

year. We live twenty miles from a railway. I have one brother and no sister. We have a dog named Shepherd, and three cats. Santa Claus came here at Christmas and brought us lots of toys.

LULU H. P.

Burnwood, Susq. Co., Pa.

Dear Editor,—The 'Northern Messenger' is a very good paper. I have taken it for four years, and want to take it as long as I live. My uncle took it when he was a little boy, and my grandmother sent for it for me.

FLOYD R. A. (aged 12).

Rose Vale, Albert Co., N.B.

Dear Editor,—In my last letter I said I was five feet five inches tall, and I signed my name Bill (of course, that is what I am called by a great many). Harold B. L. said I should have signed my full name, so here goes: my full name is William Carvel Jonah; but I don't generally sign it that way. I signed my name Bill to see if anybody around here would know my letter. I saw my name among the successful Scripture Searchers in the correspondence of Dec. 25. My birthday is on March 8, so I will soon be thirteen years old. I think the 'Messenger' should have a club or circle of some kind.

I live about one mile and a quarter from school, but I do not go very much in winter. I think 'Saved in a Basket, or Daph and Her Charge' is a very interesting story. We live about two and a half miles from church, but we have no minister at present. For pets I have a dog and a cat; did you ever see a gray dog with black ears? I have one, when he was a pup he was snow-white all but his ears. I have a cat that will knock at the door when she wants to come into the house. Wishing the 'Messenger' success,

WM. C. J.

Onaga, Kansas.

Dear Editor,—My birthday comes on Feb. 22, on George Washington's birthday. I will be nine years old. I take the 'Messenger,' and like it very much. I like to read the Little Folks' Page. My grandfather has taken it for almost thirty years. I have two sisters and two brothers. My sisters and I go to school every day this winter, and on Sundays we go to Sunday-school and the Junior Endeavor Society. Our school and church are only half a mile away.

LILLIAN L. P.

Sussex, N.B.

Dear Editor,—Our home is two and a half miles from the town, on the top of a hill. We have quite a large farm. There are hills on all sides of us, and the valley between the hills, where the town is, gives a very pretty view, especially in summer, when the trees have their leaves on. Sussex is growing very fast, being an inland town; but there are quite a number of roads coming in different directions into it, which makes a great deal of business.

MAUD M. U.

THE MESSENGER.

There is a paper we like to read,
And it's very interesting, too;
The Little Folks Page is so nice,
I think so, now, don't you?

We get the paper on Sundays,
And we read it every time;
And we read all the stories,
And do not miss a line.

I think that all who read this
Will agree with me, now;
And since the paper was published
It has made many glad, I trow.

BEATRICE V. (aged 12).

Sample Copies.

Any subscriber who would like to have specimen copies of the 'Northern Messenger' sent to friends can send the names with addresses and we will be pleased to supply them, free of cost.

HOUSEHOLD.

A True Record

(Mrs. Dora Sprecher, in 'American Mother.')

'Nellie, how have you managed it?'

I had heard much of my Cousin Nellie Morton, whom I had not seen since her marriage twelve years before, and I determined to accept her invitation to visit her. But I was not prepared for the woman who met me at the door, with the same happy eyes, and seeming but little older than when I had last seen her.

'Managed what?'

'To keep so young and happy.'

'How could I do otherwise with four dear little ones to keep me young?'

'But most women grow old instead of young with the burden of a family.'

I knew that, aside from her church duties, Nellie had given herself up to her family. We all blamed her, for we felt that she was too gifted a woman to thus give up her social position. It seemed to us that in so doing she was depriving her children of any social distinction in the future. One of Nellie's excuses had been, that when her two oldest children were young, she had gone and left them to the care of a nurse girl; 'but I soon found if I were to keep my babies pure and untainted, I must be their nurse girl.'

But I was more than surprised when my eccentric cousin told me that for more than a year she had had no hired help except a woman to come in and do the heavy work.

'Why, Nellie! what is that for?'

'Several reasons. In the first place, it is almost impossible to obtain competent help. Mary had been with me for nearly four years, and I had depended so entirely upon her that for a while after she married and left me I was lost. After having several incompetent girls, I felt that we would all be happier without one. Our mode of living is new to most girls, and few care to adapt themselves to it.'

'Then, too,' she added, 'I have so often heard mothers say that children in school had no time for housework, and I wanted to prove by actual experience that they had.'

When I went up to my room for the night, I asked what was their hour for rising.

'We are all up at six, except Lucile and Roy, and they are up by six thirty.'

'Don't you find it hard to call them so early?'

'Oh, we never call them. As you have seen, they are all in bed by seven thirty, so they are ready to wake up bright and early.'

'You don't put them to bed at seven thirty the year around?'

'No, when school is out and the days are long and hot, after dinner daily they put on their night-dresses, and take a nap. When they wake up, they march into the bathroom, and after a bath they are bright and fresh until nine o'clock.'

As I was determined to see how Nellie did manage, I was up by six thirty. As I was coming down stairs, I met Nellie's oldest, a bright girl of eleven, coming up.

'Good morning, Doris. Were you coming to call me?'

'No, I am going up to open the beds and windows and empty the slops; that is one of my chores every morning, before breakfast.'

I found Elizabeth setting the table. In the kitchen was the mother, busy with the morning meal.

'Where are Harry and the babies?'

'The babies aren't dressed yet. Harry is dressing Roy and helping Lucile.'

I found, during my visit, that though Mr. Morton was busy in his office from early until late, while he was at home he did many little things to lighten the burden for 'Mamma.' And I believe that one reason for Nellie's happy face was the co-operation of her husband.

At six forty-five, they assembled for family worship, and by seven were seated at the breakfast table. By seven thirty we had finished, and I asked them to go on with their work as if I weren't there, for I wanted to see what the children could do. 'Come, girls, just one hour before time to go to school, and Cousin Edith wants to see how we manage our work.'

Doris began sweeping the kitchen, Nellie the sitting-room, and Elizabeth and Lucile to clear away the dishes. By the time they had them carried into the kitchen, Doris had finished her sweeping, and had her pans ready to begin washing, and as she washed, Elizabeth wiped and put away. Lucile brushed the crumbs from the table, swept and dusted the dining-room, set the table for dinner, and placed the chairs at the table. As Lucile was only six, I was astonished to see her do her work so well, especially sweeping. Nellie afterward told me that the sweeping was a self-imposed task. 'But she loves to do it so well, and is so proud and happy to help, that I have not the heart to stop her.'

While the children had been busy, Nellie had accomplished but little. She had been called twice to the telephone. The grocer boy, laundry boy, and the butcher boy had some of her time at the kitchen door. Roy had fallen and hurt his head, and had to be comforted. Doris went to the piano to practice, while Nellie was combing Elizabeth's hair, and Elizabeth practiced while Doris was being combed, which gave them each about ten minutes.

'Perhaps you think that I ought not to be combing these big girls, but they can help me in so many ways, and I can comb their hair so much faster and prettier, that I do it for school and church.'

At eight thirty the children were off for school, with the morning work all finished down stairs.

I suggested that the children had had no time for play.

'They will have fifteen minutes after they get to school for a romp and play. On stormy days they do not start until eight forty-five, for I do not like to have them in the schoolroom any more than is necessary.'

'Doesn't Lucile go to school?'

'No, I prefer to keep them at home until they are seven. Much complaint has been made of late of the children in the public schools having more work than they can do at school. But my two girls have not found the work hard, and I believe that one reason is because they did not start before they were old enough to understand the work. Two other good reasons are that they have never been up past bedtime during the school year, and they have only three meals a day.'

'I see you are as much of a hobbyist as when we were in school together. But tell me, do the children always go on with the work as they did this morning?'

'Perhaps to some extent they may have had on company airs, because of your being here, though I did not think of it just then. They know that the work must be finished before school, and the longer they are at it the less time they will have for play; also, if it isn't done well, it must be done over. Doris is quite inclined to hurry through her work, while Elizabeth is too slow. Sometimes one of them feels as though she did not want to work, then I give her a day's rest, and treat her as a boarder. This doesn't happen often, and by the next day she is glad to be one of us. Do you know, when I was in school, I used to think I should love to be a kindergarten teacher, and after my babies came, I made it quite a study. I got the gifts, and taught them many of them; but I now believe that too much time is spent in amusing children instead of letting them amuse themselves. Children are highly imaginative, and by many little arts and devices work is easily made play. Sometimes ours is the White House kitchen, and I am the chief and they are the underservants. Again, when I am in one part of the house and they in another, I am a poor washerwoman, and they have to keep the house. They love to be "Five Little Peppers," and mourn because there are only four of them, and Ben has to be gone