

Mrs. Gray's children were loved by every one. There was a gentleness and grace in their whole aspect, which won all hearts. Mrs. Gray was a Christian, and her children were early taught to fear God and keep his commandments; they knew it was their duty to be cheerful, and to put their trust in their Heavenly Father. As they always appeared happy, none knew the struggles in that widow's cottage; but anxiety and care made great inroads upon Mrs. Gray's health, while she toiled day and night to maintain her children. Mrs. Gray was aided in all efforts by her daughter Annie, who seemed, as she grew up to womanhood, to imbibe all her mother's energy, and to possess those excellencies which impart dignity to the humblest, or shed a lustre upon the most exalted condition. She assumed the burdens of life as if they were her highest pleasure, and went cheerfully to the severest duties, with the sweet consciousness that she was lightening the cares of her dear mother, and blessing the home of her sister and brother.

Nearly eight years had elapsed since the death of Mrs. Gray's husband, and it was with great sorrow that we beheld her footsteps verging on the brink of the grave. The scene which I witnessed at her dying bedside will never be forgotten. Her children were around her, in an agony of grief that melted the feelings of all who saw them. The neighbors came in to proffer kindness, and the pastor was there to offer the consolations of the Gospel to their breaking hearts. Before her death, she took her children, one by one, and gave each a mother's dying blessing; and to Annie she committed the care of Ella and Charles. Never did Annie appear so beautiful as when she restrained her own measureless grief to soothe the sorrow of her sister and brother. It was evident, now that the energetic head of the family was gone, that their small property would do little towards their support; they determined, therefore, to lease the old homestead. Annie hired a small room, and with the aid of her needle, as her mother had done, she took care of her sister Ella. Her brother Charles, a bright boy of fourteen, urged on by affectionate motives, entered a country store in the village, determined in some way to add to his sister's comfort. Hardly a day passed without Annie seeing her brother, and every Sunday they spent in her room and at church, cherishing the memories