

# NEW DOMINION MONTHLY.

APRIL, 1875.

## ALL FOOLS' DAY

BY B. ATHOL.

"I'm glad summer will soon be here. It's so expensive living in winter. When the days are longer and warmer there is a great saving of light and fire."

The Gray family were at tea, which was, with them, and had been for some years back, what the books call, a frugal meal. In fact, when in good spirits, they were in the habit of cracking mild little jokes thereon themselves, and inviting the attention of one another to the fact that their table, an old one, and inclined to be rheumatic, groaned beneath the luxuries of the season. This evening they were unusually silent. Kate, the eldest daughter, generally the first to speak, answered her mother, though not in the same spirit of hopefulness as regarded the change of the season which was likely to diminish the household expenses.

"It seems to me I can't remember ever hearing any word but 'save, save, save, save,' always save. If we had something to save, I could understand it better."

And she glanced discontentedly around the room, meeting a prospect which was not calculated to improve her state of mind. Everything was old, shabby, patched, and darned, and though arranged with an air of would-be fineness, seemed to say, by way of apology, "Well, we're not much to look at we know; but you see we're trying to put on the best face possible, and we've been better once."

"Well, you might hear a worse word, Kate," said her brother Robert, who for some years had represented the head of the house, and, with a great deal of her manner and disposition, was his mother's staff and comfort. "It isn't such a bad word, after all."

"You might hear 'save' with a 't' and an 'r' in it," said Annie, a younger girl, who threatened to be the clever woman of the family.

But this answer was too serious, or perhaps some of them remembered to have come too near the truth of it, to call forth any of the applause which often greeted Annie's remarks.

"You've a dreadful imagination," exclaimed Kate. "Nothing seems too bad for you to think of."

"Taint my fault; I don't want to think of it," was the quick reply.

"It will be good for Edward, too. He will grow strong again when the warm weather is here. I'm afraid you walked too far to-day."

"Not too far, if I had made anything by it," was the response, with a sigh.

"Keep in the house until you are stronger, old boy. I'm as likely to hear of anything for you as you are for yourself. You need not make yourself sick again over that," said Robert.

There was another silence for a few minutes, when Robert broke out suddenly: