

## Tired of Home.

BY LEANDER S. KEYSER.

Nettie was feeling very discontented. She had no special reason for feeling so, but it had just got into her nature somehow, and she couldn't help it.

"O, I'm so tired of always being at home," she complained. "If I could only go away somewhere!"

"Where would you like to go, Nettie?" asked her mother.

"It wouldn't make much difference where," the girl returned. "One gets so tired of being at one place all the while. If I could go and stay with some one and see something new, I'd feel better."

Her mother smiled, but made no reply. Nettie's home was a very pleasant one in the country, and she had every thing that was good for a little girl; yet it all seemed so commonplace, and if she had been a little older, she would have said that her life was growing "humdrum," with the same sights and surroundings day after day. She longed for a change.

And she was soon to have her wish. One day an acquaintance, living about five miles distant, came to visit at Nettie's home. She had a babe four months old which required a good deal of care. During her stay she said:

"I wish I had a little girl to take care of baby while I do my work; a little girl like Nettie here is just what I need. Baby takes so much of my time, it is almost impossible to get any work done."

Nettie's mamma looked at her little girl a moment as if she were thinking about something. Then she said:

"Perhaps Nettie would like to go home with you and take care of your baby for a few weeks."

"I wish you could spare her," replied Mrs. Harwood quickly. "She would be of much help to me. What do you think about it, Nettie?"

The little girl fairly trembled with delight. How grand it would be to get away from home, and see something of the world; and then to go five miles! That would be famous!

"O! I wish I could go," she cried. "May I, mamma?"

"If you wish to, dear, and think you won't become homesick."

Nettie laughed at the idea of becoming homesick. Why, she would never be so silly as that!

And so when Mrs. Harwood started home in her carriage, Nettie bade her papa and mamma and little brother Harry good-by, and went to her new home. Of course, there was a queer twitching about her lips as she left the dear, family place which was her real home; but she soon forgot every thing else in the delights of the long drive over the pleasant hills.

Yes, this was a change, and for a few days she felt that she was almost in Paradise. Every thing was new. It was wonderfully pleasant to get away from the scenes she had known all her life—Nettie was ten years old, you must remember—and see hills and valleys and people she had never seen before.

On the fourth day her little charge—the baby—was quite cross. Do what she would, she could not soothe it. How much she wished she could carry it right out to Mrs. Harwood, and tell her that the baby needed her special care! But Nettie felt a little too "strange" to be so free with Mrs. Harwood.

Now if it was mamma, I wouldn't mind going and telling her," Nettie thought, looking a little longingly out of the window. Then another thought came: "O, how I would like to run out over the fields on a lovely day like this!"

But she was beginning to feel gloomy, and so she made herself think about something else. The baby continued to be fretful, so that Nettie could not get a moment's rest.

"Oh, if Mrs. Harwood would only come!" she murmured, almost breaking into tears.

But Mrs. Harwood was busy with her work and did not come. Nettie looked out at the green fields and groves through her tear-dimmed eyes and sighed:

"If I was home now, I could ask mamma to let me run out-of-doors awhile. I wouldn't be afraid to ask mamma.

But I can't ask Mrs. Harwood. She might not like it. O, I'm almost tired to death!" And she picked up the crying baby and carried it wearily about the room.

At last Mrs. Harwood came. There was an impatient look on her face.

"Why, what is the matter with baby? Haven't you been taking care of him?" she asked, a little sharply.

"Why didn't you come and tell me that he was fretful?"

There was just a faint note of rebuke in the woman's tones that went to Nettie's heart, and brought tears to her eyes.

"There! there!" said Mrs. Harwood soothingly.

"Don't cry. I know the baby has worried you. I shouldn't have stayed away so long. Now you can run out and have some fresh air."

Nettie was glad to escape. She ran out into the orchard where no one could see her, and had a good cry, which gave her some relief. Mrs. Harwood was so kind during the rest of the day that Nettie was almost as cheerful as ever.

But the next forenoon long before dinner time she became almost famished, and felt that she never could wait until the middle meal. How naturally came the thought:

"If I was at home now, I'd just go and ask mamma for a piece of bread and butter."

The long hours dragged away like a log chain, and by the time noon came Nettie was really sick from hunger and weakness. In the afternoon, as she tried to amuse the fretful baby, her cup of grief brimmed over.

"If I could only see mamma!" she sobbed. "I wonder what Harry is doing. If I was at home, we could play together in the front yard on the soft grass. There never was such a nice yard as ours. And there's the spring down back of the house, and the little run in the meadow where the birds sing so gaily and the nice barn and the old water-trough, and the orchard with all its large trees, and—and—"

It all came vividly before the little girl's fancy. At last she was in the grip of that hardest of all sicknesses to bear—homesickness.

"O, my! O, my! if I only could go home!" she moaned.

After a few hours Mrs. Harwood came into the room. She looked at Nettie in surprise.

"What has gone wrong, Nettie?" she asked. "Your eyes are so red!"

At this the little girl could no longer control her feeling. She broke into so violent a fit of weeping that Mrs. Harwood almost became frightened, and pleaded with Nettie to tell her what was wrong. Nettie was ashamed to confess the real state of affairs, and therefore would not answer for a long time. At last the woman asked:

"Are you homesick, Nettie?"

"Yes," the girl wailed, her tears streaming faster.

"Well, you poor child, you shall go home to-morrow morning just as soon as our hired man can take you," promised the good woman in a soothing voice. "I'm real sorry you've been feeling so badly. You're a good, faithful girl, and I should like to have you stay with me a few months; but if you can't be happy away from home, I would not want to keep you."

When Nettie came in sight of her home the next morning, she never felt so glad in her life, and the old place, which she had once thought so tame and tiresome, looked like fairy land to her delighted eyes. The carriage had scarcely stopped at the gate before she sprang out upon the ground, and ran up the path to the veranda where her mother stood with a beaming smile to welcome her home. She flung her arms around her mother's neck, and sobbed for very joy.

"O! mamma," she whispered, "I'm so glad, I'm so glad! I'll never call my home tiresome again. It's the best place of all."

"The best will is our Father's will,  
And we may rest there calm and still  
Oh, make it hour by hour thine own!  
And wish for naught but that alone  
Which pleases God."