

NERVOUS HENRIETTA.

"Oh, my patience!" thought Henrietta, "if I could only pack grandma off by herself for awhile just till I jot down a word or two! To have a pair of black eyes following your every motion is enough to stiffen you out straight. I never saw eyes look through a body so!"

Henrietta was growing nervous. There sat the glaring white kitty on the rug, staring at her with winking eyelids, and in the corner stood the tall clock ticking with all its might—and what a clicking grandma made with those knitting needles! There was a bright fire, but Henrietta was quite sure one of the brands was about to split in two and come rattling down upon the hearth.

"Henrietta," said grandma, slowly, settling her spectacles and picking up a stitch, "are you writing a letter to your mother?"

"No ma'am," answered Henrietta, shortly, scowling at her paper.

Grandma went on with her knitting, the clock went on with its ticking, and the cat still stared at Henrietta as she puzzled away at her writing. By-and-by grandma dropped another stitch, settled her spectacles, and asked, sloyly:

"Henrietta, are you writing a letter to Charles?"

"No, ma'am," repeated Henrietta, "I am trying to write a composition. But seems to me you are very wide awake to-night, grandma! It's eight o'clock, and I've had your flax-seed tea ready for an hour!"

"Yes, dear," said the good old lady, innocently, "but I don't feel sleepy a bit!"

Henrietta sighed, and scribbled on her paper as a slight relief to her feelings.

"I do believe the Fates are against me to-night! Can I keep my temper? I will try, if it kills me! I've got ideas enough in my head now for twenty compositions, but they float, and dive, and fly and creep, and slip through my fingers. You might as well try to catch a will-o-the-wisp and use it for a lantern as to try to fasten one of my thoughts down to this paper!"

"Why, Henrietta," said grandma, "your fingers are flying pretty fast! I guess your pen isn't so very bad after all is it?"

"Oh, dear!" thought poor Henrietta, "does grandma mean to drive me crazy

to-night? I believe I won't answer her, and then she may begin to mistrust that I don't want to be bothered!"

But the next moment a better spirit prevailed, and she answered her good grandmother kindly.

"Yes, grandma, but you know I don't like steel pens—they always plague me. It's my honest belief now that if I only had a gold pen I could write what I want to just as easy!"

Grandma smiled. Henrietta was afraid she was going to speak again so she added, very pleasantly:

"Grandma, dear, you know how nervous and silly I am! Now if you'll just please not to talk, I think, maybe, I could write better."

"Bless your dear little soul!" said grandma, "I've been putting you out, haven't I? Well, I won't say another word! I wouldn't have sat up so long, only I thought for once I'd wait till your father got back from the post-office."

Then grandma turned about and put her feet on the fender. Henrietta felt greatly quieted. She had fought against her unkind thoughts and "conquered a peace."

"Well," thought she, "my head seems to have settled. I think I can write now."

She took for a subject these words of the Koran: "A spoken word no chariot can overtake, though it be drawn by four swift horses."

"That is the very thing for me to write about," thought Henrietta; and it seemed as if her pen had wings as it flew over the paper, tracing just the very words she wanted, and putting them in just the right places. True, she wrote so rapidly that she did not stop for punctuation marks, and the sentences looked as if they were all out of breath; but she was laying the corner-stone for her best composition, which afterward brought her the prize.

When her father came in from the driving storm, looking like a walking snow-image, Henrietta was greeted with the words:

"Well little lady I've got a letter for you with something in it as hard as a stone and as long as my finger. Who do you suppose would be sending you a stick of candy through the mail-bag?"

The old clock in the corner had not ticked twice before Henrietta had found

out what was inside that letter—a gold pen in a beautiful gold case! "From grandmother."

"Oh, you dear lovely, darling grandma!" cried Henrietta throwing her arms about her neck, "I'm just as happy as I can live! Why what a precious grandma you are? And that was what made you sit up all this long evening, wasn't it?"

"Yes," said grandma with one of her loving smiles which never grew old; "I wanted to hear what you would have to say about the pen. I would sit up a good deal later, too, to see your eyes shine so my dear."

"And how near I came to fretting at the dear grandma who was trying to make me so happy!" thought the conscience-stricken Henrietta. "If I had spoken one disrespectful word to her, I should want to bite my tongue right out! I've made up my mind to one thing—always to wait for the second thoughts."

THE EVILS OF WAR.

Who can observe the terrible evils afflicting people during the progress of war among them without the conviction that it is the most deplorable calamity that can happen to a nation? The sickening horrors of famine and pestilence are but faint exhibitions of misery and death which follow in its devastating train. The blood and carnage of contending armies, the slaughter of innocent women and children, the incalculable destruction of property, the total disregard of law and order, of religion and morality, are but few of the innumerable evils engendered in the ruthless name of this vile monster.

This hideous demon of tyrannical invention goes forth to devastate the homes of innocence and beauty, to destroy peace and shame justice to desolate the fertile fields and blooming gardens of rural industry, and to blast forever the rising hope of honest, toil-worn millions.

Nothing is too sacred to escape the venomous fury and iron grasp of inhuman war. In its unholy career mercy is forgotten, virtue disregarded and religion abhorred, while the holy instincts of pure hearts are crushed beneath their increasing errors. Reason and resolution, humanity and christianity—indeed all those higher and nobler faculties of the human mind which render man "but little low-