

her some time afterwards, nearly starving, and thought that he did a good deed when he represented her case to the rector, and through his instrumentality found Brownie a situation as nursery-governess in a good family.

That fact was accomplished, and in that position poor Brownie still lived on the wintry side of life. How much she suffered need not be recorded, for she decided that it was *too* much for mortal to endure. She had a very independent spirit; she left her situation, took a room for herself in a country town, and managed to earn a subsistence as daily governess to Dr. Gibbs's children.

She was happier there; she began to notice that the sun shone, and that the river sparkled, and that the birds sang in the trees. Color came to her cheeks, mingling red with the dark complexion which had fastened the name of Brownie to her, as the most appropriate. Her bargain with Dr. Gibbs included three meals every day. Brownie found that it cost her very little to live. She began to put by money, and when winter came bought warm clothing,—bought a dress of russet brown and a neckerchief of crimson, and a spray of crimson leaves for her hat.

At last came Christmas week; and Mrs. Gibbs ordered her children to come and help dress the church with holly berries and evergreens. Where the children went, as long as daylight lasted Brownie was expected to be, and so she too was soon busied in the church. From the Park house, came the Squire's daughters and their friends, who with the townfolk generally felt that the dressing of the church was *the* event of the year, and that it was necessary each year to eclipse the work of the last.

Brownie sat upon the ground before the pulpit. The evergreens were strewed around her; two children sat at her feet, stringing holly berries; but Brownie's clever fingers were weaving beautiful designs wherewith to deck the

pulpit. At the poor cripple's bookstall she had pored over some old missals of illuminated pages, and in some old book had read of the mediæval work of the monks. The remembrance of these works gave impetus to her fingers, force and beauty to her artistic designs. Every now and then a crowd of admiring and astonished visitors surrounded her, annoying her by pert questions or rough handling of her work. Brownie began to dislike the Park people, thinking them both idle and impertinent. Yet amongst them was one young man, quiet and reserved, who held himself so haughtily aloof from every one, that Brownie sagely considered that he must be a tutor, probably held at a distance by his employers, and therefore lonely like herself, with no one with whom to converse. After wandering all over the church, he passed the place where she was at work and paused an instant. Brownie looked up, smiled kindly and spoke. He passed on without a word. Brownie was very much hurt; a few tears fell upon the design she was weaving; she rubbed her hands across her eyes—tears were foolish things and on no account to be permitted.

Her work was finished,—the children triumphantly heralded the news. The workers gathered round to wonder and admire, and Mrs. Gibbs was to be heard taking the credit of it all to herself as part owner of Brownie's talents. Yet as the pile of designs was not put up, and the designer alone knew the way it should be done, it was found a necessity to appeal to her personally. Brownie standing on one side with a crimson flush in her cheeks, and a merry appreciation of the scene in her eyes, came forward to explain. Yet the party was too stupid or too careless to understand her directions, and Brownie was just going to give the matter up as hopeless, when the quiet man joined the group; with much courtesy begging to receive her commands, and with sympathetic intelligence obeying them.