

children, whose delighted eyes constantly sought, and found too, new beauties in the once drear and hated schoolroom. A new drawing on the blackboard from those wonderfully clever fingers, perhaps, or another bright illuminated text for the wall, another little picture, or a pretty, delicately tinted mat of tissue paper for teacher's desk, and the daisies and wild flowers, denounced by their former teacher as "trash",—what pretty bouquets Miss Burrows could make of them!

No child would dream now of coming to that neat schoolroom with dirty face and hands, especially as Miss Burrows was so apt to sav' of a neatly dressed child:—

"See what a nice clean pinafore Kitty has"! or "How neat and particular Johnnie is about his dress"!

She loved each bright little face, looking up to hers so longingly and lovingly, and realized, with a sense of great responsibility, but, woman-like, with a thrill of pride and pleasure, that her smile or frown made the clouds or sunshine of her little domain, over which she reigned a veritable Queen.

"With so much love and admiration from twenty precious little human souls, I need not be lonely and unloved, even if I *am* an old maid, as Eliza says I am", mused Mary.

And so she wore her simple prints with royal grace and importance, and fastened pretty flowers at her slender throat and in her rich brown hair. Becoming conscious at last of growing admiration in a pair of grave, masculine eyes,—those of the Principal of the school—she indignantly repelled the consciousness, and chid herself for unpardonable folly.

"Folly" even Dolly would have called any regard, from a matrimonial point of view, of the faithful country school-master, *earning* the gratitude of the community, *getting* barely enough to keep body and soul together. But our rustic "Queen" was not mercenary. The accusation of folly, so sternly made against herself, was due to her supposed presumption in imagining that that grave, strong, wise man could be moved to tenderness by her insignificant, quiet, "old" little self.

It was all nonsense, Mary knew, and dismissing an idea so unworthy of her years and dignity, she and Mr. Lawrence worked together like the best of friends, as they were. How they consulted and planned, and worked upon the sympathies of the parsimonious trustees, and got up entertainments, at which the boys and gir's, in pretty costumes largely due to the deft fingers of Miss Burrows, read, recited and sang, to the great delight of admiring parents and friends, who, in the pride of their hearts, willingly gave the trifling admission fee, until, with the proceeds, the old school blushed in paint and improvement not dreamed of by the patient "master" before Miss Burrows' advent as within the possibilities for years to come.

They were getting on so nicely, so very nicely indeed, when change, remorseless and inevitable, brought its

unwelcome interruption,—unwelcome at least to Mary, but surely viewed by Mr. Lawrence in a very different light.

A wealthy bachelor uncle had suddenly died,—as even wealthy bachelors must,—leaving to his favorite nephew, John Lawrence, a large and very valuable farm, with immediate possession. As soon as the new arrangement could possibly be made, Mr. Lawrence's place was taken by a youth scarcely out of his teens, and the former, with a blind man's selfishness, had bidden his former fellow worker a cheery Good Bye, unmindful, happily for poor Mary's pride, of the tears she scarcely could hold back.

"Of course he had a great deal to think of", Mary argued with herself. "Just setting up his own home", and—"getting ready for his wife", she had been about to say, but couldn't, somehow. For Mr. Lawrence had confided to Mary that the dearest wish of his heart would now be realized, and he hoped to make the girl he loved mistress of his home as well as his heart.

"He might have remembered me a little, though", murmured poor Mary, "when we have been such friends, and now I have only that boy to help me,—no, he is master, by the way, it is I that am supposed to help him".

The new Principal was inexperienced, as well as young, and many and embarrassing were the difficulties as to discipline into which the hitherto orderly school was plunged. The worst of it was that Mary and Mr. Rawson differed so entirely in their ideas of school management that Mary was vainly striving to resist the growing conviction that separation would be the only alternative of continual strife, and already saw herself, in imagination, with trunk packed and carefully corded once more, on her way back to her mother, confusion in her face, and failure graven on her heart. She had not been to blame, but the knowledge gave her little comfort. Why could not things have gone on as they were? It was too bad, when she had been happier than ever before in her life, in spite of the hard work. What a tiresome world it was anyway! But for poor mother, who would miss her, she knew, she would be glad, so glad, to be out of it, and with the dear father she longed for so sorely.

And yet, was it her father she longed for? Beneath the tender spot filled by that dear memory was there not a deeper, stronger feeling, a yearning associated with the grave, dark eyes, lighting a face half hidden in a rich brown beard? With an indignant little stamp, and a quick flush at the remembrance that *he* was another girl's lover, Mary endeavoured to excuse her-self with the assurance,—“It was just because of the trouble I was thinking about him. If he had been here everything would have been going on smoothly,—and now I'll have to go home”.

In despair at the thought, or for some other reason, Mary gave way completely, and bowing her head upon her little desk, indulged in a passion of tears. School was out, but would not some loving little one linger, as usual, for