

"You mean the lawyer's folks—yes; I'm glad he's taken a seat with us. What a beautiful family he has!"

"Beautiful indeed! and dressed in such exquisite taste. Nothing in the least gaudy but perfectly genteel, and very rich."

"They say he is immensely wealthy; he came from Boston. His father died a year ago, and left him a hundred thousand dollars. How they did listen! I hope they will all be under conviction before a great while."

"What! are they not religious?"

"Bless you, no. They are very nice moral people, though—better than professing Christians, I'm told, but then far from being pious."

"Sister Dix, we must cultivate their acquaintance. What a field for doing good."

"O! yes; great indeed. Did you notice what elegant hymn books they carried? Turkey morocco and gilt—every one of them, down to the smallest child."

"I noticed that; I think they have paid our preacher quite a compliment. There are so many men of talent in town."

And so they wended their way down the church steps, talking of the new acquisition.

That evening the eloquent preacher said to his wife, "My dear, I had very attentive listeners in the new family who took a pew last week."

"I thought so," was her reply.

"We must call upon them immediately."

"Certainly; I shall be ready at any time."

The next day little Minnie, the youngest daughter of the pastor, came home, admiring a beautiful bunch of flowers which she held in her hand.

"See, mother—just see—how beautiful! The old lady called me in again to-day, and took these from her little garden."

"I can't think who it is that gives these flowers to the child," said Mrs. Ivers, the pastor's wife.

"O! she's a real nice old lady, mother.—She says she loves father, and thinks he does a deal of good. She had a writing desk and was writing, when she called me in, for she had a pen in her hand. She says she hasn't been here a great while. I asked her if father had called to see her, and she said no, but she didn't expect it yet awhile—she knew he had a great deal of calling to do."

"Who can it be, husband?"

"I can't think, I'm sure," was the reply.

"Father, won't you go with me, some time?" asked little Minnie.

"Certainly, I will," said her father.

"She kisses so nice," said the child, artlessly. "She don't make a fuss about it, but is so neat; so different from almost all old ladies!"

The pastor and his wife smiled.

A few days after this, Mr. Ivers was out on a collecting tour. It was for an important object, for which he had volunteered to work and give his time. He drove around town, little Minnie beside him.

"O! what a splendid house!" said the child, clapping her hands, as they stopped before a stately mansion. "Who lives here?"

"The new family, dear, that sits in the pew behind us. Don't you remember those pretty little girls?"

"Yes, but I don't like 'em," said Minnie, "because they didn't smile to me when I smiled to them, but tossed their heads so."

"You shouldn't notice such things, Minnie," said her father, helping her out of the carriage; "perhaps, as they are city folks, they wanted to be introduced."

"I didn't," replied Minnie, significantly.

They went up the marble steps, and were soon seated in the great parlour. The lawyer's wife and the lawyer's daughters came in—were polite—talked of the weather—the society—several little nothings, but not a word of that chiefest thing, personal piety. O! how cold, unprofitable, barren was the conversation! The minister felt congealed: little Minnie fidgeted, after trying in vain to make the little girls talk. The older young ladies sat looking very interesting, but scarcely opened their lips. However, when the minister opened to them his mission, and said that he did not expect over five dollars from any one subscriber, the lady immediately took from a silver porte monnaie a new, rustling bank-note of that precise amount, and handed it with a smile to the clergyman.

The visit was ended.

"How good the sun does look!" cried little Minnie, springing from the last marble step. "I was so cold in there!"