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ing and growing; and when he was  
down on the floor, crawling into every-  
thing, another one came. And mother  
trusting the more than ever, and I  
washed and dressed both of them.  
"Did I ever get time to play about?  
"Oh no, ma'am. For as fast as one  
baby got to crawling another kept com-  
ing; and mother said I was the oldest,  
and play was for little children and  
little dogs and cats, but not for big  
girls like me. When I was ten years  
old, we had six of them besides me."  
"Six little dogs and cats?"  
"Oh no, ma'am; six little children  
that had been babies.  
"And then the next thing happened.  
One day, when I was carrying Jim up-  
stairs—he'd been crying to be took out  
of doors, and I'd been taking him out,  
and he'd seen a monkey with a little  
red cap on; well, my two legs just  
slypt out from under me, and I tumbled  
right into the room and bumped his  
forehead, dreadfull.  
"You bad child," says mother, and  
took him away, and put water on his  
forehead and kissed him.  
"I lay there on the floor; if you  
would be pleased to look, ma'am, you'd  
see the very place.  
"And says I, 'I couldn't help it,  
mother. It was my two legs as went  
right out, and I can't get up.'  
"Mother she looked scared like, but  
but one of the neighbours was there,  
and says she,—  
"Let her be; she's only shamming.  
I know these girls!"  
"So mother let me be, and I lay flat  
on the floor, as still as a mouse, till  
father came home and nearly tumbled  
over me.  
"Hallo!" says he, 'whatever is the  
matter now?'  
"She's been a-lying there doing  
nothing these two hours," says mother,  
'and Mrs. Jones, she says she's  
shamming.'  
"Mrs. Jones," says father, 'there's  
the door; and I rather think it's wide  
enough for you to get out at, but the  
next time you want to get in you'll  
find its grown narrow.'  
"So Mrs. Jones she went away very  
red in the face, and father he picked  
me up and sot me up on end."  
"Now, little woman, whatever is it  
ails you?" says he.  
"I don't know, father. It's been  
coming on ever so long. My legs have  
got so shaky that it seemed as if there  
wasn't any bones in 'em. And the  
pains in my back have took me bad be-  
tween times."  
"Father didn't say another word,  
and he didn't eat any supper, and after  
he'd lighted his pipe, he just sat think-  
ing. Mother didn't say anything  
either. She undressed me and put me  
to bed; and then such a thing happen-  
ed! I don't want to talk much about  
it. It chokes me in the throat if I do.  
You wouldn't hardly believe it, ma'am,  
I'd been a big girl so long, but she  
reached over when I lay close to the  
wall to make room for the rest, and she  
kissed me! Oh, how I hoped my two  
legs would get well, so that she needn't  
have a sick child to take care of! But  
they didn't, and I got weaker every day,  
till I felt like a great long piece of  
thread dangling about. So father took  
me in his arms to the doctor's."  
"I felt so ashamed when the neigh-  
bours all came out and looked at me,  
and saw Mrs. Jones laughing quite  
hard!"  
"But the doctor did not laugh at all  
when father carried me in and showed  
him my legs."  
"Yes, they're a couple of pipe-stems,  
and no more," says he. And then he  
began to punch me all up and down my  
back, and in some places hurt me  
dreadful."  
"Well, my little woman," says he,  
'what have you been doing all your  
life now?'  
"Nursing the children, sir," says I.  
"I thought so," says he. 'Eating  
bad food, breathing bad air, and doing  
the work of a grown person. Have you  
any friends in the country you could  
send her to, my man?'  
"No sir," said father; 'not one.'  
"There's little else to be done for  
her," says the doctor. 'Plenty of good  
air, good food, and entire rest, might  
arrest the progress of disease.'  
"What kind of food, sir?" says  
father.  
"Beef and mutton, beef and mutton,"  
says the doctor.

"Father shut his teeth together  
hard.  
"I'll put you in the way of getting  
what the child needs in that line," says  
the doctor, and he wrote something on  
a piece of paper.  
"There, take that to the street and  
number I have written here, show it to  
some of the people there, and you'll get  
beef tea, and other things of the sort.  
Keep up her strength and spirits; and  
she may come around yet."  
"I believe it was a big kitchen  
father was to go to, where nice things  
are cooked for poor people when they're  
sick.  
"But as we were coming away the  
doctor says, 'Mind, my man, green  
fields and fresh milk in the country are  
worth all the beef teas in the world for  
a case like this.'  
"When we got home and mother  
asked what the doctor said, father  
wouldn't answer at first. At last says  
he,—'He wants her to swallow down  
some fine lady's diamond necklace.'  
"Mercy on us!" says mother, and  
she dropped into a chair with the dish-  
cloth in her hand.  
"Father went away to his work, and  
mother kept groaning about the  
diamond necklace.  
"How's it to be got," says she, 'and  
how could swallowing it down bring the  
bones into your legs, I should like to  
know?'  
"The doctor says it ain't my legs as  
ails me," says I. 'It's the spine of my  
back.'  
"Them doctors, they thinks they  
know everything," says mother. 'Didn't  
you say as it was your two legs as went  
out from under you? And them  
diamonds, they do worry me so!'  
"I lay still, and thought, and thought.  
When the spine of your back aches the  
worst, you get so sharp!  
"And says I at last,—'I know what  
father meant. The doctor wanted me  
to be took off into the country, to drink  
milk and smell the green grass; and  
that would cost money, ever and ever  
so much money. For it's too far for  
father to carry me, and I should have  
to ride in something.'  
"But it's the diamonds as worries  
me," says mother; and I couldn't get  
'em out of her head, and the children  
they all plagued her, and I wasn't  
there to help, and she looked ready to  
drop. I got away down into the bed  
and cried to think how drove she was.  
"And then I brightened up and  
called the children to me, and told them  
stories out of my head about things  
father had told me of. I put in green  
meadows, and nice, quiet churchyards  
where ivy grew all the year round, and  
there were pretty little graves for the  
good children to go to sleep in. And I  
says, 'Let's make believe that some  
day, a lady with a gold ring on her  
finger and a gold watch hanging round  
her neck, will come and take us all into  
the country and give us strawberries to  
eat.'  
"Mother, how does strawberries  
grow?" says I.  
"Why, on bushes, child!" say she.  
'How else should they grow?'  
"When father came home he laughed  
at that, and asked her if she supposed  
potatoes grew on trees?  
(To be continued.)  
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