

Little Folks.

Ernst and His Model.

'O, Ernst, it is beautiful! Is it like me? Is that the very way I stood? I could fancy it is me but for one thing—it has not life. It is only a piece of clay, after all, and cannot hear the music of my dear violin.'

'But I can, Thekla,' returned her brother, with a laugh, 'and perhaps that inspired me to put such good work into my statuette.'

'But you are not the statuette, Ernst, and your work is not you,' persisted Thekla.

'Yes, it is,' replied the boy, with flashing eyes. 'It is the expression of what is in my heart and mind.'

love you, and know you will become famous some day.'

The workshop, in which much of the brother's and sister's time was spent, was simple and rude; but without was bright sunshine, and the peaceful residences and beautiful gardens of a German town. Their father, who had died two years before, had been a poor musician, and had taught his little daughter to play on the instrument she loved so well. Her talent was as pronounced as her brother's, though in a different line.

Ernst's work was now the sole support of his mother, sister, and two little boys, but before his father's death he had begun an appren-

'It speaks out exactly what I feel, as my own tongue could not do. If I am sorry, it says so. If I am glad, it goes like this.' And she played a few bars of a gavotte. 'If I am ugly, why there!'

She drew the bow across the strings, producing a sharp, discordant wail. Ernst stopped his ears, with a laugh, put aside his image to cool, and, taking his hat from a peg, prepared to go out.

Thekla approached the table after he had gone, violin in hand.

'I am afraid he did not like what I said,' she murmured to herself. 'But I told the truth: it has not life. It is but a piece of clay, moulded by clever fingers, pinched into lines, and smoothed into curves that look like life. But only the great God can give life. And our pastor says we must have a higher life still, a life in the soul, if we would know God and enjoy him for ever. Yes, I spoke truth; my violin always speaks truth, and it will not say what I do not feel. God requires truth.'

How it was she never knew, but just then she gave herself a sudden twist, the violin in one hand and the bow in the other. Which came in contact with the statuette she could not tell, but in a moment it had turned over, and the figure lay broken, flattened, and defaced upon the stand. Only the face was not marred, and it lay happy and serene, as if smiling at the wreck of hope and beauty.

With a despairing cry, Thekla threw her once-loved instrument on the floor, as if in anger for the mischief it had wrought. She raised the image carefully, and tried to put it together again. But no! the ugly dents and cracks remained. It was hopelessly injured.

'I cannot tell him! I dare not tell him!' she exclaimed, as sobs broke forth. 'He will be so very angry, and not love me any more. Oh, how careless and wicked I have been!'

She picked up her violin, almost hating it, in that moment of supreme despair, for the mischief it had been the means of working. Away she stole upstairs to her own little room, drawing a rough bolt across the door to secure her from intrusion. Then throwing herself on her knees, she gave way to a perfect storm of weeping.

Two hours passed. Ernst must have come in. What had he done?



I love my sister, and choose her for my model. I love my art, and mean to go to Berlin some day, and perhaps may see the old specimens of Greek art in other lands. Who can tell? I shall learn all I can from these our masters. My whole heart and soul—the very best that is in me—shall come out in my work. Oh, it is grand!'

And Ernst Ulbrich put aside his image as Thekla turned away and began to play the Vaterland.

'I am so glad that when the great God formed a man out of clay he breathed a soul into him,' she said, as she finished her piece. 'Ernst, your work is just perfect, so far as terra-cotta can be. But I have something in me which your dear little figure has not got. I feel and see and love my brother who has moulded me here. Yes, Ernst, I

ticeship to an artist in terra-cotta. At first he learned to examine the material out of which the figures were made, then to prepare the colors with which they were often painted. He understood all about the baking of the clay when it was moulded; and what a delight it was to him to make his first venture in the plastic art in the rude figure of a horse!

'You are not the statuette, and your work is not you.'

Though Ernst had the cares of a family upon him, he was still a boy in many things, and the words lingered unpleasantly in his memory. Boy-like, he could not refrain from sending a passing shot after the unconscious offender; so he said:—

'Your violin is not you.'

'Yes, it is,' cried Thekla hastily.