

"My dear husband," exclaimed his wife, "what do you mean? you know that our Lord alone blesses the fruits of the earth"

"Yes, indeed, my good lady," replied her husband smiling, "but I was recalling the pleasant tradition of the Germans, who used to say that the sainted Emperor who sits in State at Aix la Chapelle, though he has been dead a thousand years, would go forth when the vineyards were in blossom, and walking up and down the Rhine, bless the fruit of the coming harvest. When the vintage was particularly excellent and abundant, the husbandmen felt that the blessing had availed—that the great Charles still watched over the land he had rescued from barbarism. But come, my dear, let us who enjoy true light, bless our grapes by sharing them!"

Mrs. Montague was only too happy to comply with her husband's suggestion, and soon the gardener was on his way with a full crowned basket to the neighboring cottage of Mrs. Desmond.

The family at the cottage were delighted with the delicate and generous attention, and the basket was not considered unfit to adorn the parlor table, for every one has not a grapery, and all who have, do not "bless" their grapes by sharing them.

Addie and Eliza came in the cottage to call and to communicate the sad intelligence to Mrs. Desmond, that Miss Miriam's school had been broken up by the presence in the neighborhood of smallpox.

Noble, persevering, true-hearted Miriam! Though prostrated by sickness, debilitated by confinement to her chamber, and unfitted for exertion, still she had courage to commence her school, and the little children were flocking back after their pleasant holiday. News came that this dreaded disease had appeared very near, and of course the school duties were suspended.

Mrs. Desmond expressed great sympathy for her young friend, and bade the girls carry her one of the finest bunches of grapes with her love.

Miriam's heart was comforted by this timely offering, and she rejoiced the more in her present, when she remembered the poor little sick child in the next street. This little one was suffering from the spine disease, and could not rise. All day long she lay upon her weary bed, and lingered out the hours of suffering. Thoughtful friends sent her books and papers, but the means of the family were limited, and poor little sick Sarah did not enjoy many luxuries. When Miriam received the grapes, her first exclamation was, "They will do for that poor child!" She tasted one or two herself, and then they were sent to Sarah. Those who know how dreary it is to lie all day and all night, week after week, upon the bed in one small room, to be wearied with disease and parched with fever, can appreciate the delicious coolness of these grapes to the poor invalid. She had never dreamed that such grapes grew, they were so large, so sweet, so refreshing. She plucked them one by one with her wasted hands, and thought in her heart that Miss Miriam must be an angel to send her such lovely grapes. "Mother," said she, "it isn't hard to be sick when people are so kind to me. I feel better already. O those blessed grapes! The next time I have something nice, I will