

"Oh, well, Mrs. Tom, he'll outgrow that. The best thing you can do is to let me take him to sea with me the next time I go, and that will cure him of his laziness, if anything will. In the meantime, I have a patient for you to take care of, if you have no objection. He can't last much longer, poor fellow, and you are a better nurse than Sibyl. What do you say, Mrs. Tom? Shall I send him up to your house?"

Mrs. Tom was a brown-faced, black-eyed, keen-looking, wide-awake, gossiping little woman, of four feet high, with a tongue that could, and did, say sharp things sometimes; but with a heart so warm and large that it is a wonder how it ever found room in so small a body. However, I have been told, as a general thing, little people are, by far, cleverer and warmer-hearted than their tall neighbors—as if nature were anxious to atone for their shortened stature by giving them a double allowance of heart and brains.

Nursing was Mrs. Tom's peculiar element. Nothing delighted her more than to get possession of a patient, whom she could doctor back to health. But unfortunately this desire of her heart was seldom gratified; for both Carl and Christie were so distressingly healthy that "yarb tea" and "chicken broth" were only thrown away upon them. Her frequent visits to the mainland, however, afforded her an opportunity of physicking indiscriminately certain unfortunate little wretches, who were always having influenza, and measles, and hooping-cough, and other little complaints too numerous to mention, and which fled before Mrs. Tom's approach and the power of her "yarb tea." Of late there had been a "plentiful scarcity" even of these escape-valves, so her eyes twinkled now with their delight at the prospect of this godsend.