

the only man in Nottingham who could be convicted of giving short weight.

'I am thinking of other people than tradesmen. You are all strangers to me, and so I hope you will not be offended if I say that I wonder if there is anybody here who always gives full weight and measure.'

'That can't mean me,' said Gregson; 'for I never had a pair of scales or a measure in my hand in all my life—that is, to sell anything with.'

'Nor me,' 'Nor me,' said two of the others.

'You mean something else, sir,' said Moffat; 'what is it?'

'Here is one thing, then,' said Mr. Bowen. 'I was a working man once; and I know something of what working men used to be, whatever they may be to-day. Now I have known at least a few working men who, whilst they could stand up stoutly enough for "a fair day's wages," were not quite as anxious about giving "a fair day's work."

'When the master or the foreman was out of sight they would idle away their time, or work with hardly half their strength; and I won't say I never deceived in that way myself. Now, to my mind, that is just the same as giving short weight over a counter.'

Just at this moment the shrill whistle of the engine announced that the train was close to the railway station; and of necessity this stopped all further talk, or probably Mr. Bowen might have told them of some other ways in which they and other people, too, give short weight.

'I say,' said Gregson, as the men walked together from the station, 'who is that man? I've seen him before, but can't say where.'

'I don't know,' said Moffat; 'but don't you think he was beginning to turn the tables on us a bit? There's no knowing what he might have done if he had only stayed ten minutes longer.'

### A Lesson of Life.

One bright autumn Pearl Fenwick came slowly down the stairs of her cottage home wearing a very discontented expression. The day was Saturday, and Pearl being free from school duties had been performing her usual work of sweeping and dusting. This she had done with a faithful, careful hand, for Pearl was naturally conscientious in the performance of all her duties. But this morning her work had been done in a perfunctory way and when finished it was without the cheerful spirit which usually accompanied her completed work.

'Mamma,' said Pearl, as she came into the little kitchen where Mrs. Fenwick was doing the Saturday's baking, 'I am tired to death of this everlasting round of sweeping and dusting. It is work five days of the week in school, and then on Saturday this tiresome housework; I am tired of the whole round and of this unprogressive little town; I wish something would happen.'

Mrs. Fenwick was a widow whose husband had given his life as a volunteer in the war, when the blue and the grey, brothers, but alas! divided, fought so bravely.

Many were the homes made desolate, among them that of Mrs. Fenwick, who was left with little Pearl with little but an active brain and willing hands to provide food and clothing for herself and daughter. It was the mother's ambition that Pearl should be well educated, and thus be enabled to more successfully fight life's battle. So the mother toiled early and late at her needle that Pearl might be kept in school until she should finish her high school course, which object for which she had striven was in

sight, as Pearl was in the last year of the high school course.

'My daughter,' said Mrs. Fenwick, 'it grieves me to hear you speak so discontentedly. Have we not great reason to be thankful, and can you not feel happy in the thought that you are helping mother, and will soon be able to lighten my cares when your course in school is finished?'

'I suppose you are right, mamma, but I do get so tired of the same old round of duties. I wish something strange and unusual would happen just as it does in the stories I read.'

'Pearl was but sixteen. She had passed the long summer vacation in pleasant visits with her cousins, and now the return to her quiet home life and round of duties seemed very irksome to her.

A few days passed and Pearl came home from school one day to find her mother lying on a couch in the sitting-room with fever-flushed face.

'What is the matter, mamma?' inquired Pearl, anxiously.

'I hope it is nothing serious, but my head aches so badly and I feel so very tired it seems to me I never want to sit up any more. You must get tea for yourself, and attend to the work, for I am not able to get up.'

By morning Mrs. Fenwick was in a high fever and Pearl went at once for a physician. When he came he looked grave, but said little, only insisting that a nurse be found at once. This was done by Mrs. Fenwick's brother who lived in the same town; and everything that could be done by kind neighbors and friends to make the sufferer comfortable, was done. Mrs. Fenwick grew worse daily and soon lay in a stupor from which she could be aroused with difficulty.

Mechanically Pearl went about her daily work of preparing food for herself and the nurse, and the few services she was allowed to perform for the sufferer. It had never occurred to her that her mother could be taken from her, and when at midnight one night she was aroused to go to her mother's bedside, she was entirely unprepared for the scene which awaited her. The mother who had loved her so dearly and cared for her so tenderly, always shielding her from the rude contact of the world, lay unconscious, her life ebbing away. To Pearl it seemed that the end could not be near and that there must still be a hope of her mother's recovery. After a few breaths which came more and more lingeringly, the sound of the last expiring breath smote Pearl's ears as a dreadful knell. The friends about the bedside perceiving that all was over began quietly to make preparations for the care of the slender form which death had robbed of its jewel. Mrs. Fenwick, in all the long years of her widowhood, had been a trusting Christian. To her the Master had said 'Well done.' There was no doubt in the minds of the sorrowing friends that she was even now rejoicing with the heavenly choir who welcomed her to the home above, where there shall be no more tears, and 'sorrow and mourning shall flee away.'

In the excitement of the time no one thought of Pearl or noticed that she passed quietly out into the night. She made no demonstration nor did she at first shed any tears. Her sorrow was too overwhelming. She stood in the doorway which her mother had so often entered and wherein she would come no more, and looked out into the quiet September night. The air was still except for the lonesome sound of cricket and katydid from the oak tree. The dome of the cloudless sky arched above glittering with stars, and Pearl looked upward almost expecting to see shine suddenly out in the blue, a new star which should herald her

mother's coming into her inheritance. But no change came over the heavens and all nature seemed irresponsive to her great grief. Back into the lonely home she went and sat down before the much worn sewing machine, over which her mother had so often bent.

Laying her head upon its table she gave herself up to grief-stricken thoughts of the loving mother whom she through all her life should mourn. Did the thoughtless words return to her, as she shrinkingly realized the change that had come to her? Who can tell? But those hours of bitter grief and sorrow wrought a great change in Pearl. The life experience had brought her womanhood, and in the days of trial that followed, when the last sad rites of the burial of all that was mortal of Mrs. Fenwick were performed, Pearl bore herself with a calm endurance, bravely trying to bear the lot placed upon her.

When all was over, and Pearl was ready to leave the dismantled home, it was decided that she should go to live with an aunt, a sister of Mrs. Fenwick's, in a neighboring city. Among all her relatives, and they were many, this home alone was open to the homeless girl, and it proved a home indeed.

When the morning came for Pearl to start for her new home, a group of her school friends went with her to the train. All too soon came the rushing train, which was to bear Pearl away from the little village to the teeming city where she was an entire stranger, except in the family of her aunt, Mrs. Farrar.

On the journey Pearl thought seriously of the changed circumstances in which she would be placed, and resolved to do her best to repay the kindness of her aunt. Mrs. Farrar was one of those noble women of which the world has too few, of a large-hearted generous disposition. Though her home was plain and her means not ample, such was her generous spirit that she took Pearl gladly, willing to fill for her a mother's place.

Pearl entered at once upon the duties of her new home, continuing her course in school, and assisting her aunt in the work of the home. Often as she thought upon the past, of the great sorrow that had come to her and of the unknown future which lay before her, she recalled her thoughtless words of that September morning, and with the heart ache that returned with their memory, she questioned why she should be so sorely bereaved. No answer came to her questionings, but the rolling years will show the depths of the Heavenly Father's love, and Pearl has learned to say, 'Thy will and thy way have been best for me.'—Michigan Advocate.

Victoria, in her little girlhood, was spending the day with one of her royal aunts. That grand lady, wondering how to entertain the child, made a sudden rash offer: 'Victoria, you shall amuse yourself just as you want to amuse yourself, to-day. Choose anything—anything—and you shall do it if it is possible.' The small guest took in the gravity of the situation, meditated carefully, and announced her decision: 'I have always wanted to wash windows.' The word of an Englishwoman held good; the usual pail, chamois skins, etc., were provided, and the future Queen of Great Britain scrubbed away diligently to her heart's content. How many of those whom we envy, envy us! Perhaps we are coveting pleasures which they would be only too joyful to exchange for some of ours; pleasures which we have tried, and would gladly give away if we could.—Forward.