

richer than Andrew, because he has spent more in charity and in helping others than ever Andrew has thought of. What I mean is, he can get all the good of his money. When they were both young, and Andrew was sweeping his store and saving his pennies, he regretted that he could not afford to buy a flute for a poor fellow in the same boarding-house, who had a genius for music. But Roger, poorer than Andrew, did afford it! He worked over a translation, by which he earned the money late at night, after his working hours."

"How splendid!" exclaimed Isabel. "It seems, from what you tell me, as if he had the power with his touch to turn everything to gold."

"I don't know," said Ellinor, gaping a little, "I think I should prefer to have the gold than the power to change to gold. 'There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip.'"

Aunt Mary raked up the fire, and they bade good-night. Isabel said:

"Well, Aunt Mary, if Sherburne is a quiet place, we have begun with an event."

"Why, yes," said Ellinor, "the meeting these young men will give us talk for the rest of our visit. I do like events."

"I am afraid it will be your only one," laughed Mrs. Archer.

CHAPTER II.

Aunt Mary proved a false prophet: that very night was the sound, unusual in Sherburne, of an alarm of fire; the whole town was stirred and waked, Ellinor and Isabel with the rest.

"Half New York might burn up without our knowing it," said Ellinor, "but here we are all afloat because one poor little house is on fire."

It happened to be very near, however—only across the street, a little farther down. Uncle Josiah went out to help, Aunt Mary and all the household were up and dressed, and when it proved the poor little house could not be saved, she arranged to receive the invalid mother in one of her own lower rooms.

Ellinor and Isabel made themselves useful, and ran up and down and here and there. There was coffee to be made, fires were built, and directions given. And all the time the roar of the fire outside was going on, and the splendid glow of the flames, for the great barn to the little house went too; and Ellinor and Isabel had to stop continually and look out upon the magnificent sight of the rushing flames, the whirling ruddy smoke, and the lurid color in the sky lighting up the snow.

The next morning they sat together over a late breakfast.

"Well, Aunt Mary, you got up some-

thing for our entertainment this time. I never saw quite such a sight," said Ellinor.

"How the flames cracked and roared!" said Isabel. "What a terrible sound that is, as if they were really devouring something, like a horrible pack of wild beasts! Don't wonder that anyone should lose their senses in a great fire."

"But how comical some of it was!" said Ellinor. "I shall never forget that girl's coming in with a gridiron, and putting it in my hands with such care, as though it were a set of diamonds she was saving."

"Poor Agnes," said Aunt Mary, "no wonder her head was turned, when she saw burning the house she was born in. But she thought first of her mother's safety."

"How near such a scene brings us to our fellow-creatures!" exclaimed Isabel.

"How interested I shall always be in all those people we worked with last night. That dear old man that thought of the mother's rocking-chair with its pluffy seat! He brought it in to me with tears in his eyes, as he said, 'I guess she thinks considerable of that, and wouldn't like to have it go.'"

"I know," said Ellinor, "If I met him in a horse-car I should think he was just a common kind of old man, but he was thinking of everybody and everything."

"And that brave boy who climbed up to the roof of the next house with the rope for the pails of water," said Isabel, "what a splendid fellow he was!"

"Yet he had a snub-nose," said Ellinor, "and his hair inclined to the sandy, so you would think if you met him selling newspapers."

"How can you talk so about them," said Isabel, "when you have seen them all in such scenes?"

"That is the thing," said Ellinor, "I am waking up to the beauty of my kind. O Aunt Mary! I see one must come to Sherburne to see the world."

"What nonsense you are talking, Ellinor!" said Aunt Mary, "and we must sit here no longer, for there is Mr. Dobson with his sleigh to take his mother away to his own house. We shall all be quiet again before the morning is over, and by to-night you will be thinking Sherburne is the most 'dead-and-alive' place you ever saw."

Aunt Mary was doomed to be a false prophet again. Farmer Dobson, indeed, did insist upon taking his mother away to his own home, and the house was restored to its usual quiet and neatness by noon, when a sleigh was seen to drive up to the gate.

"Who is this?" exclaimed Isabel.

"Our travelling companions, surely!" cried Ellinor.

And very soon appeared the two young