

by the now scattered class, some of whom she refers to in her "Farewell to Strabane School," in a succeeding chapter. Ever afterward on New Year's Eve, when all had met again at home, this selection was read aloud. Then sitting at mother's knee, with that mother's hand fondling her hair, she was her own true self. Not, however, as she was known, but displaying that deeper vein of character which her teachers seldom, if ever, understood; ever sinning, ever repenting; ever on the side of the weak and fighting for the right, an individuality hard to duplicate, whose organization was so fine, she felt what she couldn't see.

About this time, or perhaps later, in a year of absence from school, she began that practice of letter-writing of which she afterward did so much—writing to the school-girls. Varied descriptions of school and home life they were, minglings of prose and poetry which breathed the after-life of the writers and gave expression to the almost unformed thought in words. These letters were carefully kept, and finding a convenient hiding-place in a stump of a tree up on the hillside in the "east" field, there they were placed, where in her rambles she could look them over. This was peculiar to her. If outside would do, inside was not needed. Loving Nature as she did, she found her happiness in its woods and fields and sunlight. Going for the cows was ever preferable to washing dishes, gathering flowers to fancy work, picking berries to sewing, and everything in Nature was a source of pleasure.

On her twelfth birthday mother repeated to her those words of Christ at that age, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Henceforth, that she had a work all her own and by herself to do, took possession of her. Years afterward, in recounting her birthdays, that one was marked by those words which were never effaced. Her childhood's treasures were kept and the memories connected with them fondly cherished, and once in a while, often tearfully, looked over. Past events were lived again as their anniversaries came round. The passing away of time, as the old clock slowly and musically tolled away the twilight hour, brought sad thoughts, yet from whose depths there sprang new determinations for the future, as the stream of time engulfed the hours beyond recall. In such a mood she wrote, "All the better feelings