, "but it is detestable! I'd rather be Bridget in the kitchen, feeling a sense of being good for something, than live in a prison of fine clothes and know that I was helping nobody. Oh, dear! if this horrid day were only over!"

But it was not over by any means. She had to meet her father at dinner, and be treated with oppressive politeness in his presence. She had to encounter the fun twinkling in his eyes at the sight of her embarrassment—to see him joining the others by showering attentions upon her, as though she had been a princess. But she was a girl of courage, and having made up her mind what to say, she said it right out before them all, while Bridget was removing the dishes:

"Mamma, dear I beg your pardon. I have been very naughty and foolish. I hope you will forgive me and let me go back to my work. I shall never be so foolish again;" and here, bravely trying to smile, she burst into tears.

Mamma gave her the kiss of reconciliation and trust. "Nannie, darling," said she, "you have had your little lesson. I should not have inflicted it on you if I had not been sure it would save you a more bitter one in the future."

Nannie was cured of ever wanting to be a lady, in the helpless sense—a drone in society. She has become a very noble, useful woman, and if her hands are not beautiful, they are so helpful that everybody admires them.—*N. Y. Observer.*

THE GOLDEN GEESSE.

"I wish I had a golden goose that laid golden eggs!" said Norah, throwing down her book, and clasping her hands energetically.

"Don't talk nonsense!" said the mother. "What wouldst do with the gold, lass?" said the father.

"I would buy myself a white frock, and a blue sash, and a hat like the squire's daughter; a silk gown for mother, and a coat with a velvet collar for you to wear on Sundays, father."

"That would take only part of a golden egg," returned the father. "Go on, lass, and then we shall know all thee wants."

Norah drew closer to her father, and looked gravely up in his face.

"A donkey-cart for mother to go to market in; a carpet for the room, curtains for the windows, lots of beautiful flowers and fruit in the garden, and nothing to do. I should sell the eggs and get so much money that you never need do any more work."

"Thank thee, lass, thank thee; it sounds very grand. Wife, dost hear what Norah is going to give us?"

"Aye, if wishes were horses, beggars could ride!" returned the mother. "I wonder at thee, father, for encouraging the lass in her folly. Come, Norah, get the table ready for supper, the lads will be in from the field before long, and they'll be hungry enough, I daresay."

Scarcely had she spoken when the gate swung open, and the two lads appeared, one of them carrying something very carefully in his hat.

"A present for you, Norah! Guess what it is in three guesses. Now!"

Norah sprang forward. "Is it a bird?"

"No."

"One of Mrs. Lovell's plum-cakes?"

"No."

"A goose's egg, perhaps," said the father, laughing.

"O, you shouldn't have spoken!" said Tom. "I wanted Norah to guess. But it's not one egg. Farmer Lovell has sent her six eggs; and he says if she will get the old hen to sit upon them she will have six as fine young goslings as need to be."

"Why, Norah, you're in luck," said the father; "and it will be hard, if out of six geese there should not be one to lay golden eggs for us."

"Golden eggs!" exclaimed Tom, in surprise.

"Ah, lad, thee dost not know all the fine things that are coming to us," returned the father, laughing; whilst Norah's cheeks grew red, and the mother said, "Father's making fun, lad."

The old hen sat upon the eggs, and in due time the goslings straggled forth, and Norah began to build castles in the air.

One sunny afternoon, Norah sat knitting by the river's side whilst her geese were swimming and diving to their heart's content, when farmer Lovell passed by. Norah jumped up.

"Aren't they beauties?" said she, pointing to her geese, "I can never thank you enough for them."

"Make a good use of them," said the farmer, patting her on the shoulder; "but that I'm sure you will do; the daughter of a good father and mother need not be told that." And he went his way. And Norah fell to thinking of what he had said, and as she did so, the visions of blue and pink ribbons, and stylish hats vanished away, and a sudden sense of the responsibility of having possessions of her own began to press upon her.

"I think the geese are making me wise," said she, unconsciously speaking aloud.

"Then they will be golden geese," answered a voice at her side.

"O father! Did you hear what I was saying?"

"Only a bit of it."

"It's a great thing to have property," said Norah, "and to know what to do with it makes one feel older, and it's a weight as well as a pleasure."

"Why, lass," said her father, "the geese have taught thee a lesson thy mother and I have failed to teach thee!"

The older and fatter the geese grew, the more important Norah felt. She and Tom had many consultations as Martinmas drew nigh, and at length it was decided that the time had come for the geese to be sold.

"I'm sorry to part with them, Tom, but they must go. I must have the money."

"What for?"

But Norah screwed up her mouth and shook her head. She had her own plans, but she was not going to tell them.

"I wonder if they would bring seven shillings apiece," said she.

"Here's farmer Lovell coming, maybe he can tell us."

"I don't like to ask him," answered Norah.

But Farmer Lovell anticipated the question, for his first words were, "Well, Norah, if you're willing to sell your geese, I've got a good customer for you."

Norah looked up, her eyes half-filled with tears, for now that it came to the point, she found that she was really very fond of her geese.

"Eight shillings each," continued Farmer Lovell; "it's a high price, and, though poultry's dear, you are not likely to get such an offer again."

"She'll sell them," said Tom.

"Let your sister speak for herself."

"Yes, thank you; I have made up my mind to sell them," said Norah, "and I'm much obliged to you for"—and here Norah burst out crying.

"What a queer girl you are!" said Tom.

But Farmer Lovell patted her on the shoulders, saying, "I understand, child; and I'll send for them to-night."

That evening the geese had an extra feed of green meat from Norah's hand, an extra pat on the head for good-bye; and when Norah went to bed at night she put her two pounds eight shillings under her pillow, and cried herself to sleep.

"What will she do with it?" asked Tom.

"You'll surely not let her spend it all as she pleases," said the mother.

"Leave her alone," said the father; "the golden geese have been talking to her." The mother lifted up her hands, but said nothing.

The next morning Norah came down to breakfast pale and quiet, and eat her bread and milk in silence, and when her brothers had gone off to work, she sat down beside her father, and asked, "What's the fare to Cloverdale?"

"Cloverdale! What put Cloverdale into thy head, lass? Art thou going to be a traveller? Let me see, third class would be about ten shillings, I fancy."

"Ten shillings there and ten shillings back, and ten more would be thirty.—Father I want you to go to Cloverdale, and bring grandmother to see us all."

The father gave a start. "What put that in thy thoughts, lass?"

"Grandmother said in her letter she should like to see you again before she died; and as I minded the geese down by the river, I thought of Joseph in the land of Egypt, and how his old father longed to see him; but I knew that you could not afford to send for grandmother; and then all at once it came to me that the geese would manage it for us."

The father was silent for a while; but he drew Norah closer to him, and kissed her; then he spoke. "Dost hear the lass, mother? Wasn't I right? And haven't the geese been as good as if they'd laid golden eggs for her?"

"Better," replied the mother. "Thou art a good lass, my daughter, and thy father shall go and satisfy the desire of his heart—to see his mother again in the land of the living. It will do us more good than if thou couldst buy a dozen silk gowns and fine coats."

And the father went and the grandmother came; and as they sat round the blazing fire, full of happiness and joy, no heart was lighter and happier than Norah's; and when her grandmother laid her hand upon her head, and said, fondly, "Bless thee, my child, for this great happiness; the remembrance of thy good deed will return to thee again and again."