



THE secret in the joy of living is the proper appreciation of what we actually possess.

Mammy

By T. W. Hanshew.

(Concluded from last week.)

THE click of the shop door startled the child out of her reverie, and she turned round to find Mammy's soft wrinkled old hand on her shoulder and Mammy's mild old eyes beaming down into hers. She shrank back and made as if to steal away.

"Please, I wasn't doin' nothin'," she said apologetically. "It ain't wrong to lit look."

"Of course it ain't," acquiesced Mammy with a smile. "Land sakes, child! don't shake so—I ain't angry with yer. Why ain't you never ben in to see me? You're more like the little gals as us to live round here than any of the rest. Come in, there's a dear."

"I ain't got nothin' to spend—I never have nothin' to spend," said the child, trying to edge away. "Mummy can't spare it."

"Land sakes! that don't make no difference, dearie!" replied Mammy gently. "You just come in and be my visitor—visitors don't have to spend nothin', you know. Wouldn't you just like to set down a while in my back room and hold that dolly in yer arms?"

The thin little face lit up with rapturous eagerness, and the big, hungry eyes actually glowed.

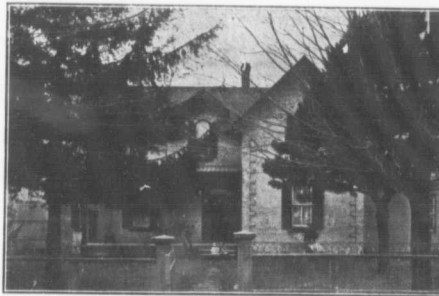
"Hold it? Really hold it?" said the child in awe. "Oh, wouldn't I! I sometimes p'tend that I do hold it! I sometimes p'tend that I'm a rich princess and can have everything I want. Mummy says that's the way to get along without things—jist p'tend you've got 'em. But—it never comes true, and you do want them jist the same."

"Bless the child, what a queer, fanciful little thing it is!" commented Mammy, smoothing the sleek pale hair and looking wonderingly down into the brooding, wistful eyes. "Well, it's a-goin' to come true this time, dearie. And if you're able to pretend jist what you like, you put your hand in mine and pretend I'm your fairy godmother and you're a-walkin' with me down a be-utiful lane (jist more that cheer a little, Miss Scammers, so's she won't bunk into it. Thanky, dear)—and you're tired and a-wishin' to hold that doll, then all of a sudden you set down on a rock and it turns into a cheer quick's ever you touch it, and then—there! Now open your eyes and see if it ain't come true."

And, really, it had; for when the child did as she was bidden, lo and behold! she was sitting in the rocking-chair in Mammy's little back room with the delicious odor of Mammy's freshly made butter-scotch about her and the wonderful doll actually lying in her lap! She gave one little cry in her utmost rapture, caught it up in her arms and then for a long, long time sat looking at it, not saying one word.

And in this way the friendship between Mammy and the "Swedish widder's" little daughter began.

It would never have occurred to Mammy to probe into her history at any stage of their acquaintance; but Miss Scammers was essentially feminine and satisfied her curiosity at once. It was her direct questioning which elicited the intelligence that the child's name was Nella Nilsson, that she was born in Sweden, but left it so long ago she could remember nothing of it; that her father had been a sailor and was drowned when she was only five years old; that "mummy" had a brother once who painted pictures and made figures out of stone; that mummy's father used to write things and sell them to printers who made books out of them, and that mummy herself used to wear beautiful dresses, and people paid money just to hear her sing.



Farm Home of P. D. Ede, Oxford Co., Ont.

See description next page. Note the fine home-made iron fence. A comfortable home made so by the addition of modern conveniences.

But that was before "the trouble" got in her throat—before even pappy knew her. She didn't sing now—she just worked in a laundry, and the steam made her cough.

"She p'tends it don't, but it does," volunteered the child; "and when she comes home evenings, I p'tend that it ain't ben lonesome and I make up stories about princesses and things, and mummy makes up others about the people who own the things she washes, and we tell 'em to each other until we forget and go to sleep. It's a nice way to go to sleep—p'tendin' everything's beautiful in the room and you're jist as happy as can be, 'cause, you see, you don't find out it ain't so till you wake up."

"Have—have a piece of butter-

scotch, dearie and a cake and—and take these two home to your ma when you go," said Mammy, swallowing something. "He you goin' so soon, Miss Scammers? Well, drop in whenever you feel like it, dear—I'm always glad to see you. I guess me and my Lily o'-the-Valley is goin' to be real good friends." And when Miss Scammers did "drop in" the next day, she added the statement, "It's wonderful how comfortin' she is and what a deal of company, a little child kin be."

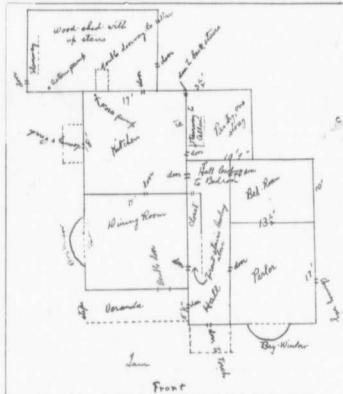
And, indeed, Lily-o'-the-Valley was "company," for she got to coming in every afternoon, once the ice was broken, and sitting in the big rocking-chair with the long-loved doll in her arms and her feet curled up under her; and the marvelous tales she invented of that shabby old street, the wonderful romances she wove about Mammy's gingerbread men—to say nothing of the fearsome tragedy she evolved out of the upsetting of a five-cent Noah's Ark—kept Mammy in a tingle of interest and excitement.

"I do believe you'll write books and things, like your grandpa, child, when you grow up," she ventured.

"I will," asserted the child enthusiastically. "I want to—I jist dream about it all the time. Then I can build a castle for mummy and you—and we'll live happy ever after."

"Land sakes!" said mammy. "I never see a child with such a wonder-

It was the longest and dreariest day Mammy could remember for many a year; and it was disastrous, too, for she made so many pilgrimages to the door and stood so long shading her eyes with her hand and looking anxiously up and down the dreary old street that she forgot the pan of gingerbread toys she had put to bake, and most of them were burnt.



Floor Plan of House of P. D. Ede, Oxford Co., Ont.

The house is a roomy, comfortable one, and is further described and illustrated on next page.

But even that dreary day of hopeless waiting was eclipsed by the next—so keen an edge hath sorrow when its course is led by the child failed to come even then.

"I wonder if they kin have moved," conjectured Mammy, with a little tightening spasm of the heart. "I didn't think my little Lily-o'-the-Valley would, without comin' to say good-by to me. But neebie they couldn't pay their rent and had to go. But even then—ah, well, what's an old body like me that a child should keer? Young folks is thoughtless—it's only the old that has to remember. Them green fields and quiet lanes is wonderful comfortin' John, and I'm glad I'm gittin' nearer to 'em, dear."

For four long dismal days the doll sat neglected in the window, but on the morning of the fifth, unable to stand it longer, Mammy took the pinked treasure out, rolled it softly in a towel and put it reverently away.

"I guess I ain't never goin' to see her ag'in," she sadly mused, "and neebie I'll learn to forget sooner if the doll ain't in sight all the time to remind me of her. 'Twon't be more'n a month now, anyways, before I've saved them last four dollars, and 'twon't be so hard to forget out where the trees and the flowers is."

The sudden jingling of the bell on the top of the shop door and the noisy clash of the knob against the wall startled her out of her wistful dreaming, and she turned round in time to see the towheaded head of Ragged Sailor leaning in.

"Hey, Mammy! Heard the news?"

She sang out lustily. "Know that Sweetie gal who lives on the top of 66? They fetched her mother home sick last Friday and she died this mornin'."

Then the door-bell rang again and the catch clicked and she heard of this choice bit of local news went dashing on, eager to be the one to tell it first elsewhere. But to Mammy it suddenly ceased and the gray old world had grown cold and still.

She knew what it all portended, to what it all pointed. If the "Swedish widder" had been ill for four nights, and no one but the child or as was with her, why, that meant there

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