

## HELEN KELLER'S STORY.

(Concluded.)

I left the pump-house eager to learn everything. We met the nurse carrying my little cousin, and teacher spelled 'baby.' And for the first I was impressed with the smallness and helplessness of a little baby, and mingled with that thought there was another one of myself, and I was glad I was myself, and not a baby.

I learned a great many words that day. I do not remember what they all were; but I do know that 'mother,' 'father,' 'sister' and 'teacher' were among them. It would have been difficult to find a happier little child than I was that night as I lay in my crib and thought over the joy the day had brought me, and for the first time longed for a new day to come.

The next morning I awoke with joy in my heart. Everything I touched seemed to quiver with life. It was because I saw everything with the new, strange, beautiful sight which had been given me. I was never angry after that because I understood what my friends said to me, and I was very busy learning many wonderful things. I was never still during the first glad days of my freedom. I was continually spelling, and acting out the words as I spelled them. I would run, skip, jump, and swing, no matter where I happened to be. Everything was budding and blossoming. The honeysuckle hung in long garlands, deliciously fragrant, and the roses had never been so beautiful. Teacher and I lived out-of-doors from morning until night, and I rejoiced greatly in the forgotten light and sunshine found again.

I did not have regular lessons then as I do now. I just learned about everything, about trees and flowers, how they absorb the dew and sunshine; about animals, their names and all their secrets:

How the beavers built their lodges,  
Where the squirrels hid their acorns,  
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,  
Why the rabbit was so timid.

Once I went to a circus, and teacher described to me the wild animals and the countries where they live. I fed the elephants and monkeys; I patted a sleeping lion and sat on a camel's back. I was very much interested in the wild animals, and I approached them without fear, for they seemed to me a part of the great, beautiful country I was exploring.

The next step in my education, which I remember distinctly, was learning to read. As soon as I could spell a few words, teacher gave me slips of cardboard on which were printed words in raised letters. I very quickly learned that the printed words stood for things. I had a frame in which I could arrange the words so that they would make little sentences; but before I ever arranged sentences in the frame I used to make them with objects.

I would find the slips of paper which represented 'doll is on bed,' and place them on the objects, thus making a sentence. Nothing delighted me so much as this game. I would play it for hours together. Often when everything in the room was arranged so as to make sentences I would find teacher and show her what I had done. Then I would get the Primer and hunt for the words I knew, and when I found one I would scream with joy.

I read my first story on May day, and ever since books and I have been loving friends and inseparable companions. They have made a bright world of thought and beauty all around me. They have been my faithful teachers in all that is good and beautiful. Their pages have carried me back to ancient times, and shown me Egypt, Greece, Rome! They have introduced me to kings, heroes and gods, and they have revealed to me great thoughts, great deeds. Is it strange that I love them?

I would like to tell how I was taught to write and to do sums in arithmetic, but it would make my story too long.

I will now try to describe the first Christmas I knew anything about. Oh, what a merry, merry Christmas it was! No child in all the land could have been happier than I was. I had never known what Christmas meant before teacher came, and every one in the family tried to make my first Christmas a memorable one.

They all prepared surprises for me, and the mystery with which they surrounded their gifts was my greatest amusement during the last days of December. My mother and teacher seemed always to be at

work upon secrets, which they pretended to hide as soon as I appeared. I got more and more excited as the day when the mysteries were to be revealed approached.

It came at last, the glad, beautiful Christmas Day! I awoke earlier than usual, and flew to the table where I had been told Santa Claus would leave his presents, and sure enough, there they were! Such gifts! such gifts! How shall I describe them? There was a real canary in a cage, a lovely doll in a cradle, a trunk full of treasures, a beautiful set of dishes and many other choice things.

The day was full of joy from beginning to end, and I shall always think of it as the merriest happiest Christmas of my childhood.

The next important event in my life was my visit to Boston. I shall never forget the incidents connected with that happy event, the preparations beforehand, the departure with teacher and mother, the journey and, finally, the arrival in the beautiful City of Kind Hearts one morning late in May.

During the long winter evenings, as we sat by the glowing fire, teacher had told me of her far-away northern home, and of the dear, unknown friends there, who loved her little pupil, until a great longing to visit Boston grew strong in my heart. And one day, like an answer to my wish, came a kind letter from Mr. Anagnos, inviting mother, teacher and me to spend the summer with him.

The invitation was accepted, and the middle of May was the time fixed upon for our departure. I thought the days of impatient waiting endless; but at last they were over, and I found myself sitting by teacher in the train, asking many eager questions as it sped onward.

We spent a few days in Washington, visiting the places of interest, and I learned many things about the government of our country. I saw the President, and the beautiful gardens surrounding the White House. It was there also that I met my dear friend Doctor Bell. He came to see me, and afterwards sent me a toy elephant which amused me greatly.

But although I enjoyed my stay in Washington, yet I was glad when we resumed our journey, and gladder still when the train stopped, and teacher said: 'This is Boston!!!'

I wish it were possible for me to give a full description of that memorable visit; for it was rich in incidents, and new, exciting experiences. But it would take much time, and I fear my story is already too long, so I will only mention disconnectedly the things that most impressed me.

I joined the little blind children in their work and play, and talked continually. I was delighted to find that nearly all my new friends could spell with their fingers. Oh, what happiness! to talk freely with other children! to feel at home in the great world! Until then, I had been a little foreigner, speaking through an interpreter; but in Boston, in the city where Doctor Howe had lived, and where Laura Bridgman was taught, I was no longer a stranger. I was at home, and the dream of my childhood was accomplished.

Soon after our arrival in Boston, we visited Plymouth, and in that quaint, old Puritan town I listened with eager interest to the story of the coming of the Pilgrim Fathers. That was my first lesson in history. And a few days later, when I had climbed the Bunker Hill Monument, teacher told me how brave, unselfish men won our dear country's freedom, my heart was thrilled, and I was proud of being born an American.

We spent one very happy morning with the deaf children at the Horace Mann School. I had never thought I should learn to talk like other people until teacher told me that morning the little deaf children were being taught to speak. Then I was eager to learn myself, and two years afterward, in that very school, I did learn to speak, and another wall which seemed to stand between my soul and the outside world was broken down.

Dear Miss Fuller taught me in a short time to make all the sounds which constitute that wonderful, curious thing we call speech. My mother had thought her little child's voice lost forever; but lo! Love had found it, and brought it home.

I wish now to speak of my visit to the seaside; for it was during my sojourn at

the north that I received my first impressions of the great ocean. It was about the middle of July, after my mother had returned to our home in the sunny south; that teacher and I went to Brewster, a pleasant little town on Cape Cod, where we spent a very happy summer.

The morning after our arrival, I awoke bright and early. A beautiful summer day had dawned, the day on which I was to make the acquaintance of a sombre and mysterious friend. I got up, and dressed quickly and ran down stairs. I met teacher in the hall, and begged to be taken to the sea at once. 'Not yet,' she responded, laughing. 'We must have breakfast first.'

As soon as breakfast was over, we hurried off to the shore. Our pathway led through low, sandy hills, and as we hastened on, I often caught my feet in the long, coarse grass, and tumbled, laughing, in the warm, shining sand. The beautiful, warm air was peculiarly fragrant, and I noticed it got cooler and fresher as we went on.

Suddenly we stopped, and I knew, without being told, the sea was at my feet. I knew, too, it was immense! awful! and for a moment some of the sunshine seemed to have gone out of the day. But I do not think I was afraid; for later when I had put on my bathing-suit, and the little waves ran up on the beach, and kissed my feet, I shouted for joy, and plunged fearlessly into the surf. But, unfortunately, I struck my foot on a rock, and fell forward into the cold water.

Then a strange, fearful sense of danger terrified me. The salt water filled my eyes, and took away my breath, and a great wave threw me upon the beach as easily as if I had been a little pebble. For several days afterward I was very timid, and could hardly be persuaded to go in the water at all; but by degrees my courage returned, and almost before the summer was over, I thought it the greatest fun to be tossed about by the sea-waves.

Oh, the happy, happy hours I spent, hunting the wonderful shells! How pretty they were with their lovely, fresh hues, and exquisite shapes! And how pleasant it was to sit on the sandy bank, and braid the sea-grass, while teacher told me stories of the sea, and described, in simple words that I could understand, the majestic ocean, and the ships that drifted in the distance like white-winged birds.

People sometimes seem surprised that I love the ocean when I cannot see it. But I do not think it is strange. It is because God has planted the love of His wonderful works deep in the hearts of His children, and whether we see them or not, we feel everywhere their beauty and mystery enfolding us.

I returned to my southern home at the beginning of November, with a head full of joyous memories, and a heart full of grateful love for the dear friends who had done so much for my happiness.

It was long before we again visited the beautiful City of Kind Hearts. I continued my studies at home, and grew gladder every day and night because of the new, wonderful knowledge that was coming to me. Of course I do not mean that I was never sad. I suppose every one has sorrows. Our dear poet has said: 'Into each life some rain must fall,' and I am sure the rain is as useful for us as it is for the flowers.

I wept bitterly when I heard of the death of my beautiful dog; for I loved her tenderly. Oh! Lizzie was so brave and gentle. She would lay her head in my lap when I caressed her, and I knew there was a gentle, loving expression in her brown eyes. And how it grieved me to think I should never see her again! But even that sorrow had a bright side.

When the dog-lovers in England and America heard that my dog had been killed, they were very sorry and kindly offered to raise money to buy me another Mastiff. Then I knew that my beautiful dog's death would be the means of bringing light and joy to a desolate life. I wrote to the kind gentlemen and asked them to send me the money, which they proposed raising, to help educate Tommy [Stringer] instead of buying me another dog.

Little Tommy's story is a very sad one. I first heard of him one vacation, while visiting some dear friends in Pennsylvania. He was then in one of the hospitals in Pittsburgh. When he was only four years

old he had a dreadful illness which deprived him of his sight and hearing. His mother died when he was a mere infant, and his father was too poor to have him educated. So he remained in the hospital, blind and deaf, and dumb, and small and friendless altogether. Could there be a more pitiful condition?

When I returned to Boston the following autumn Tommy was constantly in my thoughts. I told my friends about him, and Mr. Anagnos promised he would find a place for my little human plantlet in the beautiful Child's Garden which the kind people of Boston have given to the little sightless children, if I would raise money to pay his teacher and other expenses.

That seemed to me an easy thing to do. I knew that the world was full of love and sympathy, and that an appeal in behalf of a helpless little child would meet with a loving response. And so it did. The dog-lovers started a Tommy-fund immediately; little children began to work for him, and people in far-away states, and even in England and Canada, sent their offerings of money and sympathy.

In a very short time enough money was raised to pay Tommy's expenses for a year, and he was brought to Boston, and a sunny corner in the Child's Garden was found for him; and in that bright, warm atmosphere of love the little human flower soon learned to grow, and the darkness which had enfolded his child-life so closely melted away. So love is the most beautiful thing in all the world. 'Love,—no other word we utter, can so sweet and precious be.'

I will here end this little story of my childhood. I am spending the winter at my home in the lovely south, the land of sunshine and flowers, surrounded by all that makes life sweet and natural; loving parents, a precious baby brother, a tender little sister and the dearest teacher in the world. My life is full of happiness. Every day brings me some new joy, some fresh token of love from distant friends, until in the fullness of my glad heart, I cry: 'Love is everything! And God is Love!'

## RUNNING AWAY FROM GOD.

Mother had told them not to touch it; that was the worst of it. The pretty Franklin stove had been taken down and carried out, and mother quickly stuffed a newspaper in the round hole left by the stove-pipe.

'It's so very windy to-day,' she said to the men, 'that I am afraid to take the screen down; but you needn't come back; Jane can take up the soot when the wind falls.'

As mother left the room, she turned and said to Jessie and Polly, standing on each side of the mantel-piece, 'Don't touch that newspaper.'

She was so used to their doing what she told them that she didn't think of it again; but an ugly little spirit of disobedience crept into their hearts, and they hardly waited for mother to be up stairs before they pulled out the paper, to peep into the dark hole and see why mother was afraid to take down the screen.

And in tugging at the paper, down came the screen itself, and then what a lot of mischief Mr. Wind was up to! He caught the piles of soft black soot lying in the hearth, and sprinkled it over every thing—the pretty crimson and gray carpet, the damask chairs, the books and bric-a-brac, and over the cleanly-dressed little girls themselves. O, what a mess!

'Let's run away, Poll,' said Jessie. So they caught up their caps from the hall-sofa and away they trotted, through the backyard and the garden, and out into the fields.

But by the time mother had discovered the mischief, and was beginning to look about anxiously for the culprits, she spied them coming laggingly back through the broken fence, and the garden and the backyard. They looked so forlorn that mother did not punish them; she thought they had punished themselves.

'But why did you turn back so soon, if you wanted to run away?' she asked.

'O, we 'membered it wasn't any good to run,' said Jessie, 'cause we couldn't run away from God, you know. He's just most everywhere.'

'And when you are good children,' said the mother, 'you'll love to think that God is everywhere, and that you can't get away from him.'—*The Sunbeam.*