

She had now hardly calmed her ruffled temper and commenced reading, when Harry returned, Mr. Will close behind him, both with pails and pitchers.

"The library is at the mercy of the broom and dust-pan, and we are forced to bring our traps in here," said Mr. Will, coolly, in answer to the look on her face.

"What was it you were saying about Mahomet and the mountain?" asked Harry, innocently.

But Mr. Will was stirring something in a pail, and doubtless did not hear, and Bell's eyes were riveted on her book. Whatever they might do would not interest her after that.

There was some whispering and knocking about of china and tin, and then Harry left the room. Bell looked up and found Mr. Will looking at her.

"I should think you could find something better to do than musing with the children," she said, contemptuously. "What are you going to do now?"

"Preach, probably, as usual," he answered, in a low, amused tone.

Bell took her turn at blushing. "I will leave then before the sermon begins," she answered carelessly.

"I beg you will not disturb yourself," he said quietly. "The room is large, and I shall move the table to the farther window for light. If I preach it will be only to the children, and too low for you to hear. It is hard work for the little folks to get through the day, for it is still too wet after the rain for them to play out doors, and I thought I would amuse them awhile as my father used to amuse me."

"How is that?" Bell asked, out of more politeness than real interest.

"Blowing soap bubbles."

"Soap bubbles," she repeated; "I did not suppose men blew soap bubbles."

"You thought it was a pastime only for children and young ladies to indulge in. Perhaps, as a pastime, it is for them," he added soberly; "as a science it is left for men."

"I supposed you were above such flimsy trifles?"

"Are yours flimsy trifles?"

"Mine? I do not know what you mean. I am not blowing soap bubbles."

"Are you sure?" he asked, in his slow, earnest way. His voice did more of the preaching than his words. It was of a full, rich, deep tone, that penetrated the foolish crust of vanity in her mind, and stirred up the depths of her nature as no voice had ever had the power to do before.

Harry came back bringing four or five more children, and Edna Strong and Alice White, girls of fourteen, timidly asked if they might join in the fun also.

Bell found it impossible to read, but she kept her place on the sofa, and her eyes on her open book.

The bubble blowers got on famously. It was great fun, vieing with each other to see who could make the finest. With one accord they cried, Mr. Will's is the best of all.

"See the colors," cried Harry, "how they move. What makes them do that, Mr. Will?"

"They move down as the bubble grows thinner," said Mr. Will, smiling at their eager exclamations of delight. "How many of you know what color is?"

Of course all knew perfectly well, but after a few cries of "it is blue," "It is red," they subsided into an I-know-and-can't-tell state of mind.

Mr. Will laughed pleasantly. "To be sure it is blue, and red, and green, and so forth. If I tell you that color is a property of light, will you know better what it is? Perhaps property is a big word for some of these little heads, so I will say property here means a part of light. Color, then, belongs to light, and objects, of themselves, naturally have no color. For instance, in a dark room, a red and a blue covered book would look alike, neither color visible. Only in the light do objects have color.

"The light of the sun holds in all the colors, and shining abroad clothes everything in colored garb. When all the colors are together, it makes white light. When we separate this white light, we have the solar spectrum or rainbow colors." As he said this, he held a prism in the sunlight, throwing on the white wall the colors always so fresh and beautiful. There were various "ohs!" and "ahs!" and then they all looked expectant at him to tell them more about these strange things.

"How many colors are there?—not shades, but primary colors. You know what a prime number is, Joe," turning to one of the older boys, "tell me what a prime color is?"

"I should think it would be the first of a kind," answered the boy slowly.

"Yes, the first, main root, of which various shadings make the branches to a color tree. And some one has said there were seven of these colors, and you think seven a small number. One thing, let me tell you right here, that seven is the Bible number