

struggling for the last half hour with French translations.

"It's perfectly lovely," said Daisy. "White organdie, trimmed with sweetest lace. Hurry up, for we want to go down-town."

Fifteen girls crowded into the "corner," as the girls' room was called, examined the dress with many exclamations of admiration, sniffed at a bunch of violets in the window-sill, helped themselves from the box of chocolates that Ethel hospitably opened for them, and—looked at the gold-piece.

Lessons were done for the day, and soon they all hurried off for the recreation period. Ruth was the last to leave the room, and as she passed the bureau, Ethel, looking back, saw her stop and pick up something, putting it in her pocket.

The day was warm and bright, the windows were wide open, allowing the fresh air to enter through the parted curtains, and also forming an open doorway for a little stranger in search of anything bright and glittering that seemed to strike his fancy. His keen bright eyes caught sight of the gold-piece lying carelessly on the bureau. To snatch it up and make off as fast as his two legs would carry him was the work of a moment.

"O, Miss Davidson! Some one has sto'en my five-dollar gold-piece!" cried Ethel, bursting into the dining-room that evening as the girls assembled for their 6 o'clock dinner.

"Why, Ethel, my dear girl! What is this? Do not be too ready to accuse any one of such a crime. You must have mislaid it."

"No, I haven't. I left it in my little black purse on the bureau when I went out this afternoon. I never thought of it until a few minutes ago, and when I looked in the purse the gold-piece was gone," and Ethel began to cry.

"Was any one in the room after you went out?" asked Miss Davidson.

"No; Daisy and I went out together, except —" and here Ethel looked straight across the table at Ruth Le Maître.

"The last time I saw it," said Ruth, in answer to Miss Davidson's inquiring look, "was when Ethel showed it to the girls. I didn't notice her put it in the purse," but the flushed face and downcast eyes of poor Ruth—thus suddenly confronted by so many inquiring eyes—roused suspicion in the minds of several of the thoughtless girls.

Miss Davidson, quick to notice the expressive faces around the table, assured Ethel that a thorough search would be made after dinner and changed the conversation into other channels.

No amount of searching, however, availed to find the missing gold-piece, although every nook and corner of the room was closely examined.

There is nothing more contagious than suspicion. The girls soon began to treat Ruth in a cool and distant manner. She was seldom asked to make up a set of tennis and frequently was left out of the

plans for evening amusements. So the days wore away. Ruth, naturally shy and retiring, felt keenly the change in the girls' manners and shut herself up more and more in an atmosphere of icy reserve.

And now occurred one of those curious coincidences that, like an invisible hand, so often help us out of difficulties.

One day, while the weather was still warm and mild, several of the girls were playing tennis on the lawn when Ethel brought paper, pencil and a French book to a bench under the trees. After a while she dropped her book to watch the capers of an old grey parrot owned by two Quaker ladies who lived next the school, as he walked along the dividing fence, talking and scolding while he balanced himself with his wings: "Polly! poor Polly! Sir-r-r, Sir-r-r! Come on! Come on! Stop! stop! stop!" ending in a shriek that caused the girls to laugh.

Presently he espied a bit of bright tin, and clutching it in his beak, he made off as fast as he could go.

Ethel turned to her book. "Oh, dear!" she muttered, "why did I choose French instead of German when I came to the Seminary. I'm sure it's the hardest language in the world. I never can translate this!"

She worked away, however, and in a little while held up a sheet of paper on which she had translated "The Mischievous Magpie."

"A lady staying at a hotel left a valuable diamond pin on her bureau while she went to church; on her return the pin was missing, and she charged the maid of the hotel with the theft. The poor girl was tried and found guilty. As she was led to the public square to be punished, a great thunder-storm came up, and the lightning struck the statue of Justice which stood in the centre of the square, throwing the scales from the hands of the statue into the street. In one of the scales was found a magpie's nest, and in it the diamond pin."

As Ethel laid the paper in her book she thought of the grey parrot and the piece of tin. Suddenly a queer look came to her face. "Oh! could it be possible? She would see this very minute," and springing up, she ran out the gate and pulled the bell of the adjoining house.

The good Quaker ladies were astonished at the flushed and excited girl, and at the story she told in a stammering way. They couldn't make much out of her talk except that she wanted to go to their yard and hunt for the place where Polly hid the piece of tin.

The three went out together. There was Polly even now waddling across the yard with a piece of yellow embroidery silk—doubtless brought over by the breeze from some girl's work-bag. They found his hiding-place in a corner of the big yard, and there—but of course you have guessed already—was the five-dollar gold-piece!

Ethel's humility as she showed her treasure, and apologized to

Ruth before the whole school—teachers and girls—was quite touching, while Ruth, in the most frank and magnanimous way, freely forgave all the unkind treatment of the girls during the past week, explaining that what she had picked up from the bureau the day the gold-piece was lost was her own lead-pencil. She had been too indignant to explain this before, but now she was sorry she had not done so.

"I'll never, never, as long as I live, accuse anyone of anything!" said Ethel. "I couldn't have put the money in the purse at all, I must have left it on the bureau, and that wicked Polly took it. O, Miss Davidson, suppose I had not seen it with the piece of tin, I might always have thought Ruth took my gold-piece," and she threw her arms around Ruth's neck and kissed her.

One after another of the girls spoke to Ruth and in various ways showed their shame for their unjust suspicions, and in Miss Davidson's Seminary there came again the good, glad spirit of love which had made it for so many years a happy home for the girls who came to her care.

This all happened six years ago, and a few days since there was a wedding in which Ethel Barrington was the central figure. The maid of honour was Ruth Le Maître; "the best girl in the world and my dearest friend," Ethel calls her.

THE HOLE IN THE POCKET.

It would have been hard to find in all the land a happier little girl than Ruth Nordham that bright winter afternoon. In the first place, Ruth was of a cheerful, happy disposition naturally; in the next place, this afternoon was the time for the Christmas exercises of the Sunday-school where Ruth belonged. For the third cause of Ruth's happiness, we must go back a whole year, a long time for her to remember. A year before, each of the children had been given a tiny purse, just one pocket to it, and inside two things—a bright new penny and a little printed note signed by the teacher, telling them this penny was a seed, and they must plant it so as to grow into a great many pennies to be brought next year as a Christmas birthday gift for Jesus.

Ruth had been very much interested in making her penny grow. She had thought about it all the way home and all the afternoon, but could think of no way to make a penny grow. She fell asleep thinking of it, and dreamed she saw the penny grow into a tall stalk with many branches, each of which bore a penny, while the top was crowned with her new purse. The next morning, while hurriedly dressing, she heard her mamma in the next room, saying, "I wish I could hire a small boy to button my boots." Ruth's mamma was rather fleshy, and this was hard work for her. Ruth had often heard her mamma make this re-

mark, and sometimes she had buttoned them, but often she was not dressed and ready in time. But now she suddenly darted from the room, saying, "Mamma, how much does a button-hook cost?"

"Not a very big fortune, I guess. Do you want one, pet?" said her father.

"Could I get one for a penny?" said Ruth, eagerly.

"Yes, indeed; a very good one," he replied.

"Then, mamma, wouldn't a little girl do as well as a boy to button your boots?"

So it happened that Ruth invested her penny in a button-hook and agreed to button boots for mamma and auntie for five cents a week, she to forfeit a penny for mornings when she was not dressed in time. There had been times when the penny was forfeited once or twice a week, and one dreadful week when not a penny was left after the forfeits were all paid. But she had succeeded so well that the pennies had been changed by papa into two bright silver dollars, which lay snugly in the little purse which Ruth placed carefully in her pocket before leaving home that afternoon. After the exercises the children were to be served with ice-cream and cake, and as Ruth was one of the older scholars, she was to be allowed to help serve it. Very proud she felt, with her white apron and kerchief.

The children had recited their verses in concert, the pretty songs had been sung, and now there were some recitations, after which the story of the purses was to be told, and those children who had made their pennies grow, were to bring them as their birthday gift to Jesus. At this moment, Ruth put her hand in her pocket to feel of the precious purse, and was horrified to find it empty, and at the same time her finger went through the treacherous hole where the purse had disappeared!

Ruth heard no more of the exercises. One thought after another chased through her mind. First and foremost was the remembrance of what her mother had said Sunday—"Ruth be sure and bring me that dress to mend the pocket. And she had forgotten all about it, as she often did forget things she was told to do. But what should she do now? She knew her name would be called as one of those who had brought their purses. Could she say she had lost it? Couldn't she say she had forgotten it and would bring it afterwards? But where could she get so much money? She could ask papa for it, and go without that lace collar mamma had promised her. But to say that would not be right. No, she could not do that when the gift was for Jesus' birthday; she would tell the truth—how careless she had been! She would go without everything till she could get the money, and surely she never, never would forget again what mamma told her! It took a very few minutes to think of all these things, and like a flash came the remembrance of a sound just before she reached