

"What's the need?"  
 "A velvet dress."

"You don't mean it. Do you forget that you are a graded school teacher at a salary of nine dollars a week?"

"I cannot help it. I have earned my money and saved it, and I want one thing I feel at home in when I am invited to such places as Mrs. Cunningham's, for instance."

"All right, of course."

"Are you going anywhere, Louise?"

"No, I have changed my plan, too."

"What was it?"

"I was invited up to Uncle Edward's farm to spend the summer, and expected to go until I heard Dr. Lane's sermon two weeks ago."

"I did not hear him allude to the fact."

"Not exactly, but do you remember his asking us if we had ever thought what was the very best blessing we ever had, and advising us to go home and 'look over our blessings,' and give God thanks for them?"

"Yes, I do remember that."

"I had no difficulty in thinking up my best blessing. It is my good, patient mother, and when I went home and 'looked her over,' it did not take me long to decide who needed mountain air and fresh milk the most of any one. So the upshot of the matter is, mother goes for three weeks to the farm, and I am your most gracious and successful housekeeper at home. Come and take tea will you?"

"Perhaps," Kate Morgan answered, absently, and the two teachers left the subject and the large school-room together.

But the earnest, energetic Kate Morgan took a new thought along the familiar streets. All the school-years of her twenty-one years of life had been spent in some connection with that graded-school in the busy manufacturing town of Benton. The year before she had been graduated with honor from the high school, and at once offered a situation in the intermediate department, that she had filled to the satisfaction of all, and her own great enjoyment.

For so many years she had known what close economies were necessary to her plain home that the younger children might be clothed decently and that she might complete the school course. She had seen her father count out his quarterly salary as a clerk, and sigh over its meagreness again and again. She had seen the lines in her mother's patient face deepen over the problems of turned garments, and doing without things. No wonder her salary had seemed to her almost a fortune, and its possibilities a little intoxicating. She was young, too, and pretty, with musical gifts that made her welcome everywhere. But she was a child of the "kingdom," too, and every day prayed, "Search me, O God of thyself," and to such the Spirit is the leader.

It was late when she reached home, and she was still busy in "looking over" her mother and thinking that she had never seen her so pale and worn, when her father entered with a sigh over the warm day, and sank down in his chair quite exhausted. His daughter wondered that she had not noticed before how fast he was growing old. The three young children came in and they sat down to the plain supper. Kate wished now she had bought a quart of berries in the morning instead of that fashion magazine, when she saw how little appetite her father had and how the sickly boy Willis left his bread uneaten. Willis was thirteen, Herbert ten, and little Alice five years of age. Three others were waiting up in "God's acre" on the hill.

That night up in her own room Kate went through a rapid mental calculation, and with pencil and paper laid the result plainly before her eyes, after this fashion:

Kate Morgan.	Dr.
To twelve yds. black velvet at \$4.00 per yd.	\$48 00
To trimmings and making.....	10 00
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Money lost .....	58 00
Kate Morgan.	Cr.
To cash in hand .....	\$58 00
	-----
Saved.....	

But it kept her awake that night, and it was several days before her busy brain gave her even a beginning of things and how it should be saved. But each day she prayed, "Teach me, O God, of Thee, in this, as all things."

One morning at breakfast, she asked,

"Father, when do you have your vacation this year?"

"The second and third weeks of August," was the reply, "but I shall probably straighten up Jay's books for him in the time—a little extra pay."

That afternoon found Kate walking up to the door of Deacon Hollis' pleasant farmhouse. She found the Deacon and his wife sitting in their shaded porch, and met a hearty welcome. Their own three daughters were settled in homes of their own, and the old people enjoyed a call from Kate, and her singing greatly. She had to give them "Rock of Ages," now as soon as she recovered breath. It was some time before she could get to business. Then she asked:

"Deacon Hollis, have you disposed of your two-seated rockaway yet?"

"No."

"You don't use it?"

"Not often. Wife and I have agreed to ride on the same seat, so the little carriage answers us."

Then Kate's plan came out. She wanted to hire the Deacon's stall horse Roxy, and the roomy rockaway, and take her father and mother, and the children, with herself, on a ride of ten days or so out in the country.

"But where are you going?" asked Mrs. Hollis, whose kind heart was interested at once. "Your mother does look real peaked," she said.

"My plan is to go up to Lake George, see that, and spend one night there with friends that have visited us two or three times. Then, about thirty-five miles further, in among the mountains, on a stage road, lives an old aunt and uncle of father's, who writes us about once a year, and always urge us so heartily to come and visit. Now is that too far?"

The Deacon reckoned the miles and said, "Roxy could easily do it in four days, and, three back," he added: "she's a masterful hand to know when her head is turned homewards."

It was all settled at last. The Deacon liked to put a generous bill in the collection for foreign missions and he liked a good bargain right well, and it did come a little hard to offer Roxy and the rockaway for "a dollar a day and her keep" but generosity compelled, and he never regretted it.

That evening Kate unfolded her plan at home. Of the surprise, the objections, the slow, because fearful, assent of the stay-at-home elders, and the delight of the children, we need not stop to speak.

Suffice it, that the second week of August proved as bright and bland as could be desired, and at half-past five Roxy and the carriage were in waiting at the door of the Morgan home. Then it took the family just one hour to pack in the belongings necessary for the trip. Not the clothes—they had each on a good stout suit, and besides that carried one poorer to wear in the woods. But there was a small boiled ham, and three loaves of wheat bread, and a pail of ginger-snaps, and a package of cheese, a bag with salt and pepper for the eggs they should buy, and tea and coffee and sugar, and pain-killer, and liniment, and a few other such motherly provisions.

"Husband you haven't made a mistake in the box, have you? That does not look just like the one I put the sugar and things in."

It was opened and found to contain hard soap and silver polish, and they all enjoyed the laugh, and as for Kate, one look in her father's face was payment enough for all her trouble.

At last they were off in the early glory of the morning, through the half-awakened streets, down over the bridge near the noisy factories, and then out and up into the fair countryside, past beautiful farm-homes with their flowers and fruit orchards, through bits of woods where birds were chirping and squirrels racing, by little singing brooks and miniature falls, until at eleven o'clock they had come fifteen miles and were all agreed that a convenient wood with large flat stones was just the place for a dining room; and here they camped out. Roxy was unharnessed, a little fire built by the brook, and over it they boiled some potatoes and eggs, and tea for two. They spread a cloth on a rock, and on it a toad perched himself as if quite at home. After dinner, papa and the boys went exploring, while mamma and Alice took a nap in the hammock, and Kate ambitiously sketched a tiny waterfall. Toward night they drove five miles farther, and there put up at a small country inn, where they found good beds and small hills. The next day they had three hours at Lake George and time to reach their friends' cordial welcome.

But the third day they really had an adventure. A thunder storm overtook them on the lonely mountain road, and they were obliged to seek shelter in a barn, and finally to spend the night there finding beds in hay or hammock or carriage as they best could, and