

which she had been spending her Sunday evening, besides feeling very uneasy about the ruined veil, said, rather crossly :

'You are always getting into hot water about that rabbit. I wouldn't have been such a goose as to lose my day for a wretched animal like that.'

Effie felt the tears starting to her eyes again, and dared not trust her voice to reply. Conscience told her that it was, after all, her own fault, and no injustice on the part of her father. She sat down to her evening reading, and opened the little Bible so often neglected before, but invested now with a new charm and preciousness; while Harry, somewhat surprised at this gentleness and quiet face, got up from his chair and betook himself to bed, confidently announcing to Meg as he left the room that he expected she would have to stay at home also for having driven her beak through the strawberry-net. Effie got into bed that night with a happy heart; the temptation lay behind conquered, and before and around lay the new love, from which nothing could separate her. She slept, at peace.

It was early the next morning when Effie awoke. She drew the clothes more comfortably round her, and was turning over for another nap when there flashed into her mind a dim, undefined feeling of something pleasant and something disagreeable. Slowly she grew wide awake, and then the new gladness and the great disappointment presented themselves distinctly to her recollection.

'Never mind,' thought little Effie; 'it will be all right, because the Lord Jesus knows all about it now; after all, I did deserve it, and it will be a lesson to me.' Then she glanced at the clock—six to the minute.

'No more lying in bed,' was the next thought. 'I must get up early and be at work before breakfast.'

Off came the bed-clothes, on went shoes and stockings, and soon the business of dressing was in full swing. Half-an-hour later, Meg, who slept very soundly, awoke to see her sitting in the window quietly reading, and was so struck by the sight that her sleepiness all vanished in a moment, and she demanded an explanation of this phenomenon. Effie gravely replied that she awoke early, and did not want to lie in bed; whereupon Meg immediately concluded that she must have risen early in order to learn her forgotten lessons.

At breakfast-time, Winnie, having discovered the damage to her apparel, appeared with a most wrathful countenance.

'Mamma,' she began, 'I think you really ought to punish Meg. She has torn my veil to pieces, and it was quite a new one.'

'Meg,' said her mother, 'why did you do such a thing?'

'I was only just trying the hat on,' said Meg, inwardly quaking at the thought of sharing Effie's fate, 'and the veil caught; Winnie left it in my room.'

'As if that is any excuse!' burst in Winnie. 'You had no business to touch it.'

'Winnie ought not to leave her things about,' said the mutual parent of plaintiff and defendant; 'but you are very wrong to spoil what does not belong to you; now sit down to breakfast, and don't let me hear of you doing so again.'

Immensely relieved at such a peaceful issue of the matter, Meg sat down beside Effie with a most contrite air, which was somewhat out of keeping with the stealthy glances of amusement, not to say triumph, which she shot at Winnie, who was showing unmistakable signs of dissatisfaction by buttering her bread on both sides.

After breakfast the customary adjournment was made to the schoolroom. Winnie, as eldest sister, filled the post of governess to the younger ones; an arrangement not conducive, as a rule, to peace and happiness during lesson-hours. The sister-teacher strives to the best of her ability to uphold her authority, while the sister-pupils are only concerned to prevent that authority from overstepping its lawful boundary as defined by themselves. Effie was generally at war about something, being high spirited and very passionate, while Meg, of a calmer turn of mind, kept out of open strife, but proved just as aggravating from her consummate laziness and mischievous propensities.

To-day lessons began under rather a cloud. Winnie was cross about her veil, Meg had not prepared her work; Effie alone brought out her books and steadily applied herself to them. Presently Winnie spoke :

'Bring me your French reading, Effie.'

Effie promptly obeyed, feeling very secure in the knowledge that the required work was quite ready. In the middle of the reading there came a sentence which Effie translated in one way, Winnie in quite another.

'I am sure this way is right,' said Effie, 'because I looked for the expression in the dictionary, and one just like it was given there.'

'It's not right,' replied Winnie; 'you must write it out for being careless.'

'That's not fair, Winnie, because I did look.'

'Three times for answering,' was Winnie's reply.

The old passion was aroused, and, furious at the injustice of the punishment, Effie yielded.

'I won't; it's only for spite,' she said.

The book was shut and thrown upon the table, with the words, 'You may write out the rest of your reading.'

It was over in a moment—the temptation and the fall; but Effie turned and went to her place in utter despair and wretchedness. She sat down and began the task, her passion all gone, replaced by shame and sorrow that the morning begun with peace should end in the same old way, with anger and wrongdoing. As she worked there rose from her heart a humble prayer for forgiveness and strength, and at the end of twenty minutes she carried the exercise-book to Winnie for correction, quietly saying as she presented it, 'I've done this, and I am sorry I was rude.' Greatly surprised, Winnie reviewed the work in silence, and handed it back again, merely remarking constrainedly that it was tidy. Meg, watching the proceedings, pondered over them, and wasted a considerable length of time in wondering what could have come over Effie.

Lessons came to an end at last, other occupations supervened, and the day passed on; and when Effie, tired but happy, crept into bed that night she felt that in spite of all, to be a child of the Kingdom was better than everything else.

The forfeited party came off the next day, and Effie had to be an on-looker only; but she helped the others to get ready, and was so bright about it that they really began to wonder whether she minded so very much having to stay at home; they would have thought differently, had they seen the bright drops stealing into her eyes, but quickly brushed away, as she watched them out of the gate and up the road. It was late when they came back, and Effie had already gone to bed; but Harry rushed in as he passed her door, and deposited on the foot of the bed a large peach which he had kept for that purpose, and Meg assured her that nobody guessed in the least degree why she did not come; whereat, it must be confessed, Effie felt rather relieved.

And so the days and weeks passed by, and the little traveller, with her light burning clearer and stronger as she went, stepped onwards and heavenwards. We cannot stay to follow her now; perhaps another day the threads may be gathered up again. But Effie was happy, very happy. She had, without doubt, her ups and downs; but underneath all was the deep everlasting peace and gladness which those who have it not can in no wise fathom. They laugh, scoff, wonder; and not until the light comes do they ever possess the 'peace which passeth all understanding.'