

amined the deep-seated ulcers, and told Mrs. Talbot that the case had gone altogether beyond human cure; but to Mary the care and gentle treatment far outweighed the increasing pain and weakness, and when other wee patients came into the ward she radiated brightness and pleasure on them all. Sometimes she was lifted into a lounge-chair near the window, or even wheeled outside into the fairyland of trees and flowers, and then her quaint sayings and overflowing gratitude were an education for her rougher companions. There was a wonderful native refinement and courtesy about her, that made her appreciative of the most ordinary care, and the attendants could not help loving the little girl whose dark eyes always met theirs with such winsome gratitude. Her large heart in turn enclosed them all, but in the very centre of her being was enshrined the 'beautiful lydy,' and with a yet deeper sacredness of feeling the Saviour, who has always had such a magnetic power over 'little children'; and often, when they thought she was sleeping, a murmur of glad words would be heard, about, 'the mansun Lord Jesus was a-preparin'.

Moll Keenan never came to see her, so she was left in peace, but Mrs. Talbot's heart was often filled with foreboding as the months sped on towards the appointed limit, and she heard from the neighbors when visiting, Brook's Court, that Moll was bent on having her child back again, though she would so gladly have kept her. 'I can only pray that she may be soon taken to the "mansion" she talks so much about,' she said to her husband, whose mutinous feelings towards his wife's 'fad' were considerably modified, though, with true masculine dignity, he kept up a protest, through which the 'cute little woman saw with clearest vision.

They had been away for a Continental holiday, and immediately after their return Mrs. Talbot drove down to Farcham eager to know if Mary, of whose rapidly failing strength she had heard in letters, was still living. The matron had sad news to tell her of a visit from 'Moll,' who had kept careful record of the time, and had appeared on the scene to give notice of claiming her child on the following Thursday, upon which day the six months' agreement ended. 'And did she see Mary?' Mrs. Talbot asked. 'Only for a minute or two. I think she was a little softened when she saw her looking so sweet and spirit-like, but she kept to her word about taking her away, and Mary only smiled at her and said, "But p'raps Jesus will come for me first, Mammy; I think he'll have nearly finished my mansun."

Mrs. Talbot went into the ward, and there was a world of welcome in the little girl's face, but she was very weak, and could only murmur, 'It ain't quite ready yet, lydy'; and then she was quite content to lie and watch the face which to her was as the face of an angel, and to listen to low, sweet words about her 'mansun,' and the Saviour who was preparing it.

Wednesday came, and almost to the disappointment of the friends who with such keen interest were watching the race between life and time, Mary seemed much brighter and stronger; and their hearts sank as they thought of the dreaded arrival on the morrow, and the possibility of their little charge being snatched from them by a hand more cruel than the hand of death. But Mary had no fears; she lay smiling with a sweet content at her own thoughts, and when tea-time came she was able to be propped up in bed, and, surrounded by her little companions, it was made quite a festive occasion. And then her eyes rested on each one in turn, and lovingly and admiringly on each familiar object in the room, which for

six months had been to her as the vestibule of heaven. Suddenly a quick flash of joyous surprise lighted up her face, and in eager tones, that faded as she spoke, the words came, 'My mansun is ready! I am going. Good-bye.' Jesus had come to receive her unto himself.

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A True Story of a Life Sixteen Winters Long.

(By Adele M. Fielde, in "The Independent.")

Fitzgerald and I sat together on a soap-box at the top of a hill in the George Junior Republic, at Freeville, New York. I could see his toes through his shoe tips, his shoulder through his ragged coat, his leg through the holes in his trousers, and his brown hair through the straw of his torn hat. But his face was beaming, as it always does when we sit down for one of our talks.

Why he was named Fitzgerald neither he nor I knew; but he has instincts that belong to the name, and that probably came with it from a remote ancestor, who was of clean and gentle blood. Having had no data from which to reason out conventional rules, he nevertheless always provides a seat for a lady; treats the weak with magnanimity; considers his word as good as his bond; meets unexpected conditions with tact, and is altogether curiously well-bred. Yet he never knew his grandparents, and has no idea when, where, or how they lived. The sole proof that they were wholesome people lies in Fitzgerald's sound body and sane mind.

He was born in a tenement in Brooklyn, and thinks that his father and mother were friendly and sober at that time. But his earliest personal recollection is of a room on the top floor of a house on the lower East Side in New York, with a notice of eviction for non-payment of rent pasted on its door. Then the furniture, including Fitzgerald's bed, and the stove on which his mother cooked his food, was all put out of the dwelling, and was sold by his mother on the sidewalk. His father was at the time away on one of his long periodical sprees, and his mother dazed by drink, disposed of every article that had helped to make up the poor place Fitzgerald had known as home. A quarrel between the parents ensued, and then Fitzgerald was taken to the Gerry Society, and his mother was sent to Blackwell's Island. So it happened that during the fifth year of Fitzgerald's life he had clean clothes and sufficient food. Then his father decided to again 'make up the home,' and Fitzgerald returned with his parents to tenement-house life. But the old story of drink, squalid poverty, and quarrels was again rehearsed, and then the father ran away and the mother found a situation as servant in 'Hell's Kitchen.' For eight years thereafter Fitzgerald took care of himself. Sometimes he slept in a cellar, into which its kind owner threw a bundle of straw for him to lie upon, and occasionally brought the cold leavings of a breakfast. Sometimes, when it rained hard, and his tattered clothing was frozen, he raised the cover of a coal-hole, and slid down and lay all night among the coals. Sometimes he slept in an empty box or ash-barrel, always careful that his exits and his entrances should escape the eyes of enemies. His chief terrors above ground were the policeman, and below ground were the rats. How he escaped both was marvellous. His companions were little outcasts, like himself, loved and cared for by nobody.

One day eight of them together, cold, hungry and homeless, determined that they would have a hot meal. They planned a foraging expedition, with minute attention to details and probabilities. Certain mem-

bers of the party were to knock coals off coal-waggons, and others were to gather the pieces later on, and carry them to a rendezvous in a vacant lot. Fitzgerald was elected to make the grand attack on a butcher's waggon, and slip away with a steak while the driver's attention was diverted by others. The coals made a fire on the snow, the beef was roasted, and five cents, the combined wealth of the eight boys, bought a loaf of rye bread, which was evenly divided among the banqueters. 'Oh, it was good!' said Fitzgerald. 'It was the only hot food I had had for a long time; and I had been very hungry.'

Fitzgerald sold newspapers, held horses in Washington Market, and did any odd jobs that came to hand. He picked most of his food from the gutter, and rejoiced when he found edible refuse about the markets. One night, a friend of his, an industrious boot-black, said to him: 'I know a daisy place in West Thirty-Second street where you can sleep in a bed for six cents; and can get a meal for six cents, and you can go along of me, and see how you like it. I tell you it's a daisy!' So Fitzgerald found the Children's Aid Society, and saw a man whom I suppose to be its secretary. That secretary was evidently one who knew a good thing when he saw it. He helped Fitzgerald mightily, and put him in a school, and made him clean and happy.

But right away Fitzgerald's mother came and said that she had a fine home with her married daughter, and that there was a carpet on the floor and a big lamp and an income of sixteen dollars a week for the family, to live upon. So Fitzgerald went with her, and then learned that her only reason for wanting him was that he might earn money, for her uses. He got a place where he was paid five dollars a week, which his mother spent chiefly in drink, leaving him hungry, and ragged as before.

'It was about this time,' said Fitzgerald, 'that I once saw a happy home. It was a cold night, and about dark, and I was on Fifth avenue. A man came home to his house, and the rooms were all lighted up, and I could see everything inside. There was a beautiful lady and two children there; and when the man came home the children ran to him, and he took them up and kissed them, and he put his arm round their mother and kissed her too; and I have always thought about them ever since. I think of them very often.'

'And how old were you, Fitzgerald, when you saw the happy home?' inquired I.

'I was twelve then, and I can see them now just as plain!' said Fitzgerald, who will be sixteen in November.

The best things we ever do are probably those we do without conscious benevolence. To have unconsciously revealed heaven to the sight of one who had never heard or dreamed of its existence, was the good fortune of the woman who made the only happy home ever beheld by that waif twelve years old.

In the dark evening Fitzgerald went back to the Lower West Side, and found that his mother had spent for liquor the dollars with which she had promised to buy him a coat. 'I do not like women,' here said this young misanthrope. 'I have studied them, and I do not like them. There was one woman that I used to study particularly. She had six children, and she used to go along the street, drunk, with all the children following her and crying. She never took care of her house nor washed her clothes. The women are all like that. I shall never marry,' said Fitzgerald, solemnly.

'But,' said I, 'I am not like that, and I am a woman.'

'Oh, o-oh' said Fitzgerald, looking at me