

# LITTLE FOLKS

## Why Annette Was Glad.

(By Adele E. Thompson, in 'The Child's Hour'.)

Annette was not a pretty little girl; she had irregular features, pale eyes, a mop of dull brown hair, almost always tucked up in a knot in her neck; her nose, too, was a snub, her skin muddy, and as if all this were not enough, there was a

thinking about herself, and pitying herself so much, Annette grew sour and peevish; a scowl began to show on her forehead, and her lips to droop down at the corners, an expression that will spoil the prettiest face, and make a homely one look, oh, so much plainer; but Annette, like other little girls, did not think of this.

But Annette's face had more

she didn't even want to be comforted. Mamma, glancing toward her, guessed how she was feeling and sighed; for, beside her sorrow at all her little daughter had to bear, was the pain of seeing the look of sour discontent that was growing on her face.

By and by Annette grew tired of thinking how miserable she was, and, turning from the window to where Ellen Louise, her big flax-haired doll, was sitting straight and stiff in the chair where Annette had put her, she drew up her own little chair and sat down before her. 'Ellen Louise,' and she lifted a finger to be more impressive, 'I know you are feeling bad because you have to stay at home when Lady Elizabeth and Angeline have gone with Nell and Molly out to the park; but you are a great comfort to me because you always smile and look cheerful, no matter what happens or how disappointed you are.'

Then Annette stopped, for all at once the thought came to her that she didn't even try to smile or look cheerful when she felt badly, though mamma had talked to her many times about doing so. The first thing she said to herself was that she didn't care, she had nothing to look cheerful about. Then Annette stopped again. Why, there was her dear mamma, and their pleasant, sunshiny little flat, and Aunt Emma, and all the friends who were so kind to her. As she named them she felt that instead of nothing she had very many things to be cheerful for, and with a brightening look she gathered Ellen Louise in her arms and started for the next room, where her mamma sat trying to sew.

But at the door Annette paused; mamma's head—she was so bad that she had laid down her work and now from the shelf of a medicine closet she was taking down a bottle and pouring from it into a spoon.

'O Mamma, Mamma!' Annette's words were a frightened cry. 'You mustn't take that. It's not your headache medicine; it's a bottle of poison. Don't you remember telling me?'

Mamma's face went very pale.



twist to her back, so that when she walked it was slowly and with a halting limp.

And the worst of it was that Annette herself knew all this. Of course, one couldn't very well help knowing that one's back wasn't straight, or that one limped, but Annette knew it in the way that she kept thinking and fretting about it all the time. Then, too, she had heard thoughtless persons say, 'What an ugly little girl,' and so besides her back she also cried and fretted because she had not bright blue eyes and rosy cheeks and yellow curls, till she really came to believe that no one in all the world had as much to feel badly about as herself.

Another thing that troubled Annette was that since papa died poor mamma had to work so hard, and she could do so little to help her, when she wanted to do so much. So with all this, and with

lines than usual as she stood at the window one April afternoon, and the lids of her eyes were red with the smart of the tears that would come. For her neighbors, Johnny and Molly Adams, Nell Neff, Pete and Bell Porter, had just gone for a picnic in the park. Not ten minutes before she had seen them racing by, and a big lump kept coming up in her throat as she thought how if she was only strong enough what a good time she, too, might be having. Mamma, too, was almost sick, and after dusting out the rooms there was hardly anything else she could do, only to limp around after her and say, 'Dear Mamma, I'm so sorry your head aches,' which mamma said was a help, though Annette couldn't see how it could be.

So it was that, as Annette stood at the window and thought of all that was denied her, her heart grew bitter and wretched. Why,