

Corry's Bright Memories

Corry stood looking from the big south window. There was a happy smile on her face, and her eyes were fairly sparkling. She looked so very merry that a young girl passing by stopped, waved, and then came up the steps.

'So you've come back to the old round again, have you, Corry?' asked this young girl as she sat down.

Corry looked puzzled. 'The old round?' she said.

'Yes, the country, I mean. Come back to the work, and'—with a quick little gesture—'everywhere! Everywhere tiresome, you know!'

'Tiresome? Why, I think it's all splendid, Amy!'

Amy's eyes opened wide. 'Corry Bliss, how can you be satisfied to come back to this mite of a place after visiting in the city, going to fine lectures and concerts, and having such a beautiful time? I'm almost sorry I went last winter. I have been unhappy ever since. There is nothing to do here, no pleasure to be had—just nothing! Yes, I'm sorry I ever went.'

'Why, I should be too, if it left me feeling that way,' said Corry, 'but you know I have never been so happy as since I returned.'

'But didn't you like it in the city?' asked Amy incredulously.

'Of course I liked it. That is why I am so happy now. Why, even if I lived to be ninety, Aunt Nan says, I would never get tired telling of the pleasant months I spent there. Of course it is true that one cannot hear fine lectures and have as many opportunities in the country as in the city, but the remembrance of what I have seen and heard will always make life sweeter to me. I saw all I could when I was away, because I thought I would have more pleasant memories to take home and share with those who could not go.'

'But I think that seeing such things only makes one more dissatisfied,' said Amy slowly.

Corry shook her head. 'It hasn't made me so, anyway,' she answered, 'I shall never be sorry I went. As Aunt Nan said once: "Any good and true experience is never lost. If you have a chance to see a fine painting, go and see it. Even though your work is very humble in life, the thought of what you have seen will make that work pleasanter;" and I think the reason Aunt Nan said that was because when she lived in the city she one day met her laundress in the art gallery. "Do you like pictures, Mrs. Higgins?" she asked. "Oh, ma'am," said Mrs. Higgins happily, "only the thought of them makes my ironing look so nice. I always think of that landscape one when I do your fine lawn, an' that's the reason it's so smooth." She said it so earnestly that Aunt Nan said she could scarcely keep the tears back, hearing her. That poor woman couldn't go to the gallery every day, but the happy memories of what she had seen made her work pleasant.'

Amy's eyes were as bright as Corry's at the end of this little speech.

'Why,—I—I—' she stammered, 'I never thought of making use of anything I had seen. I have only regretted! But after all it is good, yes, it is, Corry, to think that I have had so pleasant a visit.'

Neither of the girls referred to the sub-

ject again, but as the days passed, the petulant look left Amy's face. And it grew to be the custom with her, as with Corry, to tell others of the good times she had had; not telling of them with regret, but with a joyful ring in her voice which said as plainly as words: 'I will find joy in the remembrance of those times, not regret in the present. I shall do my work better for having seen some of the good and beautiful things in this world.' And truly the good and beautiful reflected themselves in her and made gladness and contentment shine in her young face.—The 'Canadian Churchman.'

Manda Jane.

None of us liked 'Manda Jane; we all said so the first day she came to school. Her dress was sort of old-fashioned, and too long for her; but it wasn't just how she looked that was the matter. I guess we thought there were enough of us without her, and we didn't want any more. You see, there were nine of us girls who brought our dinners—just enough for the three playhouses out under the trees, and besides, we all knew each other, and it's so much trouble to get acquainted with strangers.

'Well, we don't need to have her,' said Delia Kelly. 'We didn't ask her to come to our school, and we can go on just the same's if she wasn't here.'

So when noontime came, and the teacher and the other children went home, we hurried off and left 'Manda Jane to herself. She looked up as if she expected we'd ask her to come too; but we didn't, and after a few minutes she sat down on the steps and opened her basket. She sat there nearly all noontime, and we couldn't help seeing her while we played. Little Kitty—she's always so tender-hearted—wanted to ask her to come.

'Whose playhouse can she have part of, then?' asked Maria. 'There are only three places, and it'll make one of 'em all crowded up to have four girls in it.'

Well, none of us wanted her, and Kitty couldn't do anything without the rest of us, though she looked sorry. That's the way it went for four or five days. We found 'Manda Jane knew as much about her lessons as any of us, though her dresses were too long, and the other children liked her in games at recess; but we girls wouldn't pay her any attention. Our schoolhouse is in the country, in a nice woody place, and so we thought 'Manda Jane was going to look for wild flowers when she didn't stop on the steps, one day, but walked right past where we were, farther in the grove. By and by, we saw her moving about, as busy as she could be, as if she was making a playhouse all by herself.

'I think that would be awfully lonesome,' said Kitty, and I think we all felt a little sorry and sort of mean, only we wouldn't say so.

The next day 'Manda Jane hurried off just the same way, and the day after that, too, and we could see her flying about and fixing something. We pretended we didn't care what it was, but really we could hardly play at all for watching her. But the next noon, when we were getting ready to go for our baskets, she stopped us.

'There's a new store started down near where you folks keep house,' she said, 'and

if you want tea, sugar, soap, or—or anything, the woman that keeps it'll give good measure and sell cheap.'

'Store?' we all said at once.

She was leaning against the teacher's table, her eyes all twinkly and laughing, and she looked almost pretty—ever so much prettier than Maria, who jumped up on the table beside her.

'Yes; I've started a store,' she said, 'and I should think you housekeepers would need to buy lots of things.'

We began to crowd round her, but she wouldn't tell us much, only to 'come and see,' and didn't wait to have her ask us twice. She had fixed up the prettiest place with moss and green branches! There was a nice, smooth stump for a counter, and scales made of stumps of birch bark; there was white sand for sugar, and pebbles for coffee, and she had made cunning little paper bags to put things in. Oh, it was such fun! We bought and bought, and she gave us some real gingerbread—such good gingerbread that her grandmother made—because she said storekeepers gave things when they had an 'opening.' We forgot all about not wanting her, and almost forgot to play keep house at all, because we were all the time running to the store. She had so much custom that she said one of us might be clerk, but everybody spoke for the place, and so we had to take turns. It was the very nicest noontime we'd had, and nobody ever thought of leaving 'Manda Jane out after that; we couldn't do without her.

'How did you ever come to think of anything like that?' Delia asked her one day.

'Grandma made me think of it,' she said. 'You see, I felt a little bit lonesome, and I thought'—her face grew red and sober, and she stopped a minute, then she said the words right out—'I thought you girls didn't like me, and wouldn't ever be friends, and I told grandma there wasn't any place for me. "Make a place, then," she said. "All the world wants the ones that are willing to make themselves wanted." So then I stopped thinking how you ought to make it pleasanter for me, and began to plan how I could make things nicer for you.'—Kate Hamilton, in 'Sabbath-school Visitor.'

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