

Jane shrunk away, and passed into the next room, where her mother laid sick. She had been sick for some time, and as they were poor, and her husband given to drink, she had sorrow, and privations added to her bodily sufferings. As her little girl came in she went up to her bed side, and bending over it leaned her head upon her hand. She did not make any remark, nor did her mother speak to her, until she observed the tears trickling through her fingers.

"What is the matter, my dear?" she then asked tenderly.

The little girl raised her head, endeavouring to dry up her tears as she did so.

"I feel so bad, mother," she replied.

"And why do you feel bad, my child?"

"Oh, I always feel so bad when father sends me over to the shop for brandy—and I had to go just now. I wanted to ask him to buy you some grapes and oranges with the quarter of a dollar—they would taste so good to you; but he seemed to know what I was going to say, and looked at me so cross that I was afraid to speak. I wish he would not drink any more brandy. It makes him so cross,—and then how many nice things he might buy with the money it takes for brandy?"

When her father came home to dinner, he looked crosser than he did in the morning. He sat down to the table and eat his dinner in moody silence, and then rose to depart, without so much as asking after his sick wife, or going into her chamber. As he moved towards the door, his hat already on his head, Jane went up to him, and looking timidly in his face, said in a hesitating voice—

"Mother wants an orange so bad. Won't you give me some money to buy her one?"

"No, I will not! Your mother had better be thinking about something else than wasting money for oranges!" was the angry reply, as the father passed out, and shut the door hard after him.

Jane stood for a moment, frightened at the angry vehemence of her father, and then burst into tears. She said nothing to her mother of what had passed; but after the agitation of her mind had somewhat subsided, began to cast about in her thoughts for some plan by which she might obtain an orange. At last it occurred to her, that at a shop close by, they bought rags and old iron.

"How much do you give a pound for rags?" she asked in a minute or two after the idea had occurred to her, standing at the counter of the shop.

"Three half-pence a pound," was the reply.

"How much for old iron?"

"A half-penny a pound."

"What's the price of those large oranges?"

"Twopence a-piece."

With this information, Jane hurried back. After she had cleared away the dinner table, she went down into the cellar, and looked up all the bits of iron that she could find. Then she searched the yard, and found some eight or ten old rusty nails, an old bolt, and a broken hinge. These she laid away in a little nook in the cellar. Afterwards she gathered together all the old rags that she could find about the house and in the cellar, and laid them with her old iron. But she saw plainly enough that her iron would not weigh over two pounds, nor her rags over a quarter of a pound. If time would have permitted, she would have gone into the streets to look for old iron, but this she could not do, and disappointed at not being able to get the orange for her mother, she went about her work in the afternoon with sad and desponding thoughts and feelings.

It was summer time, and her father came home from his work before it was dark.

"Go and get me a pint of brandy," he said to Jane, in a tone that sounded harsh and angry to the child, handing her at the time the money. Since the day before, he had taken a pint of brandy, and none but the best would suit him.

She took the money and the bottle and went over to the shop. Wishfully she looked at the tempting oranges in the window, as she gave the money for the liquor, and thought how glad her mother would be to have one.

As she was hurrying back, she saw a thick iron ring lying in the street—she picked up and kept on her way. It felt heavy, and her heart bounded with the