

contrary, was like a manufactory. Bread was baked in the house for the family, and for the workmen also, who were round the house in a swarm; pies and cakes were made in batches that would have made Aunt stare; the preserves and jellies, things pickled, and canned, and dried, labelled and put away for future use in the store-closet, would have stocked a shop. Aunt made jams and jellies every year, but she mounted guard over them, and dealt them out like medicine, giving them away abundantly, however, in cases of sickness. They were as necessary as daily bread here.

Mrs. Ramsay made her own butter and cheese—would not eat any other; made soap and candles enough for her own use, and to spare for her poorer neighbors; wool was spun: stockings, flannel, blankets, and coarse cloth, were made under her supervision. All the household sewing was done in the house. All this Mrs. Ramsay and her daughter accomplished, besides the care of a small flower-garden, the pride of their hearts, with one servant and an occasional sewing girl or spinning-maid for a week or two. Seeing that I was interested in the household industries, Mrs. Ramsay showed me the piles upon piles of home-made blankets and quilts that she had laid away in her closets for future use, and the winter dresses of homespun, making me notice the fineness of the texture, and the brilliancy and durability of the dyes, which were all her own handiwork. Enjoying my admiring wonder, she showed me a very nice cap and gauntlets of otter skin which she had made herself, tanning the skin also, as a present for Mr. Ramsay at last New Year's day. Mr. Ramsay thought at first she had sent to Montreal for them and was very proud when he knew they were produced by her own skill, as well he might be. I made myself useful to Mrs. Ramsay, by showing her old country fashions,

helped her with dresses and bonnets, embroidered a waist for baby's christening robe, showed Charlotte Ramsay different stitches of fancy work, taught her to write the angular hand, which had come into fashion for ladies, and helped her to make ornamental trifles for the drawing-room.

The spirit of the country came over me, and I attempted things boldly that I had never tried before, and with a measure of success, too. And so a good while passed. I was still wondering what path would open to me that would lead to independence. My life in Mr. Ramsay's, though pleasant in its diversity of occupation, reminded me too much of my position of betwixt and between in Aunt's household. They were as good and kind to me, and as respectful as if I were a dear friend. I was useful, I knew, but I could not feel independent. I wanted to do something that would be acknowledged work by Walter and the world.

One day, I was sitting with Charlotte Ray on the verandah, teaching her a stitch for a sofa-pillow, when a bright-eyed man, in a respectable suit of homespun, came up to the house and asked for me.

I said, "I am Miss Ray." He immediately stepped up briskly and shook hands with me like an old acquaintance.

Charlotte, with a little smile on her lips, said, "This is Mr. McLennan, from Glenshie, Miss Ray. Walk into the house, Mr. McLennan."

"Thank you, Miss Ramsay. It is just as pleasant here, this fine evening."

Miss Ramsay brought him a chair, and he sat down beside us. After remarking a little on the weather and the hay harvest, he leaned back, and making his chair rear up on its hind-legs, took out a large pocket-knife, caught up a little bit of stick, and began to cut and carve at it, as a mark that he was at his ease, and then spoke his errand.

"I have come to see if you would