

so beautifully expressed in the sweet lyric.

'Oh, Hester, is that you?' cried her Aunt Minnie. 'Your mother left word that you were to take charge of the housekeeping to-day. She was suddenly sent for to go to the minister's. The baby is worse, and Mrs. Appleton is very much alarmed. They fear the little thing won't live.'

'Hester,' called her father from his den where he was assorting some papers before going to breakfast, 'I must ask you to look over this coat of mine, and mend the rips in my pockets. And while you are busy with your needle just mend the gloves I'm going to leave here, won't you, daughter? It's fine to have a daughter at home from college, whom one can call on without being afraid he'll invade her time unnecessarily.'

Mr. Randolph smiled as he glanced at the slender girl, so tall and trim; the daughter of whom he felt so proud.

'I'll attend to your needs, father,' she answered sweetly. If Hester disliked anything in the world, it was repairing old clothing and sewing ripped glove-ends. But she would not have let her father suspect this, and as she loved him, she resolved to undertake every little service for him very willingly. This, too, would be a help to self-development, she really thought.

The breakfast over, the household started on its accustomed routine; the market man and butcher interviewed, and the parlor and sitting-room dusted. Hester procured needle, thimble, and thread, and did her father's mending. That finished, she replenished the seed-cup and water bottle of the canary, and hung its cage out of the sun in a vine-wreathed corner of the veranda. It was now after ten, but she saw a clear space before her for her painting, and went eagerly to her little studio in the attic.

She had mixed her paints, and arranged her several properties to her liking, when Aunt Minnie called her from the foot of the stairs.

'Hester, did you forget to pay your grandmother her little morning visit? She has been asking for you.'

Grandmother Mead was a very old lady, and her health was extremely feeble. She was sometimes querulous and was always exacting. Aunt Minnie's hands were full in taking care of her, but the rest of the family never failed to pay her many tender attentions. Hester's habit was to run in for a five minutes' chat every morning, and her grandmother looked forward to this bit of a visit with more wistful yearning than Hester ever dreamed.

For an instant Hester was irritated, as she took off her painting apron, and left her easel. Then a swift feeling of compunction crossed her mind. She had indeed in the pressure of other things forgotten her grandmother. She would atone for the neglect at once. Hastily she went to the quiet room where old Mrs. Mead spent her monotonous days, never altogether free from pain, often inexpressibly lonely. Mrs. Mead had been a woman of much activity, and a personage to be reckoned with. Why should we who are in the heyday of health and strength, so often fail in sympathy with those who are derelicts stranded on the shores of old age? Time may bring us to the same destiny, yet we seldom remember this until too late.

The thin old face, wrinkled and wan, the large, bright eyes, the tremulous hands appealed to Hester, as she quickly entered her grandmother's presence.

'Dearie,' said the old lady, 'I've been longing for you. I didn't see you all yesterday.'

'I had to go to Sunday-school, grandmother, dear,' answered Hester, 'and then came the church, and I spent the rest of the day with Cousin Cornelia. When I came home last night it was too late to disturb you.'

'Hester,' said Aunt Minnie, appearing in bonnet and gloves, 'I have an errand in the village that won't wait. If you'll sit with mother till I get back, I'll feel easy about her.'

'There's no occasion for any one's sitting with me,' said old Mrs. Mead, in a tone of offense. 'I am not a child to require watching. Mary makes far too much fuss. Now, Hester, go about your own pleasure, my dear. I've seen you, and that's enough for this time.'

'But, grandmother,' pleaded Hester, 'if it's my pleasure to stay with you I may, may I not? I'd like to read to you, too, if you will let me.'

The truth was that Mrs. Mead's excessive fragility made it dangerous for her to be left alone, and it was so managed that it seldom happened. Hester knew that Aunt Minnie was so constantly confined as a caretaker, that she suffered for fresh air and exercise, and her conscience pricked her because she had not oftener relieved her in her daily labor of love, since she had been free to do so, her college life being ended. On the other hand, she just thought with a pang, that there was no more chance for her to paint that day. The interruption had lessened her inclination for the work she wanted to do on her picture.

'Read me something amusing, child,' said her grandmother. 'Mary has been reading the Bible to me, and now I'd like to hear something from the daily paper.'

Hester obediently did as she was told. An hour slipped away before her Aunt Minnie, much refreshed by her walk, came back and set Hester at liberty.

She now felt the need for exercise and air herself, and set out for the long, brisk walk she liked to take before luncheon.

When the garden gate was reached, she was met by the postman, who had letters for the whole family it seemed, among them three for Hester. She concluded to read them before going to walk, and was glad she did so, two requiring an immediate answer. Writing these notes occupied a large part of the next hour, for when a girl is writing to her college classmates, there is a good deal to be said, and the pen runs on fast. Just as she concluded her letters, addressed, and stamped them, company arrived. An old friend of her mother's passing through the place, had stopped to spend an hour. Helen went to the parsonage, explained that her mother was wanted at home for a while, and found that the Appleton baby was better. She walked back with her mother. Mrs. Randolph noticed a shadow on her face.

'What is it, girlie?' she asked.

'Oh, nothing much, mother.'

'But tell mother. You always have told mother the little troubles, dear.'

'It seems so selfish, mother, but at home I never get time for anything at all. Here I've lost my day, for I can't count on the afternoon, ever. This is such a sociable place, and people call so often. I meant to paint, to write, to study, to develop myself, while I was spending this first summer out of college. But it is not of any use even to try. My time is frittered away in the merest trifles, and I'm discouraged.'

'I wouldn't be,' said the mother. 'It all depends on the point of view, Hester. You are making our home very happy. You are easing me of many loads and brightening your father's life. You are helping dear grandmother and Aunt Minnie. You are doing the lit-

tle things that God appoints at the time he wants them done, and you shouldn't be disheartened, dear. A day like this is not a lost day.'

They were by this time at home. The mother greeted her old friend cordially.

Hester went to her own room, and, somewhat absently, picked up her copy of 'Daily Strength for Daily Needs.' There she found this quotation from the writings of the Rev. J. R. Miller, and it was just a sweet personal message that did her great good:

'How can you live sweetly amid the vexatious things, the irritating things, the multitude of little worries and frets, which lie all along your way and which you cannot evade? You cannot at present change your surroundings. Whatever kind of life you are to live must be lived amid precisely the experiences in which you are now moving. Here you must win your victories or suffer your defeats. No restlessness or discontent can change your lot. Others may have other circumstances surrounding them, but here are yours. You had better make up your mind to accept what you cannot alter. You can live a beautiful life in the midst of your present circumstances.'

A lost day, thought Hester, but as she knelt by her bed at eventide to say her prayers, a deep peace stole into her soul. She had done God's will, made plain to her in little duties and opportunities, and her last waking thought was of thankful recognition of God's leading.

Pointers.

You can't expect to get along by standing still.

Contentment often serves as a brake on the wheels of advancement.

Resolutions are worse than useless, unless they are carried out. If you are going to do something, make a start.

A little time rightly spent is often productive of profitable results for a great deal of time to come.

If you have arrived at the point where you cannot be taught anything more, you must either know very much or very little.

Added knowledge will harm no one.—'Educational Record.'

No Object in Life.

I committed one fatal error in my youth, and dearly have I abided it. I started in life without an object, even without an ambition. My temperament disposed me to ease, and to the full I indulged the disposition. I said to myself, 'I have all that I see others contending for, why should I struggle?' I knew not the curse that lights on those who have never to contend for anything. Had I created for myself a definite pursuit—literary, scientific, artistic, social, political, no matter what, so that there was something to labor for and to overcome—I might have been happy. I feel this now—too late! The power is gone. Habits have become like chains. Through all the profitless years gone by, I seek vainly for something to remember with pride or even to dwell on with satisfaction. I have thrown away a life. I feel sometimes as if there were nothing remaining to me worth living for; I am an unhappy man.—R. D. Owen, in 'Among the Breakers.'

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