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THE LITTLE SISTERS.



YOU were not here yesterday," said the gentle teacher of the village school, as she placed her hand on the curly head of one of her pupils. It was recess time, but the little girl addressed had not gone to frolic away the ten minutes, nor even left her seat, but sat absorbed in what seemed a fruitless attempt to make herself mistress of a sum in long division.

Her face and neck crimsoned at the remark of her teacher, but looking up, she seemed somewhat re-assured by the kind glance that met her and answered, "no, ma'am, I was not, but sister Nelly was."

"I remember there was a little girl who called herself Nelly Gray, came in yesterday, but I did not know she was your sister. But why did not you come? You seem to love study very much."

"It was not because I did not want to," was the earnest answer, and then she paused and the deep flush tinged that fair brow, "but,"

she continued after a moment of painful embarrassment, "mother cannot spare both of us conveniently, and so we are going to take turns. I'm going to school one day, and sister the next, and to-night I'm to teach Nelly all I have learned to-day, and to-morrow night she will teach me all that she learns while here. It's the only way we can think of getting along, and we want to study very much, so as to sometime keep school ourselves, and take care of mother, because she has to work very hard to take care of us."

With genuine delicacy Miss M— forbore to question the child further, but sat down beside her, and in a moment explained the rule over which she was puzzling her young brain, so that the difficult sum was easily finished.

"You had better go out and take the air a moment, you have studied very hard to-day," said the teacher, as the little girl put aside her slate.

"I had rather not—I might tear my dress—I will stand by the window and watch the rest."

There was a peculiar tone in the voice of her pupil as she said, "I might tear my dress," that Miss M— was lead instinctively to notice it. It was nothing but ninepenny print of a deep hue, but