

## The Inglenook.

### The Story of a Life,

BY MARION BRIER.

"I wish I could write a story!"

Hazel had been sitting quietly for a long time, watching Aunt Ruth's fingers fly over the typewriter keys, while a story grew line by line on the white paper. At length the white sheet was finished, and Hazel looked with great respect at the bulky manuscript.

Aunt Ruth smiled down into the earnest brown eyes. "You are writing a story, dear," she said.

Hazel's eyes opened very wide. "Why, Aunt Ruth!" she exclaimed, "what do you mean? You know I couldn't do that, not if I tried ever so hard. I'd have to know ever so much more than I do now."

"But you are writing one," Aunt Ruth went on. "You can't help writing it if you would; but you can make it the kind of a story that you choose—either a grand, noble story that will make everyone who reads a bit of it better, or a worthless, frivolous one that will do no one any good. It may be a long story or it may be only a short one; we cannot tell that yet. You are writing the twelfth chapter now."

"Oh, I know!" Hazel interrupted, a light breaking over her puzzled face. "You mean the story of my life; but I'm not writing that—I'm just living it. I'm glad I'm not writing it, for I'm afraid it isn't always a very good story, and I wouldn't want people to read the parts when I am bad."

"But you are writing it, dear," Aunt Ruth insisted. "And you are writing it where it will not get destroyed, as books sometimes do."

Hazel still looked puzzled. "Tell me about it, Auntie, please," she coaxed, drawing a footstool close to Aunt Ruth and curling up cozily at her feet. She always insisted that she could listen better that way.

Aunt Ruth stroked the brown hair gently. "Yes," she said, "you are not only writing a story, but there are several copies of it. One copy God keeps, for He tells us in the Bible that a book of remembrance is kept. But there are other copies, too. I wonder if you can guess where they are written?"

Hazel shook her head.

"One copy is written in the lives of the people about you. Did you ever think of that? You know that you never meet anyone without influencing that person a little; some people you influence a great deal; but everyone with whom you come in contact is a little better or not quite so good, a little happier and not quite so happy, because of you. Don't you see that there is a bit of your story written in each of their lives? We cannot be good without making it a little easier for others to be good, and we cannot do wrong without making it a little harder for others to do right. So you see that bit by bit, our whole story is written in the lives of those about us."

Hazel's face was very sober. Writing this life story was beginning to seem like a very important responsibility for a little girl.

"And another copy," Aunt Ruth went on "is written in yourself—in your character. Everything that you do makes you a little different from the girl that you were before; the act, or the thought, or the word, is written in your character; if it is kind and true,

then your character will be kinder and truer after it. Tomorrow you will not be exactly the same girl that you are today. In a year from now you will be quite different. What do you suppose will determine just what kind of a girl you will be then?"

"The kind of a story that I write in my character between now and then, I suppose," Hazel answered, thoughtfully. "Oh, dear!" she added, "I never thought before that it made so much difference what I did. I didn't know it was all written down. I thought I just did it, and that was the end of it. Are there any more copies, auntie?"

"Yes, dear, there is a copy written in your face. It is written there bit by bit. You know if you feel happy we can tell it by your face; or if you feel cross, we can tell it by your face. But that is not all. After your face has been covered with smiles or with frowns, the muscles do not go back to just the same place that they were before; there is little difference—the feeling that prompted the smile or the frown has been written in your face. After it has been written over and over again a great many times, it grows very, so that everybody can read it. You have seen old people whose faces were so peaceful kind and loving that you knew there was a whole life of kind and loving thoughts and acts written there; and you have seen others whose faces were so hard and unhappy that you knew they had always been unhappy and selfish."

"Grandma Davis must have done ever so many lovely things to make her face so lovely and kind as it is," Hazel said after a little silence when she had been thinking deeply. "Yes, she is always doing something for some body. Oh, dear! I'm afraid my face won't ever look like hers; but I'll try my best not to let any cross words or looks be written anywhere. I'm glad you told me about the stories, Auntie, and I'm truly going to try and remember about them and write just the very best story I can." Aunt Ruth laid her hand on Hazel's head lovingly. "The story that God has planned for you to write is a very beautiful one," she said, and if you live near to Him, so that He can always direct you, you will write the beautiful story he has planned."—The Girl's Companion.

### The Inevitable Choice.

A delicious bit of sentiment, says an exchange, is presented in the following extract from a prize letter in Collier's Weekly, in which a daughter's love for her chummy daddy is fearfully torn by the irresistible attraction of her lover.

"Daddy, daddy," she cries, "how am I going to write you this letter? I should feel ashamed of myself for not having the courage to go straight to you and tell you my secret, as a sensible young woman should. Instead, I have run up to my room and locked myself in, to write you all my heart. When I have finished, I shall slip the letter under your bedroom door."

"Here it is: I love another man—another besides you, daddy; and the conviction is nearly breaking my heart."

"The man I love—the other one, daddy—is good, brave and true, and—yes—even great; but my poor heart aches unutterably with the thought that, if I go to him, I must leave you, dearest, best, truest father a girl ever had."

"When I look back over the twenty-three years of my life—all motherless years—and recall how we—you and I, daddy—have walked hand in hand, heart to heart, all the way, through sunshine and shadow, over smooth paths and rough, drawing even closer to each other with the passing of years—when I think of all this, and then realize that I am actually asking you to let me leave you actually deserting—oh, I could tear my heart out for its treachery, I could weep my eyes dry for very bitterness of soul! If—ah! I must ask you—if you can give me up to him, tell me so by putting a rose on my breakfast plate in the morning. Don't speak to me then for my heart is too full. Just put the rose there. And then, after a while, I will try and talk sensibly to you about it—about him."

"Good night, sweet daddy. I hardly know what sort of state my heart is in. I only know that I love two men with all the very soul of me. That sounds dreadful, but one of them is my idolized father, and the other—ah, put the rose there in the morning daddy! Your loving

"Daughter."

### Not Self-Supporting.

The little boy was doing his home lessons, and was asked if he knew who Atlas was.

"A giant who was to support the world," answered the child.

"Oh, he supported the world, did he?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, who supported Atlas?"

The little fellow was nonplussed for a moment, but after some thought said:

"I expect he must have married a rich wife."—Tid Bits.

### Dick's Good-Morning.

ELIZABETH PRESTON ALLAN.

"I had a curious thing to happen to me this morning," said Mrs. Northern. She was putting away her best bonnet, folding up her best bonnet, folding up her soft kid gloves, and patting the tiny scrap of lace veil into a small roll: "As I crossed the street by Dr. Campbell's I saw Mrs. Howell's little Dick dancing along before me, his yellow curls bouncing up and down under the wide-brimmed hat. 'Good-morning, Dick,' I called after him in a friendly tone. He did not hear me, but a poor, miserable looking mulatto boy, dirty and ragged, rose up from the curb stone, and made me a bow; 'mawn-in, mistis,' he said. 'I is po'ly 'nuff dis mawnin, thank you marm for your kind axing.'"

"He evidently thought I was speaking to him when I said 'good-morning, Dick,' and I did not tell him I meant Mrs. Howell's little boy. I stopped and chatted with him awhile, and found him poor, and as he seemed to think, without any friends. I hope I encouraged him some."

This was Mrs. Northern's side of the little story; some of the rest of us heard it from Dick himself:

"I had done los' my place," said Dick, "cause I was sick, and I was powerful fretted 'gainst my Hebenly Father 'bout bein' sick, 'bout losin' my place, 'bout mos' everything. Seemed to me lek nobody in all dis big, shirin' world cared nothin' for po' Dick. Let him lib—let him die, it all de same; sun go on shinin', people keep goin' dis way, goin' dat, and Dick jes' drap ou'. Well, here comes along one of dem high steppin' ladies, everything 'bout her lookin' like a posy of garden pinks, and I turns in