

in, children," replied Betsey, who had never had time in her hard life to learn grammar.

"Then, if she is, you may give her these," pursued Dotty, placing in Betsey's hands two cards, one bearing the name, "Louise Preston"; the other, the words of a memorandum, "Kerosene oil, vanilla, bar-soap."

Betsey looked at the cards, then at the exquisite Miss Dimple, and suddenly put her checked apron up to her face.

"Will you wait?" said she, in a stifled voice,— "will you wait, young ladies, till I give her the tickets? Or will you please be so good as to walk in now, if you like?"

Dotty condescended to walk in; and Jennie, her shadow, quietly followed.

About a minute after they had seated themselves in two great chairs, in tripped Miss Dovey Sparrow, blushing, and looking as frightened as a wood-pigeon. The roguish Betsey had just told her that these little visitors were the "top of the town," and she must "talk to them as if she was reading it out of a book."

Meantime Betsey was hiding in the back parlor, with her checked apron over her mouth, forgetting her potato-yeast in her curiosity to watch the proceedings of these little fine ladies.

Dotty rose, stumbled over a stool, shook hands, but forgot to speak. Jennie did the same, with the addition of putting her little finger in her mouth.

"Ahem!" said Dotty, snapping her card-case.

"Yes'm!" responded Dovey, trembling.

Jennie was on the point of running out her tongue, but stopped herself, and coughed till she choked. It was becoming rather awkward. Dotty wiped her nose nervously, so did Jennie. Then Dotty folded her arms; Jennie clasped her hands, and both looked out of the window.

Poor Miss Dovey tried with all her might to think of a speech grand enough to make to these wise little guests; but, alas! she could not remember anything but her geography lessons.

Dotty was also laboring in vain; the only thing that came into her head was a wild desire to sneeze. At last, her eye happening to rest on the crimson trimming of Dovey's dress, she was suddenly reminded of turkeys, and their dislike to the color of red. So she cried out in despair,

"Do you keep a turkey at your home?"

"Does your papa keep a sheep?" chimed in Jennie, one octave lower.

"We don't keep anything," replied Dovey, in great surprise at these strange queries from such intellectual damsels,—

"we don't keep anything at all,—nor a dog either."

Then Jennie came out brilliantly with a question of her own devising: "Have you got any trundle-beds in Boston?"

This was too much. The ice began to crack.

"Why, Jennie Vance!" said Dotty, and then she laughed. "Look at that monneument on the mantel! Why, what you laughing at, girls?"

"Oh, I shall give up!" said Jennie, holding her sides. "This is the funniest house and folks I ever did see!"

"Do stop making me laugh so," cried Miss Dovey, dropping to the floor, and rocking back and forth.

"Oh, ho, now," screamed Dotty, dancing across the rug, "you don't look the least bit like a bird, Dovey Sparrow!"

They were all set in a very high gale by this time.

"Be still," said Miss Dimple, holding up both hands. "There now, I had a sneeze, but, oh dear, I can't sneeze it."

"You're just like anybody else after all," tittered the Sparrow. "Wouldn't you like to go out and jump on the hay? Oh, do."

"Well, there," replied Miss Dimple, with a fresh burst of merriment, "you never asked us to take off our things,—you never."

"I didn't want to," said Dovey; "you frightened me almost to death."

"Did we, though?" cried Dotty, in delight. "Well, I never was so 'fraid my own self. I don't want to feel so again. You ought to have heard my heart beat."

"And mine, too," said Jennie. "My hair stood right out straight."

"We didn't s'pose you were such a darling," exclaimed Dotty, kissing her new friend fervently. "Oh, I love you, and I'm so glad you don't know how to behave."

"I'm glad you don't know how either," said Dovey, tilting herself on a rocker like a bird on a bough. "I thought you were going to be polite,—oh, just so polite!—for you set poor Betsey all of a tremble. Come, let's go out and play."

Of course, Dotty lost her "borrowed" card-case in the new-mown hay. She confessed the truth with bitter tears, and Aunt Louise was so kind as to forgive her. Weeks afterwards, the case was found in the horse's crib in Dr. Gray's stable, bearing the prints of Don Carlos' teeth.

Dotty has never made a fashionable call since then.—*Sophie May*, in "*Our Young Folks*."