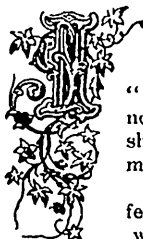


# "SEA-SICK FOR HOME AND MOTHER."



WAS just reading," spoke Grandma, as she put the paper down in her lap, "about that little girl who could not eat anything, because she said she was so sea-sick for home and mother.

"I know just how that little girl felt, and no wonder home-sickness was as bad as sea-sickness to her.

It was ever so long ago, years and years, when I was a little girl and went away from home for the first time. I went to visit dear Aunt Lydia and Uncle Jacob, two of the best folks in the world. My father took me over in his chaise, an old fashioned vehicle which long since went out of sight and sound; it was late in the fall. After he had stayed to dinner he left me and went back home. He said I must be a good little girl, and not get homesick, and he would come after me the next afternoon.

"There were no children at Aunt Lydia's and all the furniture stood in a stately row about the room and everything on the table was piled up in perfect order; the stiffness made me feel stiff, too. I watched my father out of sight and then I began to feel that I was alone in the great world. Aunt Lydia was very kind and told me stories about when she was a little girl and went away out to Ithaca in the stage coach to stay all winter and go to school. It was seven months before she saw her home and father and mother and brother and sisters again. She told me how brave she was and would not allow herself to get homesick at all. It would have been better policy for my Aunt to have led my thoughts in a different direction, but good old soul, she thought she was taking the best way to make me control myself and feel contented.

"When we went to supper, my throat seemed so full that I thought I should choke. It was a dreadful feeling, the same kind of sea-sickness the little girl had that I just read about. Aunt Lydia had frosted cake and lots of nice things, tarts with leaves and flowers cut out of dough and baked on the top, I remember, but I could not eat. When Uncle Jacob said, "Why don't you eat your supper, child?" I burst right out crying. I was ashamed, too, because Aunt Lydia had just told me how brave she had been when she went away off to Ithaca to school.

"I managed to blurt out between my sobs, "I want to go home, I want to go home." Those good people did not understand children and they thought it very strange that I should not like to be with them, and I don't think they sympathized with me as they would if they had had children of their own. I know they thought the discipline would be good for me, and that I would be better for the trial, and it was. I have heard of grown people, soldiers dying from home-sickness, and I can imagine how easily such a state of things might be brought about.

"I managed to eat a little supper and then I caught up the tabby cat that seemed to be so happy purring by the fire. Somehow, the cat seemed nearer akin to me than my Uncle and Aunt. I buried my face in her soft fur. I whispered to her about my dear old cat and three kittens at home, and before bed time I had found some consolation. But, O, dear, when Aunt Lydia took me up stairs and put me to bed in the spare-room, in that high posted bedstead, it seemed as if I should die. I did wish she would let me sleep on the lounge in the sitting-room right near her bed room. I did not like to ask her, however, so she blew out the candle and went down stairs after I was in bed.

"I had said my prayers, but I prayed over and over again, after I found myself alone in bed. It was such a comfort to know that I could talk to my Father in heaven and that he could see all the dear ones in the old home and see me, the lonely little home-sick girl, too. He must have given his little child sleep very soon, and when I woke up the daylight was making my room light and bright, but when I looked out of the window I saw the snow had been falling in the night, and was still coming down heavily. It was the first snow of the season. I wondered if father would come for me. Of course he would, for he promised. Father always kept his promises, and he said, 'I'll surely come for you after dinner to-morrow, if nothings happens to prevent.' Father always spoke that way, because he said no one knows what will happen from one day to another.

"When I sat down to breakfast, my Uncle said the roads were all drifted and unless the storm stopped and the roads were broken, father could not come for me. However, I ate a good breakfast of pan-cakes and maple syrup, for somehow in the morning things look differently from what they do at night, and besides I was sure my father would come, somehow.

"Just as we finished breakfast, a man came in