

GOING TO GRANDMOTHER'S.

BY G. L. DE R.



and active fingers, and listening to childish voices sweetly singing. After a time one of the teachers distributed boxes of small blocks to the children in her class, with the request that each child make something with them. Among the many wondrous creations made from a few blocks was a railroad train. On the teacher asking where the train was going a happy face was upturned to hers, and the reply quickly came, "to grandma's to spend Easter holidays." On hearing the magical word "grandma" a golden haired dot in the baby class who had attracted our attention by her seeming unconsciousness of anything but the work in her hands, quickly looked up, shook her curly mane, and excitedly cried, "me too doing to grandma's." A demure little maid shyly pulling her teacher's sleeve whispered, "me and Tom's going to grandma's Good Friday, and we are going to stay all day."

The delight of these little ones at the mere thought of a visit to grandmother's sent thought travelling backward to happy hours long ago. Memory, from the shadowy recesses of the brain's picture gallery, brought in orderly array picture after picture of the past, making them appear as one harmonious whole. Gazing with my mental vision upon these bright reminders of the past, the room with its happy little faces faded away, the present was forgotten, and I was again a child on my way to grandmother's.

There are five of us. Father, mother, brother Joe, sister Alice, and myself, the eldest of the three. Yes, there are six of us for father is driving old Fan, our gentle and trust-worthy friend and playmate. We are nearly there, and glimpses of the house can be caught through the trees. We children are pointing out familiar objects, and all chattering at once. "There's the harvest apple tree," cried Joe, "and there's the snow apple tree, and look mother there's the limb on the ground yet that broke when I fell and sprained my wrist. Oh! the cherries are ripe, and what lots of them." We can no longer sit still, but stand clinging to the back of the seat in front, dancing, and fairly bubbling over with excitement. Even Fan shares in our excitement, and has, of her own accord, increased her speed, until the dust is flying in clouds far behind. Visions of former feasts of sweet clover, and extra measures of oats, no doubt, rise before her as she seems almost to fly over the ground. "I saw the dining-room window first," shouts Alice, and we all strain our eyes to see if grandmother is sitting in her rocking-chair knitting there. "Hello! hello grandmother! hello Bell! we're coming, hello!" A shrill bark, and Rover darts around the corner of the house, and rushes to meet us. "Rover, Rover, here Rover," we call, just as if Rover were not coming as fast as his legs can carry him. We pass the quaint old house covered with vines and roses, and surrounded with

trees and flowers. Pass the front entrance with its broad walk bordered on each side by a long prim bed of sweet, old-fashioned flowers, and drive through the side gate which stands hospitably open, as if waiting to welcome us. "Ah! there's grandmother standing on the verandah, and there's Bell. We're coming grandmother, good morning! good morning! good morning!" we all shout, and jump and tumble out of the carriage anyway, whether we alight on hands, feet, or both, it matters not if we but reach the ground and grandmother. Such a happy, noisy, hand-shaking, kissing time. Grandmother, father, mother and children, all laughing and talking together. Rover leaping, barking, and wagging his stubby tail, and startled chickens scudding noisily away.

Accompanied by Bell (who is only three years my senior) and Rover, we start on a tour of inspection. To the orchard first, for it has a threefold attraction. A pet lamb, which comes to meet us, and after being petted and admired follows us around; a colt with funny long legs and big soft eyes, too timid to be petted; and ten downy, yellow chicks we dare not touch, as the mother hen ruffles up her feathers and darts wrathfully at us.

under the barns, and many a nest full of eggs do we find. Hats do service as baskets, and in triumph we carry our treasures to the house.

Grandmother is just about to blow the big dinner horn for Uncle Richard who was working far back in the fields, but on our approach surrenders it to us. We take turns at blowing, and how we shriek and laugh at the noises we make. Such wheezy moans and resounding blasts were surely never heard before. No one would ever dream the old horn was capable of making such diabolical sounds. Uncle Richard always declares the first time the old horn had a spell, he thought either grandmother or the horn had gone crazy. Mother endures the noise just as long as she can, then takes the horn and hangs it on its hook behind the kitchen door, and away we scamper to meet Uncle Richard, who is coming up the lane with his team of beautiful horses. Each horse is made to bear a double burden, and into the stables we ride in high glee.

Dinner is ready. How good it smells. How hungry we are. We take our places at the table, and bow our heads while grandmother, in a low, sweet voice, asks a blessing. "Oh God, bless the food which thou hast given unto



SHOES AND STOCKINGS ARE SOON OFF AND ALL FOUR ARE PADDLING.

Grandmother is standing in the door beckoning. "I'll run you a race," cries Joe, off we all start, without waiting for word to go, and in a few minutes four panting, laughing little figures stand ranged in front of the door. "If somebody will only pick some cherries I will make cherry pies for dinner" grandmother is saying. We all eagerly volunteer, and are soon provided with baskets and pails, and busily at work. The cherries that do not find their way into our mouths are dropped into the pails, but under this disadvantage four sets of busy fingers soon finish the task. Now what shall we do next? Bell suggests a game of hide-and-seek in the barns. Another race. We never walk it takes too long. Such glorious hiding places as we find, and secret, unheard of ways, of getting home free." We climb the ladders to the lofts, bury ourselves in the hay, clamber into the dark grain bins and creep behind barrels.

The sight of a hen proudly cackling diverts our attention from hide-and-seek to hens' nests. A search is at once made for eggs which sly hens may have hidden away. We peep into all manner of out-of-the-way places, and crawl

us, and while we eat of this which nourishes the body may we not forget to partake also of the food which nourishes the spirit. Amen."

We are served with mealy potatoes and boiled eggs (some of those we gathered cooked specially for us), thick slices of home-made bread and butter, milk half cream, and finally a huge piece of cherry pie. How good everything tastes, and we eat, and eat, until we really cannot eat any more.

Dinner is over, and we go with Uncle Richard to watch him harness the horses, and have a ride in the great lumber waggon back to the woods. What a jolly ride it is. The springs are stiff, and the road rough, and we go bumpety hump, over the stones and rough places. As we near the woods the happy brook greets us with low gurgles of delight. Shoes and stockings are soon off, and Rover, and all, are paddling and splashing in the warm sparkling water. With sticks, stones, and sods, we make dams and fairy islands. The islands are carpeted with soft green moss and bright yellow buttercups, and with pretty pebbles gathered from the bed of the stream, chairs and tables are