

French, handed it again to Kate and leaned back wearily in her chair.

Isabelle's weak back was getting to be an old story in the White family. It was always found to be much worse on busy days, when favors were likely to be asked and an interesting book put aside.

Kate stepped out on the veranda and looked perplexedly from one little girl to the other. Isabelle, as usual, was in full possession of the hammock, deep in one of Miss Alcott's charming stories, while Lottie, perched on the top step, was contentedly munching an apple and fanning her hot face with her tennis cap.

'Miss Isabelle,' Kate began, 'your mamma wants—'

'Now, Kate, you know I told you before that my back was too bad to do any walking to-day; and the sun is sure to make my head ache. If it is that prescription again, that settles it; for I never could walk as far as the druggist's.'

But at the word 'prescription,' Lottie was standing and pulling her cap down firmly over her curls.

'Is poor mamma worse? What is it? I'll run.' And the hot sun and little tired feet were forgotten, while an eager hand was held out for the paper.

'Bless you, Lottie, child! I wish I could go for you, but your mamma can't spare me just now. And, with a withering look at Isabelle's poor back, which was all that was visible of that young lady, Kate went indoors.

It took fully an hour to go and come from the village, including the long wait for the prescription to be filled; and mamma had been made comfortable on a lounge in the shady corner of the veranda when Lottie made her appearance.

'O mamma! How sweet of you to give me such a lovely treat! It made me so cool and rested!' And two loving arms were thrown around mother's neck.

At the word 'treat' Isabelle was all attention.

'Did you give Lottie money for soda, mamma?' she asked. But catching the twinkle in mamma's eyes, she added:

'Well, I couldn't have walked so far, anyway; for my back's too bad. But it's just my luck, anyway!'

'Yes dear; it is "just your luck!"'

I didn't give Lottie any money for soda, but I did write on the prescription an order to the bearer for ice-cream soda. For I thought if a little girl with a lame back could go, she would certainly need it; and if a little girl who was willing to take that long walk for the third time to-day, she would deserve it. Now run, Lottie, and have a cool bath and get dressed and rested for supper,' and Mrs. White called out a cordial greeting to a merry party coming up the driveway.

There were five of them, all girls, packed in a very small dog cart, drawn by a wise old donkey.

All alighted at once, tumbling over the sides and back, and a rush was made for the veranda.

'Oh, Aunt Jenny!' came a chorus of voices. 'Mamma wants to know how you are feeling to-day, and if the girls can come over for an early supper, with a little tennis afterward. The boys are home again, and it will be jolly fun.'

'How perfectly lovely!' And Isabelle, forgetting that she had a back, jumped up and waltzed around with her cousin.

'There girls, do quiet down for just one moment till we talk it over,' and, in a few words, Mrs. White explained how Isabelle had been confined to the hammock all day with a book, her back being too painful for her to venture out at all; but she thought that Lottie in about an hour would be dressed and rested enough to join them.

Poor Isabelle had subsided again into the hammock, and her face was a study. The sad fact was just forcing itself into her selfish little head that she was really going to lose this lovely evening all on account of a backache, which she could honestly say at this minute wasn't near her back, at least.

'Really, mamma, the pain is all gone. Do believe me I feel quite well.'

'Yes, little daughter, I do believe you. But a back that has been too weak to stir cannot get strong in a minute; and I shall see that it is not strained by tennis at all this summer, until it is strong enough to bear a walk to the village once, if not twice a day, if necessary.'

Nothing more was said on the subject; but a very sober little girl did some hard thinking as she sat

in the library window that evening and listened to the 'katydids.'

And you would be surprised to know how little the White family were troubled with complaints of Isabelle's poor back the rest of the summer.

Which Shall I Thank?

'Tailor, tailor, tell me true,
Where did you get my jacket of blue?'

'I bought the cloth, little master mine,
From the merchant who sells it,
coarse and fine.

I cut it with my shears so bright,
And with needle and thread I sewed it tight.'

'Merchant, merchant, tell me true,
Where did you get the cloth so blue?'

'The cloth was made, little master mine,
Of woollen threads so soft and fine,
The weaver wove them together for me;
With loom and shuttle his trade plies he.'

'Weaver, weaver, speak me sooth,
Where got ye the threads so soft and smooth?'

'From wool they're spun, little master mine;
The spinner carded the wool so fine.
She spun it in threads and brought it to me,
Where my sounding loom whirs cheerily.'

'Spinner, spinner, tell me true,
Where you got the wool such things to do?'

'From the old sheep's back, little master dear,
The farmer he cut it and washed it clear;
The dyer dyed it so bright and blue,
And brought it to me to spin for you.'

'Now, tailor, and merchant, and weaver, too,
And spinner and farmer, my thanks to you!

But the best of my thanks I still will keep
For you, my good old woolly-backed sheep!'

—Laura E. Richards, in 'Morning Star.'

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All business communications should be addressed 'John Dougall & Son, and all letters to the editor should be addressed Editor of the 'Northern Messenger.'