

it was neatly made and had never yet been washed. And while looking at it, she remembered that during the whole previous fortnight that Mary Gray had attended school regularly, she had never seen her wear but one dress. "She is a thoughtful little girl," said she to herself, "and does not want to make her mother any trouble. I wish I had more such scholars."

The next morning Mary was absent, but her sister occupied her seat. There was something so interesting in the two little sisters, the one eleven and the other eighteen months younger, agreeing to attend school by turns, that Miss M—— could not forbear observing them very closely. They were pretty faced children, of delicate forms, and fairy-like hands and feet—the elder with dark lustrous eyes and chestnut curls, the younger with orbs like the sky of June, her white neck veiled by a wreath of golden ringlets. She observed in both, the same close attention to their studies, and as Mary had tarried within during play-time, so did Nelly; and upon speaking to her as she had to her sister, she received, too, the same answer, "*I might tear my dress.*"

The reply caused Miss M—— to notice the garb of her sister. She saw at once that it was of the same piece as Mary's, and upon scrutinizing it very closely, she became certain that it was the same dress. It did not fit quite so pretty on Nelly, and was too long for her, and she was evidently ill at ease when she noticed her teacher looking at the bright pink flowers that were so thickly set on the white ground.

The discovery was one that could not but interest a heart so truly benevolent as that which pulsated in the bosom of that village school teacher. She ascer-

tained the residence of their mother, and though sorely shortened herself by a narrow purse, that same night, having found at the only store in the place a few yards of the same material, purchased a dress for little Nelly, and sent it to her in such a way that the donor could not be detected.

Very bright and happy looked Mary Gray on Friday morning, as she entered the school at an early hour. She waited only to place her books in neat order in her desk, ere she approached Miss M——, and whispered, in voice that laughed in spite of her efforts to make it low and deferential, "After this week sister Nelly is coming to school every day, and oh, I am so glad!"

"That is very good news," replied the teacher, kindly. "Nelly is fond of her books, I see, and I am happy to know that she can have an opportunity to study her books every day." Then she continued, a little good-natured mischief encircling her eyes and dimpling her sweet lips, "But how can your mother spare you both conveniently?"

"O, yes, ma'am, yes, ma'am, she can now. Something happened she didn't expect, and she is as glad to have us come as we are to do so." She hesitated a moment, but her young heart was filled to the brim with joy, and when a child is happy it is as natural to tell the cause, as it is for a bird to warble when the sun shines. So out of the fulness of her heart she spoke and told her teacher this little story.

She and her sister were the only children of a very poor widow, whose health was so delicate that it was almost impossible to support herself and daughters. She was obliged to keep them out of school all winter, because they had no