

in God's purpose. You have the three signs of God's will, desire, opportunity, and a definite call. Cousin Fanny will be glad to look after mother when you have gone.'

'I wanted one missionary, and lo! God has given me two,' exclaimed Mrs. Fletcher. 'His loving-kindness is wonderful.'

'After this,' Arthur added, 'I think our family motto had better be, "Whatever 'He' would have me do."'

'Our desires may be good,' said Mrs. Fletcher, 'but His will is best.'

'For the Night Cometh.'

Across the dial-plate, where sleeps
A lizard, drunken with the light,
An ever-shifting shadow creeps—
The outstretched finger of the night.
Uncropped, unclipped, around the base
The high grass springs, the mullein towers,
Hiding the legend on the face:
'I Cannot Count in Shade or Showers.'

A friend of sunny times alone,
It hath no love for darker days;
When clouds across the sun are blown,
It hungers for the warming rays.
It basks gray-silent in the light,
Content beneath the sun's full powers;
Above, the legend reads aright:
'I Number but the Sunny Hours.'

But carved beneath, another line
Cries its short message to mankind;
Half hid beneath the rank woodbine
To eyes that see and yet are blind.
Out of the wilderness, unheard,
It calls through winter-time and June,
Shouting to all to wake and gird:
'Man, Seize the Hour while yet 'tis Noon.'

Like bugles in the dead of night
The high call startles, and the heart
Leaps, as a lark to meet the light,
Eager to do its promised part.
Man, seize the hour, thy work to bless;
Mould thou and shape the instant boon;
Hear ye across the wilderness:
'Use well the Time; the Night comes soon.'
—Harper's Weekly.

The Mystery of Brookfield or the Travelling Doll.

(Hannah G. Fernald, in the 'Congregationalist and Christian World'.)

The name that she signed to her notes was Jessica, but Nanny Richards' father always called her the 'Mystery of Brookfield.'

You would never have suspected, to look at her, that she differed from the other dolls of fortunate little girls. She was very pretty and not very large; and the extent of her wardrobe was really astonishing. There her peculiarity began, for the travelling doll owned frocks made from the material of the dresses of almost every little girl in town.

It all began one cold, blustering autumn, when children who missed the sunny afternoons of out-door play were inclined to be fretful, and sometimes even cross. It was hardest for Ruthie Day, because her mother was not well that fall, and Ruthie had no brothers and sisters. One morning Jimmy Carter, who did errands for half the families in Brookfield, appeared smiling at the Days' door, with a box and a small trunk, both of which he insisted on giving into Ruthie's own hands.

'I'll call again in a week,' he said, and then he ran whistling down the path.

Ruthie opened the box first—and Jessica, the travelling doll, smiled up at her. She wore a crimson cloak and hood over a white muslin dress, and her hands were clasped about a tiny note, addressed to Miss Ruth Day.

'Dear Ruth,' it said, 'I shall be glad to spend a week with you if you care to have me. Please have my trunk packed promptly at nine o'clock next Tuesday morning, as I have an important engagement to keep. With love, Jessica.'

So Ruthie had the first surprise and the first delight in that wonderful trunk, where pink dresses and blue dresses and white dresses, silks and muslins—even an umbrella and a rain coat—were snugly packed.

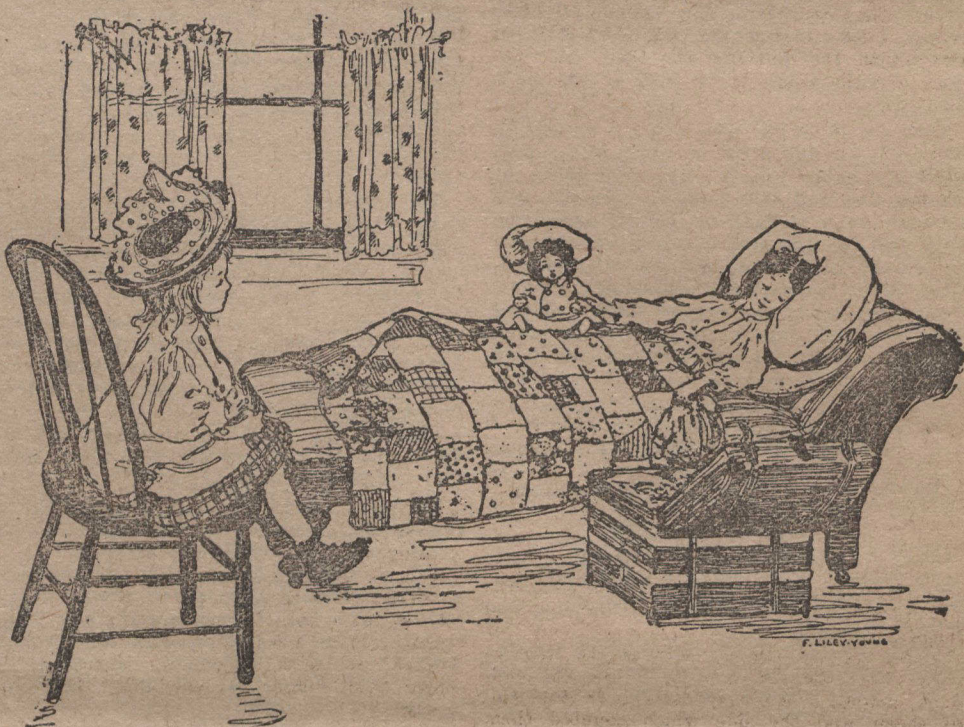
Jimmy Carter came only too promptly when the week had passed, and to Ruthie's ques-

tions he answered briefly but good-naturedly. 'I'm not to tell.'

That Tuesday afternoon Esther Cole had an engagement with the dentist. She was to go at two o'clock, and at half past twelve the travelling doll appeared with Jimmy and the trunk and a note which said that Jessica was to stay four days. Esther thought about the trunk full of clothes all the way to the dentist's and quite forgot to be frightened.

When Minna James sprained her ankle Jessica came to spend three weeks with her; Minna had time to make her two new frocks (which she really did not need) and so began the custom of adding to the travelling doll's already extensive outfit. Jimmy protested that the trunk was heavier after each visit, and that he should soon be unable to carry it.

Jimmy joked a great deal about the doll,



but he would never answer any questions, and most of the little girls' mothers soon told them that they ought not to ask any.

When Nanny Richards gave the dolls' party with which she always celebrated her Anabel's birthday, Jessica was not known to be visiting anywhere, and the greatest concern was felt about her. It would be too cruel for her to miss the party! But at three o'clock Jessica arrived, escorted as usual by Jimmy, and arrayed in a new violet silk dress, with a wreath of white lilac on her yellow curls, and a large box of dolls' chocolate creams tied by a ribbon to her wrist.

Jessica had apparently divined the party, as she came in time to divine other and less agreeable things. Esther Cole, when she was beginning to expect another visit from the travelling doll, received instead a note in the well-known handwriting which said:

'Dear Esther, I feel sure that while your playroom is in such disorder, my presence would only add to the confusion; I will make you a visit as soon as you are ready for me. Your loving Jessica.'

There were other notes, too, which brought pink spots to the cheeks of other little girls, and caused Dr. Richards, when he heard of some of them, to pronounce Jessica 'a deep one.'

'I'll tell you, Nanny,' he said, 'where that travelling mystery of yours ought to go. Down on River Street there's a little girl with a lame back—a dear little thing—family's just moved to town, and they don't know any one. I'm going to take you there to get acquainted with Phoebe, and you'd better drop a hint in Jessica's ear. I don't think the child has many toys; lame backs are expensive.'

That afternoon Dr. Richards left Nanny at the little stranger's door, and came for her when he had made his calls. 'Well,' he said, 'you seem to have had a good time! Did you get acquainted? And isn't she a nice little girl? And are you going to give the travelling doll a hint to pay a visit there?'

'She doesn't need one,' said Nanny with

dignity, 'Jessica arrived ten minutes after I did!' And then Nanny and her father laughed together.

'Father,' she said, 'you just ought to have seen Phoebe's face while she unpacked the trunk! I was expecting Jessica soon myself, but I wish—I truly do—that she might stay with Phoebe a whole month!'

Little lame Phoebe soon found her way into the warm hearts of the Brookfield children, and she grew to love Jessica far more dearly than any of the others ever could. The doll made her more and more frequent visits, and after each one Phoebe found it harder to let her go. The other children noticed this; they all agreed with Ruthie Day when she said:

'Jessica came to me last night, but there! I can't take a bit of comfort with her for thinking how Phoebe misses her.'

Then Nanny had an idea. 'Children, let's

write a note and put it in Jessica's hand when she goes away from Ruthie's. Let's ask her to stay at Phoebe's altogether! We'll miss her, I s'pose, but we've got our own dolls—and we aren't lame.'

It was a little hard, but they loved Phoebe, and they wrote the note. All the little girls signed it whom Jessica was in the habit of visiting—and then they waited for something to happen. At first it seemed that nothing ever would. Jimmy took Jessica away from Ruthie's on Tuesday, but she did not appear at Phoebe's on Wednesday or Thursday or Friday.

'Do you suppose we've hurt her feelings?' queried the anxious children, 'Do you suppose Jessica thought we didn't "want" her?'

Saturday morning there were eight notes beside eight breakfast plates in Brookfield. 'Jessica requests the pleasure of your company at two o'clock this afternoon,' said each one, and the address given was the big house with the conservatory, where Miss Cynthia Russell lived all alone.

At two o'clock eight little girls stood rather timidly at the door of the Russell house. The maid seemed to expect them; she led them to a pleasant room where their bewildered eyes fell with relief on one familiar object—Jessica, enthroned on a doll's high-chair, and with a muslin-curtained cradle beside her.

'I thought, since she is at last to settle down in a home of her own, that she might do well to take a little furniture with her,' said a laughing voice, and then Miss Cynthia was among them, kissing them and helping to unbutton their coats. Suddenly every little girl seemed to have known Miss Cynthia all her life; to have known her intimately, that is, instead of merely well enough to say, 'Good-morning, Miss Cynthia,' when they met her.

'Is she going to Phoebe's to stay, Miss Cynthia?' they asked eagerly.

'To be sure she is,' replied Miss Cynthia, 'and this is her good-by party to you all! You have been very kind and dear to her, but of course any dolly would rather have a