

"Shut up!" muttered Bluebell, in the artless vernacular of a school-girl, half turning her shoulder with an impatient gesture.

The entrance of the tea-things created a diversion, but the discontented girl sat apart, while the hideousness of her surroundings came upon her as a new revelation. Certainly, in Canada, in a poverty-stricken abode, taste seems more completely starved than in any other country.

Bluebell, in her critical mood, noted the ugly delf tea-things, so badly arranged; the black stove, four feet into the room, with its pipe running through a hole in the wall; the rickety horse-hair chairs and wire blind for the window, "gave" on the street, where gasping ~~geese~~ were diving in the gutters for the nearest approach to water they could find.

Scarcely less repugnant were the many-coloured crotchet-mats and anti-macassars with which Miss Opie loved to decorate the apartment; nor was a paper frill adorning a paltry green flower-vase wanting to complete the tasteless *tout ensemble*.

The evening wore on; Mrs. Leigh proceeded with the turning of an old merino dress; Miss Opie adjusted her spectacles, and read *Good Words*: Bluebell sat down to the piano and executed a selection from Rossini's 'Messe Solennelle' with force and fervour.

"You play very well, child," said Miss Opie.

"That is fortunate," said Bluebell, "for I mean to be a governess."

"You mean you want a governess," retorted the other. "Why, what in the world do you know?"

"More than most children of ten years old. I might get a hundred dollars a year. Mamma, I could buy myself new boots then."

"You are nothing but a self-willed child yourself, unable to bear the slightest disappointment," said Miss Opie.

"Never mind," said Mrs. Leigh, coaxingly; "I'll see if I cannot get you the boots. They will give me credit at the store."

"No, no; I know you can't afford it; they were new last April. Mamma is oil to your vinegar, Aunt Jane."

"And you the green young mustard in the domestic salad—hot enough, and, like all ill weeds, growing apace."

"Then it is field mustard, and not used for salad," said Bluebell, anxious for the last word. And, escaping from the room,