

## Children's Corner.

## LADY TEMPLE'S GRANDCHILDREN.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## A HAPPY VISIT.

It was not long before the promised visit took place, to which Dolly looked forward with great interest and happy anticipation. She felt as though without this kind, new friend, her life just now would be very miserable and lonely.

Her grandmother still looked coldly on her, and seemed to consider that she had forfeited all claim to favour and trust; and although no ostensible punishment was inflicted upon her, she felt this coldness and suspicion more keenly than anything else. And what was worse than all, she found out very soon that her influence was considered undesirable for Duke. Lady Temple believed that boys should associate with boys, and learn manliness and independence, and not be too much thrown with their sisters.

At any rate Duke was to have other companions than Dolly, and not to be thrown entirely upon her for society; and during the afternoon hours, when the little girl was shut up in the library with Miss Manners, Duke was generally spending his time in the Lennox play-room, or entertaining his small friends in his own nursery.

He enjoyed this kind of thing very much himself, was a great favourite with his companions, and grew increasingly masterful, and wilful, as he felt his power over other boys, even those older than himself.

But Dolly did not enjoy the change at all. Duke grew to be so absorbed in his new play-mates and his boisterous games, that he seemed to care far less than heretofore for the society of his gentle little sister. He loved her dearly, of course, but his love was not of the unselfish kind that hers was, and she felt quite sure that her influence over him was growing less and less.

She had not much chance of regaining it, for now they were but little together, save in school hours and in the latter part of the afternoon when they often rode together. Dressing and going down to dessert occupied most of the evening, and that quiet little bit of time, when Duke was in bed and more inclined to listen to her than at any other moment, was now taken away beyond hope of recall.

So poor little Dolly found herself very lonely in this great house, amongst strangers: and but for the kindness of her new friend, she would often have been sadly desolate.

But perhaps it was partly this loneliness and sadness which made the child increasingly thoughtful, and prepared her heart to receive the lessons of comfort and peace after which she was searching in a blind kind of way.

Lady Temple approved of Miss Manners herself, and of her method of teaching, and the governess held a high place in her regard. Her father had been a clergyman, and in his lifetime well-known to the dowager, and therefore she gave a ready consent to Miss Manners' request to take Dolly home one Saturday to spend the afternoon with her.

It was a very happy visit for the little girl. Miss Manners had pretty rooms in a house not very far away, and they were full of all kinds of curious and interesting things; and there were beautiful books full of pictures, which Dolly was allowed to turn over to her heart's content—as she never could the grand-looking books on grandmother's table—and Miss Manners explained all about them, and told her wonderful stories about the plants and animals, and

Dolly was very much pleased and interested and enjoyed herself exceedingly.

And then by and by a dainty little tea was brought in, which they shared cosily together, Dolly losing her grave, reserved ways, and chattering merrily to her companion; and when the tea was over, as it was a beautiful warm evening, Miss Manners proposed that they should go out and sit in the garden where it was pleasant and shady, and where they could watch the beautiful sun go down behind the trees.

"And then," said Dolly, looking up half shyly, half wistfully, "we can have our talk."

"Yes, dear," answered Miss Manners gently. "I have been thinking a great deal about it."

"And I too," answered Dolly simply. "I am so glad grandmother let me come."

And then they went out together, and the hour that followed was one which the child never forgot so long as she lived.

Sitting upon Miss Manners' knee, and resting her head upon that kind shoulder, Dolly listened to the wonderful story—the old, old story, which never grows old—the story of the love of Christ, the story of His life and of His death, and of the undying love which will not leave His children comfortless, but will be their help and comfort, their strength and stay unto this life's end.

The story was not new to the child, indeed the most part was familiar enough, and yet it had never come home to her with the meaning and force that it did that day. It had never before brought the tears to her eyes, nor roused within her that sweet, deep feeling of love and gratitude toward the Heavenly Father which now filled all her heart.

No, when she had heard that story before, she had not known what it was to be lonely and troubled, she had been happy in the love of her earthly parents and in the home they had made for her, and so that other love, so far above theirs, had not been understood, because the need for it had not been felt.

But now all was changed. The child was pining for a great and all-satisfying love—a love which should bring with it rest and help and comfort—a love which, as she phrased it, should "help her to be good," and now she had found it.

Yes, it was all true, what she had dimly known and spoken of to Molly. There was a *something* in the word which was strong enough to turn sorrow into joy and anger into love. Dolly had believed this before, and now she knew it, and knew too what it was.

Goodness?—yes, goodness indeed; but not exactly the goodness she had thought. It was no goodness of man, or in man, that could bring about so great a change. It was the goodness of God—of the Son of God—His love and His goodness—which did it all. What man has to do is to trust that goodness and that love, and to try, however distantly, to follow in the footsteps of the Lord.

This was what Miss Manners taught, and this was what Dolly understood. It did not take her long to grasp the meaning of the beautiful thought. She had been pondering so earnestly about it for so many long days, that her mind was ready to grasp the truth, and she received it with the simplicity and confidence of childhood, which knows no doubts, is held back by no fears, and is ready to receive and believe all that is so good and so beautiful, feeling with the wonderful instinct of innocence that it must be true.

"Miss Manners," said Dolly, after a long pause, "I don't think I can ever feel really lonely or unhappy again."

"Dear child, I hope you will not need."

"I shall know that Jesus knows, and Jesus cares. And He will help me."

"Always, dearest."

"Will He help me to make peace?" asked the child wistfully.

"I feel sure He will do, dear."

"I think he must want me to," continued Dolly earnestly. "Didn't you say He called 'peace-makers' the children of God?"

"Yes, dear."

"I should like to be God's child," said little Dolly with sweet seriousness.

There was a little pause, then she added—

"And you said *loving* was the best way to do it, didn't you?"

"I think so, my child."

"I feel as though I could love everybody now," said Dolly, looking up with a kindling smile.

"And I feel quite sure that I can love grandmother."

"That is right, Dolly. That is what Jesus Christ wishes all His little ones to feel."

"Is it?" asked Dolly, still smiling, "that is very nice. And, Miss Manners, isn't it funny? I don't feel nearly so afraid of grandmother as I did. I feel as though I should not be too frightened to say something to her which I have wanted to say for a good while, only I have never dared. I think I shall say it to-night."

And Dolly kept her word.

When, after dessert that evening, the two children left the room as usual, Dolly turned back at the foot of the staircase, and bidding Duke go on alone, retraced her steps to the great, dimly-lighted dining-room.

Her heart beat rather fast when she stood beside her grandmother's chair, and saw those keen, cold eyes fixed intently upon her, with a look betokening something between surprise and displeasure; but she stood her ground bravely.

"What are you here for, Dorothy?"

"I came because I wanted to say something to you," began Dolly, her voice faltering a little, but gaining courage as she went on. "I want to tell you I am very sorry I was so naughty, and disobeyed you about going to see Duke in bed; and I came to ask, please will you forgive me?"

The great grey eyes were raised appealingly to the cold, impassive face.

"It was very inexcusable conduct on your part, Dorothy. I have been much displeased with you."

"I know, grandmother. I am very sorry. And please will you forgive me now?"

She had to wait several long seconds for the answer, but it came at last.

"Very well, Dorothy; I forgive you."

Dolly's face glowed and flushed with gratitude and pleasure. She raised herself on tip-toe, clasped her little hands upon Lady Temple's shoulder, and pressed her warm lips to the cold cheek.

"Thank you, dear grandmother," she said; and then, half afraid of her own boldness, she hurried out of the room without waiting for another word.

Duke was standing just outside the door.

"Why did you say you were sorry?" he asked. "I never would have asked her to forgive me anything. It was very silly of you, Dolly. Why did you?"

"I am sorry," Dolly answered softly, "and mamma would have liked me to say so, I know. And, Duke dear, I do so want us to try and be good."

"I don't care about being good," answered Duke. "Bruce and Edgar aren't good. I like to have fun. Good-night, Dolly. There's Lucy waiting for me."

He kissed her and ran away. He did not care to hear his sister's gentle pleading now. He thought it was manly to be independent, and to do as he chose.