CIHM
Microfiche
Series
(Monographs)

ICMH
Collection de
microfiches
(monographies)

Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques

Technical and Bibliographic Notes / Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- [x] Coloured covers/ Couverture de couleur
- [ ] Covers damaged/ Couverture endommagée
- [ ] Covers restored and/or laminated/ Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée
- [ ] Cover title missing/ Le titre de couverture manque
- [ ] Coloured maps/ Cartes géographiques en couleur
- [x] Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/ Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)
- [x] Coloured plates and/or illustrations/ Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur
- [ ] Bound with other material/ Relié avec d'autres documents
- [ ] Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion along interior margin/ La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la distorsion le long de la marge intérieure
- [ ] Blank leaves added during restoration may appear within the text. Whenever possible, these have been omitted from filming/ Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte, mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont pas été filmées.

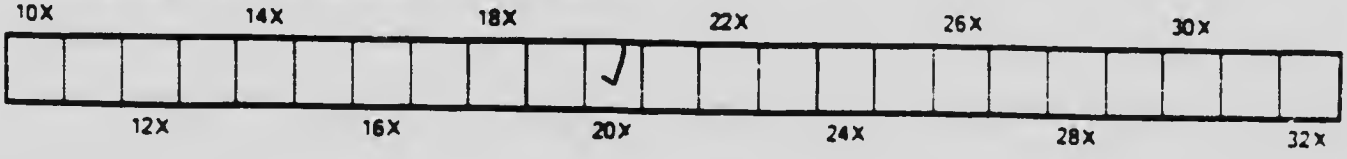
- [ ] Coloured pages/ Pages de couleur
- [ ] Pages damaged/ Pages endommagées
- [ ] Pages restored and/or laminated/ Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées
- [x] Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/ Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées
- [ ] Pages detached/ Pages détachées
- [x] Showthrough/ Transparence
- [ ] Quality of print varies/ Qualité inégale de l'impression
- [ ] Continuous pagination/ Pagination continue
- [ ] Includes index(es)/ Comprend un (des) index

Title on header taken from:/ Le titre de l'en-tête provient:

- [ ] Title page of issue/ Page de titre de la livraison
- [ ] Caption of issue/ Titre de départ de la livraison
- [ ] Masthead/ Générique (périodiques) de la livraison

- [ ] Additional comments:/ Commentaires supplémentaires:

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below/
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.



The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

Nationai Library of Canada

The imeges eppeering here ere the best queiity possibie considering the condition end iegibiilty of the originai copy end in keeping with the fiiming contract specificetions.

Originei copies in printed peper covers ere fiimed beginning with the front cover end ending on the iast pege with a printed or iiiustreted impression, or the beck cover when eppropriete. Aii other originei copies ere filmed beginning on the first pege with e printed or iiiustreted impression, end ending on the iest pege with e printed or iiiustrated impression.

The iest recorded freme on eech microfiche sheii contein the symboi → (meening "CONTiNUED"), or the symboi ▽ (meening "END"), whichever epplies.

Meps, pietes, charts, etc., mey be filmed et different reduction retios. Those too ierge to be entireiy inciuded in one exposure are fiimed beginning in the upper ieft hend corner, ieft to right end top to bottom, es meny fremes es required. The foiiowing diegrems iiiustrete the method:

L'exempieire fiimé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

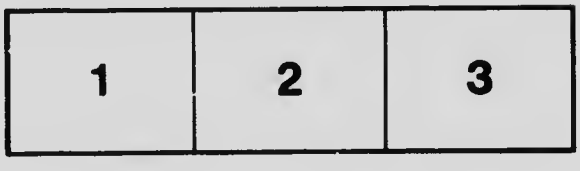
Bibiiothèque nationeie du Cenede

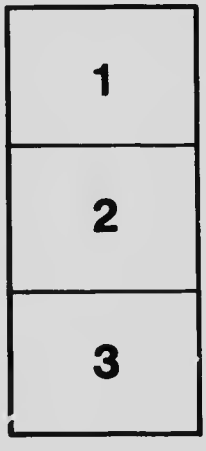
Les imeges suiventes ont été reproduites evec ie pius grend soin, compte tenu de ia condition et de ia netteté de l'exempiaire fiimé, et en conformité avec ies conditions du contrat de fiimege.

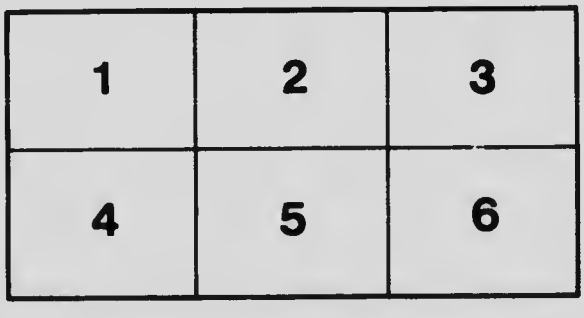
Les exempieires origineux dont ia couverture en pepier est imprimée sont filmés en commençent par ie premier piet et en terminent soit per ia dernière pege qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'iiiustretion, soit par ie second piet, seion ie ces. Tous ies eutres exempiaires origineux sont fiimés en commençant per ia première pege qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'iiiustretion et en terminent par ie dernière pege qui comporte une teiie empreinte.

Un des symboies suivents epperaître sur ie dernière image de cheque microfiche, seion ie ces: ie symboie → signifie "A SUiVRE", ie symboie ▽ signifie "FiN".

Les certes, pienches, tebieeux, etc., peuvent être fiimés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque ie document est trop grend pour être reproduit en un seul ciiché, ii est fiimé à pertir de l'engie supérieur geuche, de gauche à droite, et de heut en bes, en prenant ie nombre d'imeges nécessaire. Les diegrammes suivants iiiustrent ie méthode.







GURNET'S GARDEN,

AND

THE NEW BOY AT SOUTHCOTT.

BY

MRS. MARY R. BALDWIN.

TORONTO
WILLIAM BRIGGS, 78 & 80 KING ST. EAST
MONTREAL: C. W. COATES HALIFAX: S. F. HUESTIS

PREFACE.

A DISTINGUISHED woman once wrote of an author's work, "It is a *human* book, written out of the heart of a live man, not merely out of the brain of an author." One who offers a book, even of the most humble character, to the public will hear challenging voices, real or imaginary, crying, "Who ordered thee?" If the book grew from the heart out through the intellect it must bear about it evidence of the fact, which should be an answer to the voices.

The world has need of *human* books, and if this story, of the struggle of the higher spiritual forces with the conditions of sin and sorrow as they are found in every-day life, shall be classed among them, the author's highest hope for her book will be fulfilled.

GURNET'S GARDEN.

CONTENTS.

GURNET'S GARDEN.

CHAPTER I.

ETHRATON.

The town which I shall name Ethraton is situated upon a coast noted for its natural attractions. It is protected from the Atlantic surges by a narrow bar, but it is near enough to catch the wild music that a storm puts into the ocean's voice.

The town is a very old one, and is connected with events that date back to the landing of the pilgrims. For years commerce claimed it as one of her ports, and ships from the far-away spice islands brought hither their cargoes and then sailed away, to be followed by a man's dream of money or by a woman's dream of love and hope.

But the commerce of Ethraton is a thing of the past; and its quiet and ease may be likened to that enjoyed by a man who, after a life of hard labor, settles down to enjoy its fruits without care or fear for the future.

A few fishermen supply the near markets, but the

industries closely connected with the sea have given place, for the most part, to manufacturing interests.

Ethraton has so many beautiful spots about it, and so many places of interest that tell of those who lived so many years ago, that in summer crowds of people hurry to it, and many prolong their stay until the autumn.

It is no wonder, for it offers a quiet in rare contrast to the feverish life of our cities of to-day.

A stranger on first entering Ethraton from the sea must stop at the foot of Campaign Street, which is said to be one of the first streets laid out in New England. It is a wide street, and, as for length, it begins away back among the rocks and trees, and ends with the sands of the bay.

Perhaps I should have said it begins at the sands, and ends among the rocks and trees; or it may be I should have said nothing about its ending, for it is one of those streets that never seem to be finished, for each year lengthened it, and made changes toward the country.

The sea end did not change except as all things must when left to time's inroads, and as to lengthening—does not the ocean claim its own with a mighty hand?

One would linger at the sights on Campaign Street which would seem like a vision of other centuries, as

indeed they were in one sense; for brains and hands that conceived and executed had rested from all of earth's achievements long before the eighteenth century gave place to the nineteenth.

While the gables and dormers spoke of a life that was past there were signs of a life of to-day around the old buildings, that had been patched without the least regard to fitness but with an evident intention of meeting an actual want, a want so pressing that it could not spare an extra cent or an added moment to satisfy the smallest demand of beauty.

Passing on, the houses marked the years by their style changing gradually to a modern one, until, coming to the further end, you saw again the dormers and gables of the old time, showing that the last half of the nineteenth century was taking counsel of the eighteenth.

No one could have walked the length of Campaign Street without noticing a park-like inclosure that had its front entrance upon the street. The large gate was never closed except at night, and there was scarcely an hour in the day when some of its rustic seats were not occupied.

In the old days it had been a city pleasure resort, or, rather, a place to hear fine music and drink the cottage-brewed beer. The proprietor, Andrew Gurnet, was a jolly fellow, and seemed to have but one idea,

and that to give his visitors pleasure. Some said, however, that he was a sharp one withal, and cared a great deal for his "fo'pence ha'pennies," that, night after night, were put away in a strong box.

His wife was certainly a help, for she also joined with him in trying to make the garden a success. She helped about the flower-beds, so that never a blossom was missed on account of a choking weed; she made delicious cakes and pies, and helped in the beer-making, and then, when the lamps were lighted, or, it may be, the candles, she was all smiles to those who came.

For years the people of Ethraton depended upon Andrew Gurnet for entertainment of this kind, until at last death called him away. His wife could never gather the courage to take up the old life again, and never was the same woman that she had been before her husband's death; many said of her, even, that she never could bear the sound of a violin after it.

She tended her flowers as usual, but allowed no one to enter the garden except poor children, whom she supplied with flowers from the earliest bloom until the latest.

It has been said, by those who heard it from their grandmothers, that it was a beautiful sight to see the little ones coming out of the garden, their aprons filled with the blossoms given by "Mother Gurnet."

But the old lady blessed more than she knew, for the children carried their treasures to their homes, and they went to brighten a sick-room or helped to lighten burdened hearts, or, may be, dressed a bride, or lay as love tokens above a form in its last sleep.

But at last Mother Gurnet was herself called to give up life, and a kindly people covered her with the flowers that her own hand had planted, laid her to rest, and the garden gate was closed. The little children peered through the palings with anxious eyes, and lisped Mother Gurnet's praises, and then went away to forget their praise and their grief in some other childish hope or fear.

The years went by, and others took the cottage and tried the experiment, but one and all failed to bring back the cheer of the old days, until at last Ethraton began saying, "There never can be another Mother Gurnet."

The house had not had a tenant for years, and was fast going to decay, when, one morning in April, the street gate was thrown open, and little children of another age than that of Mother Gurnet looked in to see a pile of lumber lying near the house, and men at work near it.

There were men turning over the ground where the flower-beds had been in Mother Gurnet's time,

and a tall woman, dressed in a very queer fashion, was talking with them.

After a while she came toward the children, and, looking out from her large green sun-bonnet, asked, "What are you looking at, my little dears?" The little one to whom she spoke was too timid to answer, but a bolder one stepped forward and asked, "Are you Mother Gurnet?"

"And who was Mother Gurnet?" asked the woman. They answered, "O, she was a kind lady, who made cakes and beer, and helped the flowers to grow for the children, and—and—made splendid times for them!"

The large, homely face looked out from under the great bonnet in a wondering way. There was nothing said for a few minutes, and then the voice of the woman broke out in a tone of strange longing, "*I* should be happy to give the children splendid times!"

There must have been some peculiar fascination about this woman, for the children lingered to watch her, and one said, "I think she's nice!" and another, "I really guess it is Mother Gurnet, and she smiled at us."

They went away that day to tell that Mother Gurnet had come back, and the second day there was a crowd where there had been only a dozen at first.

"She's making flower-beds!" whispered one. "She's planting the seeds!" said a second. "She's coming!" said a third. And, sure enough, the woman had heard the child-voices, and was coming toward the gate.

"Are you really Mother Gurnet?" came from a pair of little red lips.

"No; I'm not Mother Gurnet; but I'm going to live here where she lived, and my name is Persis Marcel; and you can call me Aunt Persis, if you like."

A shade of disappointment passed over the faces of the group that listened, which the woman noticing caused her to say within herself, "She must have held a wonderful power to be remembered so long!" And then a look of longing spread itself over her features, as it had when the children first spoke of Mother Gurnet.

She went back to her flower-beds to think as she worked; to think as she had never thought before; and the children had started this new train in her mind.

Miss Persis Marcel had run away from the city, the summer before, to get rested by the quiet of Ethraton, and she had been so soothed and helped there that she went back to say to her brother, "Ansel, it was almost a taste of heaven to me. I am going there to settle."

"To settle, Persis! What can you mean?" he cried. "How can we spare you? Edith is needing you more than ever now; and you have been a mother to her, you know. And then I've always thought you would stand by us until Harry went to college. Boys of his make-up need some one to guide them, and their mother, my poor Clara, will never be strong enough for that."

Miss Persis gave her head a little toss at this, and could not forbear saying, "When I give up the care perhaps she'll take it. She's worn out with what the world lays upon her—the burden of society, I mean, brother."

At the very last of the talk Persis said, "I have settled it all in my mind, Ansel, that I shall go down to Ethraton to spend the rest of my days. I am going to buy a place there, and I'm going to have room to breathe. I am going to take Matilda's child with me. She has not long to live, and why shouldn't the poor little dear have a change? I shall expect that you will send Harry and Edith to me for the summer months. I shall want them, for you can't know how I shall miss them." And here her voice lost its calmness and her eye its clearness.

Miss Mareel carried out her plans, of which we have been shown the beginning, and by the first of May the old Gurnet garden was in readiness.

On a very bright day a carriage stopped before it and Persis Marcel got out, and then lifted out what might have been a child of six, from its height. The housemaid, seeing the carriage, ran down the walk, and Miss Marcel, beckoning to her, said, "Take her in your arms, Sarah; it is Matilda's child." With this event life began again at "Gurnet's Garden."

It might have been a week after this happened that some children passing again saw a strange figure in a queer sort of rolling carriage.

They were frightened at first at the strange shape and the peculiar face, and were about to run away, when Miss Marcel's voice called to them, "Come in here, children!" One stepped in timidly, and then another, until at last quite a number stood around her.

"I have brought Matilda's child —" she began, and then explained, "But you don't know who Matilda was. Matilda was my sister. I can't tell you what she was to me; but that made no difference—my loving her so much. She had to go when she was called, but she left her child. Come here, Iris!"

The little carriage came slowly down the walk, and stopped by the children.

Each one looked curiously at the girl who sat in it, and each face turned then toward the woman for an answer to their thoughts. But Persis Marcel had not

the heart to tell them then, and she allowed them to go away with the wonder in their eyes, saying to herself, "I must tell them some day."

Iris saw and understood their look, and her poor little heart that had so many times been saddened by this child-wonder again felt the pang that some must feel so acutely, the pang that comes from the knowledge that they are not like others, and that they cause surprise and pity.

But the children came again and again and received flowers from the hands of the girl in the carriage, who sat awaiting them with her lap full.

She had a very pleasant voice and said very pleasant things to them, so that when Sarah, the maid, came to call her into the house they went slowly out, as if there was nothing left in the garden for them.

Miss Marcel, even the first spring, had made such improvements around the place that the people of Ethraton were quite astonished. She had made the old house comfortable without seeming to alter its appearance; and when the vines covered its sides and crept almost to its dormers it became the most attractive-looking old building on the street. Then the grounds were full of beauty. The old walks were repaired, the trees were trimmed, and the flower-beds glowed with splendor.

Miss Persis had at last found a home; something

that all her life she had craved. A place where she could sit down, away from life's care and work and worry, and give up all thought of the hurrying, sorrowing world, that yet had no hope, neither perhaps wish, of giving up, to enjoy ease and rest.

"And so you have really done with active life, Persis?" asked her brother, who had come to bring the children for a visit.

"And why not, Ansel?" she answered.

"O," replied he, with a gleam in his eyes, "I don't forget so easily your kindly prying among the needy and the sorrowful that I can suppose you will ever really sit down to enjoy your ease this side heaven."

"Don't, Ansel—don't talk that way!" she answered uneasily.

CHAPTER II.

MATILDA'S CHILD.

"MATILDA'S child"—the little Iris—was fully twelve years of age. She had been dwarfed and crippled, when just beyond her babyhood, by an accident, and could never hope to be larger or stronger or more shapely than she was at the time when the little children first peered at her through the garden palings.

Did she wish to be? or was she so used to herself that she did not mind much about it? Some one, I think would like to ask these questions, and so I answer, Could you have looked into the sad face, that usually did not seem at all like a child's; could you have marked the longing in it, you would have found an answer I think; the sadness seemed so entirely unrelieved by the light of hope.

But her mind was not dwarfed; it was far in advance of what is usually found with those of her age, so that she surprised those who talked with her, and caused them to say, "How sad that she has such a poor, little, weak body!"

At her mother's death her Aunt Persis received her

as a sacred charge, and took her with her when she was called to her brother Ansel's home to care for his children. Day and night she held her watch, at first for the lost sister's sake, afterward for the sake of the child herself.

If tears could have washed away grief or have changed things, then all would have been different; for Miss Marcel shed floods of tears over the child, and the first remembrance Iris held was that of her aunt's tear-stained face, and the first words she tried to utter were, "My poor, afflicted, blessed Iris!"

She could never forget how her aunt had, as she heard them, strained her closely to herself, and, kissing her, said, "Say it again, my baby!" nor how she had said it again and again, only to make the smile come to the face that so seldom showed one.

Miss Marcel had laid away joy, or had seemed to, when her sister died. Indeed, she had been heard to say that every thing pleasant went out of life with Matilda, and that, if it were not for the little Iris and others who needed her, she would gladly follow her.

I do not wish to have it understood that Persis Marcel was a shirk. That she never could be. She was unselfish, and full of tenderness toward those who suffered in any way, and, as her brother had

said, went prying around among the needy to find just what she could do toward relieving sorrow.

She helped hundreds in many ways, and if only she could have carried joy with her she would have proved an angel of light indeed.

All this work and care, added to the charge of her brother's children and Iris, began to tell even upon a woman of her iron nerve and constitution, and led her to take the summer rest at Ethraton, where, among its still and beautiful scenes, she became soothed and strengthened, so that she longed for a permanent rest in a place that could offer her so much.

Of course, she had her misgivings and questionings with regard to her duty. There were times when she felt quite ashamed of herself for desiring a rest, but then she would face her doubts with the question, "Who will take care of Matilda's child when I am gone?" This view of it decided her; so we see that her motive for coming to Ethraton was, after all, an unselfish one.

The children's words about Mother Gurnet and the pleasant time she made for people stirred again the old questionings, and her rest, that she had but just begun to enjoy, was in great danger of being disturbed. "Are there those who are needing me even here in this peaceful spot?" she asked. "Must I

take it all up again?" She had all this tumult to herself, and did not at first speak of it to Iris.

It had always been a very hard matter to keep such a secret from Iris, for she seemed to have remarkable insight for a child, and her sensitive nature vibrated with every stir of feeling in her aunt's soul; but Miss Persis meant to guard this secret, and she succeeded well for a while.

The new home was a delightful place to Iris, and seemed a fulfillment of all the dreams she had indulged in after reading or hearing about old times, when people, as she had learned from her aunt, had their homes to please themselves, and not the world.

In truth, the child had never found the life at her uncle Ansel's very pleasant. Her uncle's wife was a woman who appeared to try to please the people outside her home more than those who were in it, and seemed never at her ease on account of these outside people; but was always worried about her dress and her furniture, and so never was happy.

The children too—her cousins Harry and Edith—had begun to be afraid also, and cried for hours if they could not have just what they wanted to wear. She heard her Aunt Persis trying to make them see that it was not a very dreadful thing what these people thought about them, but she saw, too, that their mother taught them to think quite differently.

Then, in the city, the walks in the park did not seem pleasant to her. Harry and Edith were ashamed to have her go with them in her little carriage, and at last she only went out with her Aunt Persis. But the beautifully dressed children would stop and stare and make unfeeling remarks, and sometimes even laugh at her or at the carriage.

It really made little difference to her which they laughed at; for the carriage was almost like a friend, almost a part of her life.

She had found, as I said, the old house beautiful. She could sit by the open window and look out, and there was no Aunt Clara to say, in a weak voice, "Draw the curtain, Iris, I cannot bear the light." She could sit in the very best chair in the old front room, and no one said, "Be careful of the velvet, Iris!"

Here the air and light were free to come and go, and play all sorts of tricks as they would; and there were really no best chairs, but all seemed beautiful, as all things must that are really of use in the world. There were no reception days, and no four o'clock lunches, and no operas, as there were in the city.

The neighbors had been in to see her Aunt Persis, and had seemed to come because they wished to; and the best of it was, she could sit by, curled up in a big

chair, and listened as they told of the old times of Ethraton, that seemed to her ever and ever so much older than any times of which she had heard before.

In place of the lunch parties, her aunt had proposed to have little old-fashioned tea-parties. And as for operas—did they not have a whole host of birds to make music for them every day? Ah, yes; the city life seemed an unpleasant dream, and the life of Ethraton had begun to seem a sweet reality.

Then there were the books. And her Aunt Persis found so much time to read to her in this new home, and to talk of what she read; and then there came a day that never could be forgotten, because it was a beginning of a new and wonderful experience to her. She never could forget the kind of a day it was. It had seemed that there was a peculiar appearance to the sunlight and the grass and the flowers, and that the sounds in the summer air were very different from any thing she had heard before. No, there had never been any thing like it to her before; it seemed a day made only for what had happened in it.

Miss Persis had arranged with her to visit one of the old families on Campaign Street. The lady came from a very aristocratic family, "one of the old sort," her aunt said, as she took her black silk dress from the linen sheet in which it had been carefully wrapped,

and basted the soft lace into the neck and sleeves. "And she went to school with your mother, and she always speaks of her; she loves to talk of those days." And Miss Persis paused, and looked as if her thoughts were far away.

She took up her sewing again, as she said, "She wishes to see you, and wonders whether you are like your mother, and whether you will be fond of her." And Iris caught the tone of pity in her voice as she spoke.

"I don't want to see her! I can't see her!" burst out the child. "She knew my mother. My mother's picture is beautiful, and you say she was tall and straight—and I—I am a dreadful little cripple. O! O!"

Miss Persis dropped her work, and the black silk that had been so carefully kept and handled was allowed to fall unheeded to the floor as she sprang forward and caught the weeping child in her arms and held her to her heart.

"O my poor little one! My dear lost Matilda's lamb! What can I do? How can I help my precious one to bear it?"

She kissed the pinched face again and again, she fondled and softly patted the shrunken limbs, until, soothed and quieted by the loving touch, the child gave no outward sign of her great woe, and began to

unfold the bright cashmere that her aunt brought to her.

"Blue was your mother's color," Miss Persis ventured, "and it is your color too; you have the same clear complexion, and her eyes."

At precisely three o'clock the carriage was at the door. Iris felt very glad that they were going together in a carriage with two horses; and that she would be saved the staring of people at sight of her own little carriage.

The house where they stopped at last was near the end of Campaign Street; an old one—not so old as theirs, but it had the same funny little windows and low eaves. It was a very big house, spreading out over a wide place in the yard; and the yard—it was almost as large as Gurnet's Garden, and beautifully kept.

The gardener was working at the walks as the carriage drove in and around, through a covered way, to a horse-block.

A girl of perhaps her own age came running out to meet them. She was without a hat, and her hair—Iris thought she had never seen such hair before. She had bright eyes and a lovely complexion, and as she ran her cheeks were very red.

Iris began to tremble. She would, if it had been possible, have fled from what was to come.

She clutched the dress of her Aunt Persis, and she, careful soul that she was, felt a pang on account of her hitherto unwrinkled silk; but that passed, and a sharper one darted through her soul as she thought of what the child was thinking.

She only said, "Remember, Iris, that this lady whom you are to meet knew and loved your mother."

The driver opened the carriage door, and the lady herself came out to meet them. As they got out, or, rather, as at Miss Persis's order the man lifted Iris from the carriage, and then gave the crutches to her, there was a little cry from the beautiful child, and she turned and ran out of sight.

The face of Iris changed to a deathly white; and Miss Persis, with an equally pale one, took her in her arms and gave an appealing look toward the lady, who waited.

"Bring her in here!" the lady said, as she led the way toward the house. The driver waited for his orders, but Miss Marcel had forgotten every thing in this new trial.

The child was laid upon a lounge, and her aunt was whispering something in her ear, when the lady went out and said to the man who waited, "You need not come for them; I will return them in my carriage."

She did not go immediately back to the room where she left the two. She followed in the direction she had seen her child go, and called, "Stella! Stella! my child, come to me!"

"She's gone to the brook, I think, ma'am," said the gardener, who heard the mother's call. "At least that's where she goes most. She ran past me and looked scared like; an' it's no wonder, at such a sight!"

The mother went slowly back to the room where her friend was sitting with the child's hand in hers.

The child was a strange sight, and she could not help asking herself, "Can this be a daughter of the beautiful, finely formed Matilda?"

She so governed her expression, however, that no trace of her feelings was seen upon her face, as with a low, sweet, calm voice she said, "And this is Matilda's child! How we shall all love you, dear!"

Iris seemed transformed. Her blue eyes took to themselves a positive beauty; and then the lady said, "You have your mother's eyes, and she used to look at me just as you are looking now. It does not seem possible," she continued, turning to Miss Marcel, "that the days are gone when Matilda Marcel and Marion Sterne loved each other so much."

Then after a silence, she said, "But our children

will perhaps live them over again, and will be to each other what we were once in friendship."

"O, I forgot the driver—forgot all about telling him when to come for us," exclaimed Miss Marcel.

"But I have seen him," replied Mrs. Sterne; "he is not coming for you. I shall send you home in the twilight myself."

Miss Marcel did not feel that she could remain through the day, but glancing toward Iris she saw that she was looking intently at a picture upon the wall, and there was no trace of her past pain in the look.

Mrs. Sterne brought a portfolio and placed it upon a light stand before the girl, as she said, "Here are some views of places you have never seen; some of them I have visited, and I will tell you about them soon."

Iris began turning the leaves, and Mrs. Sterne, placing a chair beside her, told her how she had climbed the mountains, and stood by the lakes, and how, in other lands, she had stood in the great cathedrals, and had heard the deep-voiced organs. Here the child clasped her hands and cried, "O, how I should like to hear a great organ, one big enough for a cathedral."

"That is just like your mother," the lady said; "she loved music."

Just then, from another room, came the soft sound of a sad air. "It is Stella!" explained Mrs. Sterne, "and music is to her every thing; by-and-by you can go to the music room, and she will play for you;" then, rising, she excused herself, and went out.

"O, I can't see her, mother!" cried Stella, as her mother entered the room where she sat playing, the frightened look not all gone from her face.

"But, my dear, if you could see her as I have seen her you would not feel as you do. She has really lovely eyes, and you know they are said to be the windows of the soul, and she may have a very beautiful soul; her mother had. I hope some day you will love each other very much."

The girl stopped playing. "O, mother, don't say that! Don't expect it! I never can bear to even look at her, and I can't see how she can really wish to live, herself; I'm sure I should want to die if I could not walk."

"Stella, my child, for my sake, can you not try to be at least kind to the poor child? Remember, she is your mother's guest, and that if you refuse this it will give me much pain."

Nothing that Mrs. Sterne could have said would have had the effect of these words upon the girl; for she loved her mother passionately, and had a great

desire to please her. She sprang toward her, saying, "O, mother! I will do any thing for you, but how can I do this?"

"I will help you, dear child. Try and think about what is within the poor little homely body; and her face, too, was really beautiful a while ago. I am going to bring her in to you. I want to have her listen to your music; she loves sweet sounds perhaps as well as you do. I shall put her in the rolling chair that was your brother's; Margaret will bring it down from the garret. Remember, my child, that your brother Ralph was a cripple, and now he is an angel."

"But was my brother Ralph such a small, strange-looking creature?

"Your brother was beautiful to me, but I know how others looked at him; and sometimes they shuddered. It is very strange that both of us should have been so afflicted, Matilda and I. But God's ways are past finding out, and his laws are the best that could have been formed."

Then, taking her little daughter's hands in hers, she asked again, "Will you try to please me in this matter, dear child?"

And Stella answered with some hesitation, "I will try, mother."

Mrs. Sterne left the room, and going to Margaret,

the house-maid, said, "I want you to bring from the garret the rolling chair."

"An' indade, mum, yer towld me to put camphor in it, and wrap it up, to presarve it loike. I thought it was a koind o' sacred thing."

The tears started to the lady's eyes as she listened, and her voice shook as she answered,

"Yes, you are right; my boy's chair seems almost a sacred thing. My blessed boy sat in it through the years he was with me;" and lowering her voice she whispered, "And he died in it. But take off its wrappings and bring it down, for another sufferer like him needs it."

The chair was brought to the parlor door by the girl, who stared at the little cripple upon the sofa. At a word from Mrs. Sterne she left it standing there, and the lady herself wheeled it to the side of Iris, and said, "Now we will go to the music room."

The chair had been wheeled across the threshold when Stella came forward and held out her hand, and the trembling hand of Iris lay for a second in it.

"Play 'Brook Songs,'" said Mrs. Sterne to her daughter.

Stella touched the keys, and Iris bent forward; her lips parted and her eyes grew large with excite-

ment. She saw nothing, heard nothing around her—not even the whisper of Mrs. Sterne to her aunt, "Does music always affect her so much?" She was utterly unconscious of every thing but the music. Stella stopped presently, and turned to see the figure of the girl in the rolling chair with clasped hands and a face that was lighted with feeling.

"Play on!" said Mrs. Sterne to her daughter, while she kept her eyes upon the face of Iris.

Again the girl listened, and when Stella finished she leaned back in her chair and burst into tears.

Nobody spoke a word for many minutes, nor seemed inclined to move. And then Miss Marcel went to her side and whispered, "Shall I take you away?"

"No, no," she murmured. "It was so wonderful I could not bear it."

Mrs. Sterne made a sign to Miss Marcel to follow her, and both ladies left the room; and Stella and Iris were alone.

"Has she never heard music before?" asked Mrs. Sterne.

"Never music like that, I think. I believe she has never before been where any one played any thing that had a meaning," answered Miss Marcel.

"I thought while I looked at her," said Mrs. Sterne,

"that possibly she had her mother's gift, and I wondered if she had ever tried to play."

"But she cannot walk!" replied Miss Persis, in an astonished way.

"But she can use her hands; it might be possible. Who knows but that she may prove to have her mother's talent?" replied the lady. "My boy Ralph did not even walk with crutches; her case is not so bad, I think, Miss Marcel. Stella's teacher is a genius, and—well, I wish Iris might have the advantage of her instruction."

Miss Persis seemed strangely shaken by these words. She covered her face with her hand and sat in silence for a while, and then in measured tones began:

"I thought I knew the child better than any one else could; where were my eyes, that I did not see all this before? I don't know; sometimes I think I've worked blindly all through. Have I got to throw up all the past and take a new start? I came down to Ethraton to end my days in rest, but I had no sooner got here than even the little children, looking through the garden palings, seemed to learn my secret, and gave me a hint that work waited for me even here. Why is it that some people feel a right to enjoy hard-earned ease, and others can never be at peace with themselves or with the world, but must always

see new work, always have a sorrowing heart before their eyes—a heart waiting for them to heal?"

After a few minutes Mrs. Sterne answered: "My husband used to ask that. He was also one who had this far sight for sorrow and want; but I think it was not until he had learned of the great Burden-bearer that he knew the secret of it all. Then he said that no true Christian would wish to tread in another path than that the Master trod; that as his great heart took upon it the burden of the woe of the world, and knew that this woe held a part of the sacrifice to which he was pledged, so it belonged to the pledge which his followers took, this giving ourselves to others; and as we walked in this way, and each day gave our sympathy, we each day, little by little, laid down our life as the Saviour had done."

Miss Persis gave no answer. What could she have said? For she knew nothing by experience of this great law of love and sacrifice in its deeper Christ meaning.

She returned to the subject of the music lessons, and asked, "Where can I find this teacher? Nothing that I can do for Matilda's child must be left undone. How strange that I never thought of it before!"

The two sat talking of it and making plans until Stella came, rolling the invalid's chair into the room where they sat.

The ladies, looking at the girls as they made their appearance, said within themselves, "All is well."

At twilight Miss Marcel and Iris rode home, but neither of them said much. They were dwelling upon what the day had brought them.

CHAPTER III.

MISS MARCEL'S CALL.

IT was midsummer, and the sun had for days hung above Ethraton with a seeming fiery vengeance. From lip to lip the words passed, "There has been nothing like this here for years."

The summer boarders spent their days upon the little islands lying around the town, and the greater part of the nights in walking by the sea, whose sands by day reflected the sun's glare.

It was well for Ethraton that its people had generally no need of toiling for daily bread during the heated term; that the descendants of the founders of the old town were "well-to-do," and need have no fear for a coming frost or a next week's drought.

But the old families, or rather the new stock of the old settlers, were not the whole of Ethraton. There was another class, that had come in with the building of the first mill; a class that must work through the heat as through the cold, must fear a drought that might cut off the water-supply of the mills. For the most part they were an industrious, well-kept class, but mingled with them were the shiftless and hope-

less ones, who never had a cent left for a rainy day; and so, when the mills were not running, they were in want. The drought of the summer of which I am speaking stopped the mills from working, and there was trouble among the families whose heads belonged to the shiftless order.

The quarter occupied by the mill hands was named Fisherville, because in the older days of the Ethraton fishing interests it held the homes of the fishermen. The descendants of these people, when the fisheries gave way to the manufactories, still occupied the old houses, and, year by year, reared new ones, so that there were rows of cottages where once had stood the scattered homes of these men of the sea.

It is true that some of the grandchildren and great-grandchildren followed the longings which had descended from their ancestors, and held to the sea, and were satisfied with a smaller income than the mill offered only that they might live upon the water. The drought made no difference with these.

Fisherville was not so far from Gurnet's Garden that the little children of that quarter could not reach it. Crowds of them visited it and looked through the openings into it, and some ventured to go in, and were so enchanted that they came again, until at last

Gurnet's Garden had its regular visitors—perhaps not exactly of the kind that came in the Mother Gurnet days, but still visitors.

It was on one of these hottest days, when Miss Marcel had closed the shutters toward the sun, and had drawn the music chair of Iris to the piano, and had placed her exercise before her and then left her to practice by herself, that she took her book and went out to the most shady summer-house in the garden.

She was so busy with her thoughts of Iris, and of the strange chance that had shown her the girl's talent for music, that she did not see that some one had come to the summer-house before herself.

She had been seated and had opened her book, when a little voice said, timidly, "Please, ma'am, I thought you would not care."

Miss Marcel looked up. It was a little girl who spoke. At first the lady did not answer. The child held in her hand a bunch of pansies, Miss Persis's favorite flower; they were the largest, most perfect specimens from her choicest bed.

A stern expression came into her face as she asked, at last, "Who gave you this liberty, my girl?" adding, "those are my best blossoms. I loved them more than all the others."

The face of the child was covered with confusion

and fright. She dropped the pansies and burst into tears.

This Persis Marcel could not bear calmly. She caught the child to herself, ragged as she was, and dirty too, and said, soothingly, "Tell me all about it, little one. Did you want them so much?"

"No, it wa'n't me, ma'am; 'twas Jabey said, 'If, now, Polly, I jest had one o' them little flowers that look like little children's faces, I'd give, Polly—I'd give my best ball; if you'll go an' ask her, now, Polly, I'd be jest as happy as the minister said the angels up in heaven was!' I didn't want to come. I didn't, really, ma'am; but he would keep asking, and he'd been a-dreaming, ma'am, and he said he dreamed that you told me to take the little flowers with the bright faces, and he knew you'd say it when I came, for Johanna—that's the girl that reads to him—said that Dobson's little Jane said that you smiled on her once, and said that you'd like to give the children good times. She really did say it, ma'am."

Miss Persis looked almost fiercely into the upturned face and asked, "Is your brother sick?"

"Yes, ma'am; he's got the fever, and he's awful sick, jest awful; yer see, the sun's been so hot, and the mills don't run"—and here she gave a long, low sob—"and father's give up; he says there aint a bit

o' use in tryin'; yer see, mother's dead—she's been dead two months."

Here was Miss Marcel's call, a call from the cool summer-houses and clean rooms and perfumed air of her home, out to the heat and the work and the woe of the world. She led the child from the summer-house, through the shaded walks, into the cool rooms of her house. Iris turned in her chair as the two entered, and the startled look of the two girls met. The ragged, sorrowful-looking child stood face to face with the cripple.

Miss Marcel rolled Iris in her chair into her own room, and told her the child's story.

"Are you going to work again as you did when you lived at Uncle Ansel's?" she asked.

"I don't know; I can't say," replied Miss Marcel. "I've seemed to have a call again. I came to rest, I needed rest; but they wont let me rest! The poor and the suffering ones will always call me away from it, I believe."

Her aunt's answer seemed to the girl like a cry of pain, and it also seemed to her that it must be dreadful for her to be always hearing these voices that called her away from rest.

Miss Marcel did not linger, however, to talk it over, but put on a neat walking-dress, gathered a bunch of her best pansies, arranged them with green leaves in

a little basket, and started with the child, whose face was lighted with joy at the thought of what Jabey would say when he saw the flowers.

They passed down Campaign Street, through the shady way, past the comfortable, beautiful homes, and turned at last into a by-street that led directly to Fisherville.

"That's our house with the fence; mother had that built; she worked hard to earn the money, and she whitewashed it herself," began the child as they came in sight of her home. "And she planted morning-glories and sweet-peas, but it's so dry at Fisherville they dried up, but that was after she died. She used to watch them grow, and she didn't know that they would dry up so. I don't believe she thought of it, for the very last day—the day she died—she told us to tie them up; and that after awhile we'd have it cool and pleasant in the rooms, when the heat came on. Father cut down the big tree to make wood; mother cried about that, and I don't believe she ever really got over it, and just before she died she said, 'It's so shady here, under the big tree!' She thought it hadn't been cut down, I guess."

They had reached the house by this time, and the child ran in to tell of the coming of a visitor. The front door was standing open, and as Miss Marcel went up the steps she heard moans, and then a sigh:

"O, Polly! Have you got here? Did she give you some of 'em?"

"She's come herself. And she's brought a whole basketful, and there's lots o' green too. It'll be just beautiful, Jabey."

Johanna, who had been sitting by the bed, rose as Miss Marcel came forward, her honest German face beaming with wonder and delight at sight of a lady in the sick-room.

"He's very sick, ma'am," she answered Miss Marcel's inquiry, "and he wants the shade and the flowers so. My mother says his mother did. You see, ma'am, the sun just rules here since the big tree went. Such a big tree as it was! You can't think." But the sick boy had turned, and was looking at Miss Marcel. She went close to the bed and said, "So you wanted one of the bright-faced flowers, did you, my boy? See, I've brought you a basketful!"

There was a low cry at sight of the pansies set in the green leaves, and the sick boy stretched out his thin hand toward them.

"An' yer didn't mind at all? I said yer wouldn't, 'cause Jane told about yer wantin' to give us good times."

"Has the news spread so about me among the children?" thought Miss Persis. "Are they all taking it for granted that I am going to bless them?"

The boy went on: "Yer see, they all dried up, what mother planted, an' it's so hot, and not a speck o' green."

Miss Persis glanced out into the yard, and the glance took in the parched earth and patches of seared grass, and the reflection from the whitewashed fence made the sight almost unendurable. "Can I ever begin again?" she asked herself, in an agony of soul. "Can I endure the dreadful sights and sounds and odors that must form a part of this work?"

The boy had been watching her face earnestly, and he noted the look that reflected in it from this soul-conflict. He did not, of course, understand it; he thought it might be, after all, that she had not wanted to part with the flowers, and so after a minute's silence he asked again, "An' yer didn't care about lettin' 'em go, I guess; yer needn't 'a' brought so many."

"O, my boy, the flowers are nothing! I have enough more," she answered. "I was not thinking of the flowers."

Jabey wondered of what she was thinking, but he dared not ask. She turned then to inquire of Johanna about the sickness, and whether he had had a doctor, and what medicine he had taken.

She found that the fever had been given full sway. There had been no doctor, and only the simple reme-

dies had been tried that the German girl's mother had thought of.

She looked at the poor, hard bed, brushed away the swarm of flies from the boy's face, and said in an absent way, "I must go, now; I will be back in an hour."

Jabey's eyes followed her as she went away; then Polly brought the basket of pansies, and told him all that Miss Persis had said.

"An' she said, did she, that she liked this kind best? An' she's so rich too; an' has lots o' flowers an' green things—trees and bushes, an' creepin' vines. I'll tell yer, Polly; one o' these days I'll pay her. I jest wish daddy could hear it; p'r'aps he wouldn't think the rich folks so dreadful."

The "daddy" of whom he spoke just then entered the room. He came in with a shuffling gait, and his face might have belonged to something inanimate, for all the life-expression it had.

"I seed a woman go out the gate a minute or two ago, Polly; who was it? It wasn't one o' the missioners, war it? It looked sorter like 'em, but it war a leetle too quick o' motion for a missioner; they's kind o' shiftless an' slow o' steppin'—thinkin' all the while o' pious things, I reckon."

"O, that was the woman who lives at Gurnet's Garden," said Jabey. "An' see these—the green an' the faces—the flowers—see!"

"Wal, there's a mighty change in you, my chap," the man answered, and a gleam of hope did really visit his face, "but I tell yer what, a loaf o' bread an' a chop would 'a' suited me better. She's one o' the aristocrats, I'm sure, if she aint a missioner, though the missioners an' aristocrats are 'bout alike. They give starvin' people books an' gimcracks, thinkin' that'll cure cold and hunger. They aint any on 'em good jedgment now, none on 'em!"

"She's comin' agin, daddy," whispered Polly, in an awed way—"comin' in an hour. She said so."

"And I think she'll bring a doctor," added Johanna, in a knowing way; "and perhaps medicines and things to eat. I must go home now," she said, as she put on her hat. "I'll come again in an hour; I suppose the lady will be here."

The truth was that Johanna, the kind, good, faithful creature, wanted to get away long enough to tell her mother the news about the coming of the lady, and about the basket of flowers, and every thing that had happened, for any news was highly prized since the mills had stopped, and every thing had settled to rest and monotony.

The father stretched himself upon the floor in the door-way, and began puffing away at his pipe. The smoke was curling up when Miss Marcel came to the door with the doctor. She gave a look of disgust at

the figure lying there; the man caught the expression and thought, "She's one o' them 'ristocrats; I know 'em, fur's I can see 'em."

He did not move until the doctor told him to, and then he put on his hat and went out into the yard, and laid himself upon the ground, while Miss Marcel and the doctor went into the sick-room. Jabey was looking at the pansies as they entered, and there were signs of real pleasure upon his face.

The doctor after some questions turned to Miss Marcel and said: "He's passed the crisis; the Lord knows how he lived through it, with nothing to help him."

He brushed the flies from the pale face, and looked around at the mean belongings of the room and toward the curtainless windows, where the sun streamed in almost cruelly, it seemed to him.

"He'll need care and comforts," he went on, in a low voice to the lady. "If there could be a shade, something to shut out the sun's glare, and screens too."

Jabey caught his words, and said, "They died—the vines that mother planted; she said they'd keep it shady for us. The big tree used to make a shade; 'twas such a big tree."

"You shall have a shade somehow," said Miss Marcel soothingly, as she passed her hand over his hair.

The doctor left, and she still stood by the bed-side talking with the boy. She called Polly at last, and asked where Johanna's home was; and the child took her to the door to point out the house. Miss Marcel gave a look of contempt at the man lying in lazy indifference upon the grass, while his delicate child was fighting for life close by upon his poor little bed. Perhaps she did not imagine how he hated her because she belonged to the class of aristocrats that from his earliest childhood he had been taught to hate.

"It's that house where the yard's ful. o' trees an' bushes," said Polly; "that's the way mother wanted ours fixed. Jabey says he'll do it sometime. Will he live, ma'am?"

"Yes, I think your brother will live," answered Miss Marcel. "We will do what we can to help toward it." And she bent her strong, cheerful gaze upon the child.

Polly brightened at this, and had the air of one whose work must be of great importance, as she said, "I'll take care of him as Johanna does. Johanna knows every thing."

Miss Persis followed Polly's directions, and was soon inside the gate where Johanna Leib lived. A stout German woman was out among the shrubbery, and looked up as she heard the click of the gate.

Miss Marcel began telling her errand directly: "I

want to talk with you about the sick boy, and about Polly; and I want to engage some one to stay there when I must be away. I want to pay some one for it."

Mrs. Leib raised her hands and said, "We've done it for the love of Gott, we wants no pay—Johanna and I."

"But you have taken your turn, I must take mine; and I must pay when I can't serve!"

Mrs. Leib dropped her garden rake. "And you must do someding for de love of Gott too? I forget the flowers you sent dem; I b'lieve I forget dat other beobles must do for de love of de good Gott, same with Johanna and me; such tings come easy."

Miss Marcel did not talk of this "love of Gott," neither did she say that such work was easy. It was not easy to her; she was whipping her rebellious soul into service, night and day, day and night. This German woman seemed to be speaking in an unknown tongue. Should she ever be able to understand the language? Should she ever be free from a slavery that was so tireless in its demands upon her for service?

Miss Marcel was a brave woman, and so she did not give up the work that called because she could not answer all these questions. She did what she could,

and to all such must come in some way, at some time. the fullness and blessedness of perfect light.

It was all arranged at last. Johanna and her mother would still keep their watch and care, but would continue to do all for the "love of Gott;" Miss Marcel would give her time and money as seemed best.

It was late in the afternoon when Persis Marcel turned in at Gurnet's Garden. It seemed as if the spot had never seemed cooler or more inviting. The flowers looked up, and sent their odor to greet her. She heard, as she reached the house, the sounds of music, and knew that Iris was at her favorite task. She reached the porch and sat down. Somehow there was a sickening feeling at her heart's core, and as she glanced around on the lovely garden, shut away from even the quiet of Ethraton, there rushed upon her the truth, as if a thousand voices were speaking it, that even here she could not hope to get away from the calls of want and of woe.

Was it the Almighty love that was calling her through all this to a rest that should be everlasting?

There was a look of pain upon the honest, intelligent features as she looked on all the beauty about her, and listened to the soft notes from within.

"Was it not enough that I brought the child here to care for her, and really to live that she might be happy?" she asked. "But I loved Matilda as my

life; it is easy to do things for love." She did not reason further, and ask herself if it would not be easy to work for the sake of the highest love.

That night she slept but little. Strange that this one woman should be so alive to the world's woe that she could take no rest, when thousands of women who perhaps had never lifted a finger or heaved a sigh for the needy should sleep in quiet.

Miss Marcel lying upon her bed decided this: that the more we use our benevolent faculties the more we are forced to use them. All things grow with use, in the spiritual as in the physical world.

She got up at last, and looked out of the dormer window—out upon the earth, then up at the sky. The stars were keeping their tireless watch, shining in beauty through a higher light; the moon was calmly fulfilling the great law of creation. The whole heavens surely followed the highest leadings that commanded a giving forth of all they were.

Long she watched on bended knee, still looking up, until just the shadow of the deep and awful truth that underlies all life flitted across her vision, and prepared the way for the coming in of the truth itself upon her poor, asking soul.

She went, when the moon had gone from her sight, to her bed again, and fell, at last, into peaceful sleep, from which she did not waken until Sarah aroused

her, saying, "It's seven o'clock, ma'am, an' the milk's been brought, an' the toast's a-waitin', an' Miss Iris is awful worried, for she says you never oversleep, ma'am."

It was not long before Miss Persis met Iris down stairs, and when the child put up her lips for her kiss she said in a piteous way, "I was so troubled; I thought you might be sick."

"I am better now, my dear," was the only answer Miss Persis gave.

At breakfast Iris said pleadingly, "You wont go out to-day, auntie? you'll stay at home and rest? It's so warm, and I'm so lonely without you!"

Miss Marcel shook her head, answering, "I must not be looking for rest after this, my dear one, and you must not ask me to."

CHAPTER IV.

A DAY AT HIGHAM'S ISLAND.

A MONTH had passed since the scenes of the last chapter—a month of work and care for Persis Marcel, in which she had found newer and stranger experiences of the great world's want and woe than she had ever believed she could. She had thought her life in the city had shown her all; but Fisherville had brought out deeper revelations to her eyes, those eyes of the soul that must always open toward the life around her.

The sick boy for three weeks claimed her attention, and during that time she spent as many of her waking hours at the white-washed cottage as she did at Gurnet's Garden.

Such a change as was made in that little front room!

"Very nice! Very nice!" Mrs. Leib would exclaim as she noticed each improvement, and she would smooth Miss Marcel's sleeve, in an almost reverent way as she added, "The lady must do it for the love of Gott!"

And when she did not find her answer in the clear gray eyes nor around the firm mouth, she would say,

meaning the words as a question, "The lady must find it so easy because she does it for the love of Gott?"

Miss Marcel often went over to the cottage where the Leibs lived, and she saw there how thrift was having a hand-to-hand fight with poverty, and how endurance was wearing away the power of want, how cheerfulness was chasing away gloom, and how beauty, in the form of flowers and shrubs and trees, was succeeding in concealing barrenness and ugliness.

The lady once spoke to Mrs. Leib of what she noticed, and she answered in a smiling, proud way, "I comes of a family that never gives up!"

But Polly and Jabey—it seemed to them as if some good fairy had dropped from some wonderful world, and had brought her gifts to bless them.

Miss Marcel had always owned, and held strongly to, decided views with regard to inherited qualities. She had even been heard to say, "I doubt if the Lord himself could change blood tendencies." But Miss Marcel, as we know, knew nothing of the power of his Spirit upon hearts and lives, nor what miraculous things, in the eyes of weak mortals, can be done through its aid.

She was, however, very much surprised at the great improvements her help toward cleaning and brightening the house had made in even the manners of the two children at the cottage; and the question would

come, How far would it go on if the help continued? Even "daddy" felt the influence. He, too, was quite unwilling to believe that his idea of the hardness of the "aristocrats" could possibly be a mistaken one. He certainly stood in great awe of this new specimen of the class, and was not without a feeling of shame at being in a shiftless dress, in idleness, around the home.

"If you only had some grass here, and a few trees," Miss Marcel ventured one day when she passed him as he lolled upon the ground. He raised himself and looked around, while she thought she saw in his look a gleam of a purpose.

"I thought o' that a minute ago, and o' what Sary —she was my woman—wanted. Sary jest slaved herself fur looks. I used to say to Sary, 'Taint a bit o' use fur poor folks like us to try;' but she never liked it, never wanted me to say that; 'pearance was what Sary had a likin' fur. Yer see, her folks was a leetle 'bove common folks, an' away back they was aristocrats, I've heerd Sary tell many a time. I wouldn't mind, now, havin' a leetle grass and a small tree or two ef they end be made to grow; but how'll they be made to grow? That's the question."

Miss Marcel did not stop longer; the gleam that she thought she saw had gone out in the old blankness. "What more can be expected?" she was ask-

ing herself when, passing down Campaign Street, she found herself opposite the home of Mrs. Sterne.

That lady was out among the flowers, and, raising her head just in time to see the figure of her friend on the opposite side of the street, she beckoned her across.

"You've been out again on one of your charitable errands, I suppose," she said, as Miss Marcel came up. "I really must warn you that you will wear yourself out. You are looking worn now; when have you taken any rest?"

"I am home every night now, and sleep in my own bed, and that to me is a comfort. But I *am* getting a little tired, and brother Ansel has written that they are all coming down for a month very soon; yes, I do sometimes long to fly away from it all—'fly away and be at rest,'" she added wearily, not thinking from what book she was quoting, or really that she was quoting at all. The words were only the natural expression of her own pressing need.

"Why don't you take a rest? You owe it to yourself and to your work, I think—your future work," she explained, as she saw a question upon Miss Marcel's face. "Say for a day; that would help some. Why cannot we take a day together at Higham's Island? It is perfectly lovely there; we could all go; I could take Stella, and you could take Iris. Margaret and Sarah could carry the lunch baskets,

and that would give *them* a day." Miss Persis caught at the idea.

"I'm sure I should enjoy it if I could take the children—the children at Fisherville, I mean. Jabey will be strong enough, I think. It will be four weeks next Wednesday since I first went there. Yes; I'm sure he would be able next week, and I know they would both be pleased with the idea. Children do need a change once in a while."

Miss Marcel said "Good-morning," after promising to see Mrs. Sterne again very soon, and started on her way toward Gurnet's Garden. She was thinking of this pleasure-day for Iris and Polly and Jabey, thinking so earnestly that she forgot all about her own need of rest.

Then she began thinking of Iris and of her music. "It's a new joy and a new love to the poor little lamb," she said within herself, "and she's no longer lonely without me; I think the music is all to her." This thought was not a pleasant one to her; her mouth took on a pitiful expression, and her eyes filled. "But what could I expect? I cannot expect it! I must learn to work without returns. It is cowardly for you, Persis Marcel, to pine because you cannot be loved. You, plain and old, cannot expect to be paid in love! But you must work on, whatever happens; the voices will not let you stop."

She turned in at the Gurnet gate, took the longest

way around by the pansy beds, picked one of the most lovely of the flowers, and said, as she looked into its face, "My dear little heart's-ease, I'll take my lesson from you—my lesson for living; I'll do my best, and die with no one to give me love in return. Why should I expect it?" But glancing down at the little blossom again, that looked with almost human eyes up to hers, she caught at something that the flower face would seem to say, and she whispered, "There must be something more—even for me; some deeper meaning to life and work, something back of all this care and toil."

She went slowly into the house and found Iris sobbing as she sat back in the invalid's chair. She rushed forward and folded the child in her arms, saying, "What is it, my precious one? Have you been sad and lonely without me?"

"I've been thinking, auntie, about you. You don't seem to get any joy, but seem to get every body's pain, and I can't help you, and I—I shouldn't really care to live if—if there wasn't to be a joy coming some time. It seems so dreadful not to have a joy. I've been wondering how it is with other people. Some people are very full of joy, I think; at least I've read of such ones." She looked pleadingly at her aunt to find an answer.

Miss Marcel said at last, slowly, "Yes; perhaps

there are such people, but I can't think they feel the woe of the world as they should. I don't see how one can be happy when one really feels the woe of others."

An expression of despair began to settle upon the young face, and the small head bowed under the weight of the sorrow that seemed a fate.

"What's the use in living, then, auntie?" she cried, and held out her wasted arms as if to catch some invisible support to which her tired self might cling.

"Life is given to us, Iris," answered Miss Persis, with a steady voice and a firm manner. "Life is given to us; we cannot throw it away, we cannot be cowards! We must be brave. It is noble to do our part without flinching, without expecting pay, even the blessed pay of joy!"

Iris dried her tears and took her lesson as a young Indian might whom his father was teaching to be a brave. She tried to accept her aunt's teaching of endurance without a hope, even at last, of a peace—tried to believe that life could be lived without a thought of joy.

Did Miss Marcel believe all this herself?

That night, as Iris lifted her face for a parting kiss, she said timidly, "Auntie, I am going to help you! Don't tell me I must not; the music is not all; it is only for myself. I think I cannot live all by myself; I want to help these poor, sorrowful people that the world is full of."

Miss Persis shook her head and replied, "Say no more about it to-night, little one; some other time we will talk of it."

The next morning was very warm; toward noon Miss Persis, coming from the garden, said, "I believe we shall have a shower before the day is over. It will be a hard one if we do, but we need it so much!"

Her words were a real prophecy, for before an hour had passed the sky became overcast and the thunder threatened with a heavy voice in the distance. Louder and heavier it sounded, and at last the tempest was upon them. The rain fell in great dashes, the voices of the storm grew terrible.

Iris sat cowering in a corner of the parlor. Her aunt sat near, silently gazing toward the window with the open shutters. Louder and fiercer the storm elements grew, beating and driving and battling each other in their fury. A little low cry of fear came from the corner where the cripple lay. Miss Marcel went toward her. "Don't be afraid, my child," she whispered. "Only think of the blessing the rain will bring to thousands." The girl was soothed under the influence of her firm words and loving touch, and so they both waited for what might come after the storm.

But it did not yield readily; it had been deprived of its rights—this storm king—too long to resist the

temptation of an opportunity to show that it still held its power.

It was fully two hours before the first glint of the sun was seen. Miss Persis, looking out, cried with a tone of gladness, "O, Iris, there's a rainbow! I will roll your chair to the porch; I want you to see it, to see the beauty that can come after the storm."

The three gathered on the porch — Miss Persis, Iris, and Sarah. The rain had ceased; a few drops were falling upon the trumpet creeper that clung to its trellis in a limp way; out beyond the door-way the flowers lay, as if crushed and lifeless. "Poor blossoms!" said Iris.

"But they will rise, to be more beautiful than ever," answered Miss Persis hopefully; "and—don't you see? above all there is the rainbow. That ought to show us that beauty and life and peace must come after the storm."

"And joy too, auntie? Does the rainbow mean joy too?"

Miss Marcel looked into the grave face lifted to hers. She caught the pleading in the look, and understood what the child would really ask, and in that moment, too, she caught at the deeper philosophy in the great storm lesson, and the glimmering of the sun of joy visited her storm-rent soul.

* * * * *

There was throughout Ethraton a cry of mingled hope and joy after the passage of the storm. It was a cry in which the rich and the poor could join, for they had been equally blessed. The clean, well-kept grounds felt it, and the small yards at Fisherville took it thankfully in.

"If I'd er had some grass seed in 'twould er been kinder nice, arter all," said "daddy," as he looked across at his neighbor's grass, that seemed to be rejoicing in the refreshing; "'taint no use this here year; howsomever, we'll have it next, and we might go over to the island—over to Higham's—an' git a tree or tew, an' git 'em sot out by next year."

"O, daddy," cried Jabey, "why can't we go this week! 'Twould be so nice over there, too, and then we could have the trees ready fur another rain."

"Yer don't understand, Jabe, nothin' about trees; 'taint no use till another year."

But that very day Miss Marcel came around to the cottage and asked Jabey and Polly to go to Higham's Island for a day. "An' Johanna too?" asked Polly.

"Yes; Johanna too, if she likes," answered Miss Marcel.

"You will meet us at the wharf at nine o'clock, precisely; will you not? We shall take the boat from there."

A day at Higham's Island was, in the imagination of the young people of Ethraton, a rare treat, not only for the natural beauties of the place but that "Granny Bates," as she was called, who lived there, was always ready to talk of the wonderful things she knew and of the things she had heard of the region around.

She knew who first lived in the oldest house, and all about the visit of the "Britishers" to Ethraton, and all about the privateer *General Arnold* dragging her anchors in a gale, and how the crew—a greater part—were frozen to death, and what the brave women of the Revolution days did, even to refusing a hen to the red-coats.

She had also a great many curiosities that her husband, now dead, had brought from other countries, when he went out as captain. Altogether there could not have been a place more interesting to visit, nor an old lady more ready to give them pleasure.

"Granny Bates" had a great-grandson living with her, who was about fifteen years old, and he had also a fund of stories from which he was always ready to draw.

His father had been a fisherman, and had been drowned several years before in a storm. His mother had died a few months afterward, from grief, the people said.

The boy's name was Neptune, Neptune Smith, but every body knew him by the name of "Nep," and declared him to be the very image of his father, loving the sea just as much and likely to die in its bed.

Nep carried on quite a business in fish, supplying some of the families who had known his father, and his fish were always of the best quality; always coming in good order, lying upon a cloth of homespun linen in their long narrow basket. The housewives of Ethraton who were so happy as to have made a fish engagement with Nep found a certain delight in raising the cool linen that covered the dead beauties, and were proud to tell a less fortunate neighbor, "I take *my* fish of Neptune Smith; I will ask him if it is possible to supply you, but I fear there will be no use; I think he has all the customers he can attend to at present." So it will be seen that Neptune Smith had become in a way a great necessity to Ethraton.

He knew it; and the thought made him not only very happy but also very anxious to do his best, and so continue to be needed at Ethraton.

At the appointed time Jabey and Polly, with Johanna, met the ladies, with Iris and Stella, and the housemaids, who carried the baskets.

Polly had never been upon the water before, and her little first shriek of terror when the boat started,

and her pale face afterward when the boat tipped to one side, quite mortified Jabey, who, although he had never himself been much of a sailor, had no fear, and did not want the others to notice that Polly was a bit afraid.

"The captain 'll take care o' us, Polly; " he whispered. "We needn't be afeard when the captain's got hold o' things; he jest knows how to turn and twist 'er any way; now look, Polly!"

And the child, looking into the face of the man who guided the boat, saw something that gave her little heart courage, for it told her that the captain would take care of the boat.

"There's a sail-boat down to the cove, Nep, I raly believe," said old Grandmother Bates to her great-grandson. "There's people landed too. It's well I made that batch o' doughnuts and the apple-tarts; an' couldn't you spare a mess o' two o' fish? leastways if they should come an' ask for a dinner?"

Nep shook his head.

"What do you say, sonny?" the old lady screamed.

Nep didn't like to be called sonny; he felt that a more manly name fitted him, now that he had grown to be a fish dealer. There was a little show of anger in his manner as he screamed in return, "I ain't going to break my promises to my customers for even the queen, if she should come."

"But I'm sure you could spare a fry, sonny," the old lady persisted.

Nep did not deign to answer this time, but walked coolly out of the house and went off to a clump of bushes where without being seen, he could see the people who had arrived.

"Laws o' me!" he said, under his breath. "They're quality people; I know by their looks. O, my! there's a lame girl, and my, there's a perfect beauty! the one with the shining hair."

When he had taken a long look at the party, as they came nearer, he said to himself, "I'll get my fish over to town and come right back, and perhaps I shall get a chance to speak to them."

He ran back to the cottage and said to his grandmother, who had drawn the chintz curtains of the best room so that she could take a good look out, "I am going to put my fish up and go right over with them, an' I'll be back by one o'clock, square."

The old lady bustled about and brought the fresh towels from the old chest, and Nep began to lay the fish in the basket. The old lady's eyes fastened themselves upon two of the biggest ones, and she said in a kind of helpless tone, "Whatever should I do, Neptune, if the visitors should come for a dinner, and not a speck of fish in the house!"

"I didn't promise them fish, granny!" was the

boy's answer, that seemed not a very respectful one; but indeed Nep had no thought of being disrespectful. He was stern in his sense of right, and nothing could seem to have any effect with him against a promise.

"You're jest like yer poor father, Neptune, for all the world. He most likely wouldn't have been drownded ef he hadn't been so bent on keepin' a promise. He went right against signs, an' all his own experience, an' agin' yonr mother's dream, an' all jest to get the fish he'd promised."

"It shows he was brave; folks all say he was, too," said Nep, as he lifted his fish and passed out of the cottage.

"O, my!" he said again, as he passed the party. "Such eyes, and such a face, and such hair; I never did see any thing to beat it!"

He hurried down to the wharf in time to see the man who had brought the people over; he was sitting on a rock above the water, and looking off to the ledge beyond that held the light-house.

He turned as he heard approaching steps, and seeing that it was Neptune Smith, said: "So you're off, my boy. This is a pleasant spot where yon live—this island. I knew yonr father. I couldn't have thonght once he would have gone before me. We cruised a great deal together, he and I; he was a merry,

great-hearted man, and he used to say that when he died he hoped they'd bury him in the sea. He found his grave there after all, for the sea took his wish to heart and she buried him herself.

"It's just ten years, come the twenty-first of next month, since he went away from here; it was just the beginning of the line-storm, and we've never had one like it since; but it's got to come one of these years. The old Storm King takes his rights. He may put it off; but I've always noticed he manages to get them all in the end. It may not be this year, nor next; but we shall have another one of these years; mark my words.

"And, my boy, you have your father's grit, and so I say don't tempt the sea too much. Don't fly in the face of signs even for a promise." Nep was standing, having set his basket down at his feet, and he was growing impatient, much as he loved to hear about his father, to get a chance to ask about the party that had just passed up toward the grove.

"They are people from Campaign Street, at least a part of them. The tall woman, with a kind of homely face, owns the cripple, I think. I heard the poor little thing call her 'aunt,' and, from what I heard, I think she came from Gurnet's Garden; and the lady with the beauty—such a beauty she is, too!—is Mrs. Sterne. She lives in a beautiful place, and

keeps a gardener and all that. The other two, the boy and the girl, those they must have taken up for charity's sake, for they're a different set entirely. I know their father, a shiftless, good-for-nothing creature, who sent his wife to her grave just through shiftlessness. That German girl belongs to a mother who's a wonder over in Fisherville for her forehandedness." But Nep could not stay to hear more; he was more anxious than ever to get back in time to see the new-comers; so he took up his basket, and, nodding "Good-by," hurried away.

Such pulls at the oar as he gave that morning! The boat shot away, and when he landed on the Ethraton shore he said, "I've made good time to-day."

He had delivered his fish, and was soon back at the wharf again. He had something new to think of as he rowed back; something had happened that had come with a strange delight to him. A lady living upon Campaign Street had said to him, "Mrs. Sterne, who lives two blocks away, wished me to ask you to leave fish twice a week at her house."

He could hardly believe he heard aright; he would speak to her about it when he got back to the island, and then—and then?

Ever since Nep was old enough to understand pictures he had held a kind of worship for beauty. His

father had felt the same toward beautiful faces, and when he married the pretty daughter of an old sea captain he felt that he owned the loveliest wife in the world.

It was very true that she had a fair, sweet face, and that her beauty held its own through her married years, which, however, were few; and she had no heart to live after her strong, brave, loving husband passed from her, who, as the people around said, "fairly breathed for her." Nep often looked at his mother's picture and listened to the stories of "Granny Bates" with regard to her beauty.

He thought that such a brave man as his father deserved the most beautiful woman in the world, and he thought, too, it must be a fine thing to have the opportunity of working and daring and living for such a wife. He decided, also, that he would himself be willing to die for one like his mother, although he really believed another so beautiful and sweet could never be found.

But the vision of a few hours before had unsettled him with regard to this last belief, and a great joy and surprise and hope came into his young soul, and took the form of something that he could not explain, and certainly would not if he could. But of one thing he felt sure—he might yet have a chance to be brave for some one besides "granny" and the fish

customers. He brought his boat up to its place upon the sands, fastened it, and took his way up to the cottage with quick, firm strides, that seemed, each one, to echo the voice of hope and resolve that was telling his young soul of something to come.

He went into the cottage yard through the back gate; he opened the door carefully; his grandmother was not there. He stood quite still, listening to voices that came from the best room. His grandmother was inviting some one to take lunch in the cottage. Then he listened more closely to other words, and knew it was the party he had seen as he went away with his fish.

By and by Mrs. Bates went out into the kitchen—to find Neptune sitting close to the best room door.

"Why, sonny, whatever has happened that you've got home so soon? You're sooner by two hours than common; and the folks we saw land have come, and there aint a bite o' fish to offer; and one o' the ladies wants you to carry her fish twice a week; and, well, they're real quality, for the most part; and there's a perfect beauty 'mong 'em, and there's a cripple, too. I want you to go in and talk about the fish the lady wants while I put on my bombazine."

Never did Nep open the door of the best room with a more trembling hand than at this time. He sank into the nearest chair, and his young face was

covered with blushes. Mrs. Sterne noticed his embarrassment, and kindly came to his rescue.

She spoke of the fishing, and of what she had heard of the island, and how it had a history connected with the Revolution, and of his grandmother's knowledge of the places around, until he began to forget all about himself and to be able to look the lady in the face and to answer her questions without stammering. Nep began even to be astonished himself with the way he got on with "quality people."

But his grandmother soon came back dressed in her best bombazine, which she kept for occasions like this, that did not come to her oftener than twice a year. To be sure, there were plenty of visitors in summer, but "quality people" did not often come to the cottage to spread their lunch.

Granny Bates did not need a great deal of urging to tell of the wonderful past of the island. She was soon launched on the full tide of talk, and the children were quite delighted when she began her stories of the Revolution. Jabey clapped his hands when she came to tell of the brave boy who said to a British officer, "I'm going to fight the British when I get a little older, and I'll never give in to them! They took my father away from us, and I mean to pay them back!"

But when Neptune promised to take them over to

the light-house, then the children began to realize what the day was bringing to them.

Iris would stay at the cottage, and Mrs. Sterne also decided to remain while the others went to the light-house ledge.

"You'd better have your lunch first," said Granny Bates. To this the ladies agreed, and the baskets were brought out, and while Mrs. Bates made the coffee Margaret and Sarah set the two old-fashioned round tables whose legs ended with the lion's claws.

They all sat down; and the old lady told of other gatherings around the tables in days that were so long past that they seemed even to her almost a dream.

At last she began telling of Neptune's father, and of his brave, kind heart, and of his death.

Neptune looked up, to see the eyes of Stella cast upon him with a look that did not make him ashamed, but really gave him a fresh purpose to be brave like his father.

Perhaps this very purpose might have had something to do with the way in which he handled the oars as he rowed the party to the island.

"Let her go to the spare bed, the poor dear child!" said Granny Bates to Mrs. Sterne, as she noticed the tired look upon the face of Iris.

And when the girl, in answer to a question of Mrs.

Sterne, admitted that she was tired, the old lady led the way across the little hall to another front room, in which was a bed, clean and cool looking, covered with a patch-work quilt. The pillow-cases were of homespun linen. "My own make," said Granny. "They're sixty years old—them slips be—they belonged to my setting-out. I don't use 'em much. I bleach 'em every year, and put 'em on the pillows again. I'm savin' 'em to lay my gray head on for the last time," she said, as Iris laid her face close to the cool linen. "It wont be long now, I'm thinking; I'm nigh eighty now; though sometimes I think it must all be a dream, and that it was only yesterday that I put the small stitches in 'em with such a happy heart, thinkin' of my weddin' day, and never thought then that I could ever be old. But I'm ready, thank God! and I'm longing to meet John; he was my husband, and he went away from me when he was still young. I sometimes am a little bit troubled about that. I wonder how it'll all be in another world—about growing old, I mean.

"You can't think how it's troubled me. I couldn't jest bear to have John turn away from me because I've changed; he wouldn't see the same Melissa that he left when we were both young." And the old lady gave an asking look toward Mrs. Sterne that was almost pitiful.

With moist eyes the lady repeated in a sweet, tender voice, "'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for those that love him.'" After a panse she went on—"There will be grand surprises for us, Mrs. Bates, I think; it may be a youthful form where there was age; it may be beauty where there was deformity. We cannot tell now, but of one thing I am sure, heaven will be to all who gain it a blessed satisfaction." And then she whispered softly, with shining eyes, "I am, myself, expecting every thing from heaven."

Iris heard all, and a strange thrill went through her as she thought of the lady's words, "It may be beauty where there was deformity." Would she then have her life yearning answered? Would she have a beautiful form in the life to come? Then came the question, Shall I ever get to heaven?

Long she lay with her eyes closed, thinking, while Mrs. Sterne and Granny Bates talked. At last she heard her own name mentioned and she could not help listening.

"Whatever did yon say that poor little cripple's name was?" asked Granny.

"Iris," was answered by the other.

"Wal, its jest my 'pinion that she ain't long to live—there's signs of it in her eyes; I know the signs

pretty well. I had a little sister who went years ago, and she had jest that look."

Iris hardly breathed as she listened awe-struck to their words.

"Well," came the calm answer from Mrs. Sterne, "It cannot really signify whether we go early or late; it is only how we go, and whether we sow seeds of joy here." The two passed out then, and she was left alone to think it all over and to feel a new conflict in her soul, in which fear and wonder and desire took their part.

At last she went off to sleep, and dreamed that she was taken to another land where there were gardens and flowers and music. And, all at once, she looked down upon herself and saw that her form was straight and beautiful; but that did not seem to make her perfectly happy, as she had always thought it would. She was looking with tearful eyes toward the keeper of the garden, when he asked, "Did you sow any seeds of joy on the earth?"

She was obliged to say "No."

"There is the trouble," answered the keeper; "for every seed of joy sown on the earth a thousand flowers spring up for the sower in my garden here."

She awoke with a little scream, to find her Aunt Persis standing over her with an anxious face.

She told her aunt nothing of her thoughts or of

her dream then, but rose and took her crutches and followed Miss Marcel out to the best room.

Neptune was telling his grandmother something that the light-house keeper had told Jabey about his mother's grandfather, who was a great man when living.

"Yes," said Granny, "I've heard of him; and I raly believe he was a descendant of the one who said when the 'Dark Day' came and they—the first settlers—were holdin' some sort of a State meetin', and were awful frightened, thinkin' the judgment had come, he said—and he must 'a' been awful brave to say it when the darkness was coming down—'Bring lights! We will be found in the way of our duty.'

"I've jest thought," continued the old lady, "that it would be so much pleasanter to have the judgment come and take us all at once, while we live; for I do want Neptune to go when I do. I don't believe he could very well get on without me."

Miss Persis, looking at Jabey, was quite astonished, for a delightful wonder had come to his face, and had seemed to make another boy of him. It all came of what he had learned of his ancestors, and sent a hope to thrill him through and through—a hope that some day he might become a real man in the world.

They rowed home in the twilight, and at the last

Miss Marcel said to Neptune, "I want you to come often to Gurnet's Garden, and some time, I hope, you will bring your grandmother."

He watched the boat out of sight, and then sat upon the beach looking sea-ward until the twilight was passing into the night. Then he slowly took his way back to the cottage, where his grandmother was waiting for him.

CHAPTER V.

A NEW CHARGE.

THE next day Mr. Ansel Marcel took an early train from the city out to Ethraton. He had important business to transact, and felt there was no time to lose in perfecting certain plans.

He had missed his sister Persis sadly since her change of home; for he had been long accustomed to go to her for advice and sympathy.

He arrived at Gurnet's Garden at noon, and as he went along the walk toward the house he thought, "It is no wonder Persis finds home and happiness here;" and his poor tired nature yearned for a resting-place like it.

Miss Marcel saw him in time to meet him at the porch.

"I'm so glad you came, brother," she said; "but where are the children?"

"I'll tell you soon," he answered. And wiped the perspiration from his face.

After dinner, when the two sat together alone, he said, "I've come to you, Persis, about the children; I must take my wife to Europe."

"And you must leave the children with me, I suppose," Miss Marcel replied with a little tone of dread in her voice.

Her brother noticed it, and a troubled look came into his eyes as he answered, "Yes; to come directly to the matter, that was what I was going to ask, but since I have come here, Persis, to your home, it has seemed cruel that you cannot be allowed a resting-place, and I believe, after all, I must not ask it."

"But I have not found a resting-place, Ansel. The poor and the sorrowing are here also. I have made up my mind there can be no resting-place for me in this world. I must keep on doing and bearing burdens for others; the voices will never let me rest, Ansel."

"Are you doing the old missionary work here, too, Persis? I thought all were living in comfort here. I thought you must have found a rest. Well, then, I surely shall not ask my favor; I must look elsewhere."

"But you *shall* ask the favor!" she answered decidedly. "Do you think I am going to see those dear children put among strangers? No, indeed! Send them to me. I am not so hard-hearted and selfish as I might seem."

"But it will be for a year, Persis, and a year is a long time for such a care."

"I shall expect you to send them," was her answer.

So the rest of the week Miss Persis was very busy getting two rooms in order for the expected charge. So occupied was she that she had no time to look after Polly and Jabey, and had not even an hour when she felt free to go down to the white-washed cottage to see how Johanna was getting on with her lessons in house-keeping to Polly, or whether the child had hemmed the skirt of the calico dress she had given her.

It was on the last day of the week when Miss Persis, having made every thing ready for Harry and Edith, went out to one of the arbors to have an hour by herself before taking up the new care; but, glancing down to the gate-way of the garden, she saw "daddy." She could not mistake the shiftless figure nor the weak face. He was looking wistfully in.

At first she thought she would not give any sign of recognition, but the voices would not allow this. They all cried, "Go and speak to him!" and she went forward.

"My little gal, Polly, told how the posies grew here, an' how the path kinder curly-kewed roun', an' how yer had little bits o' trees, an' the grass was all green, an' cut short; an' I thought I'd come an' look at it, an' see ef 'twas like it war when ole Gurnet's

grandam lived here, an' Sary and I cum together an' sot on the benches an' heard the music. Sary used to say her grandmother used to cum when Gurnet hisself kept this garding. Sary had sich a notion fur purty things, and the two young uns are jest like 'er! I've been a-thinkin' we might fix up by another year, bein' as how the mill works is goin' to begin. I've made up my mind to keep stiddy at the mill-work this time, an' fix up things a bit."

This was a part of Miss Persis's work. The voices called her to it! She must stand and speak encouraging words to "daddy!" must witness the weakness of a child where there should be a man's purpose! And yet as this woman stood there, feeling as if she were fated to be cheated out of all thoulgt of a rest, there came, with the rising will to follow exactly the leading of the voices, a something that, if it were not exactly a martyr's peace, was the exaltation of a great soul, willing to sacrifice, that is almost sublime.

Long she talked with "daddy," stooping to all that interested him, and encouraging his faint desires to reach something better than he had known before.

It was time for the train from the city that should bring her brother with his children, when she left the garden gate and took the path to the summer-house, that she might think—not rest; think how she could best help "daddy."

When the man turned to take his way out of the garden he touched a grizzled lock and bowed, saying, "I'm kinder sot up, ma'am, with what you've told me. I cudn't o' thought any body but Sary cud o' b'leved I cud do any thing of any 'count; Sary used to say I cud, an' p'r'aps she b'leved it, tho' she had hard work tryin' to keep up, Sary had." He stopped a minute, then came back and asked falteringly: "Some o' the missioner people used ter say that folks that went ter heaven knew jest what was a-goin' on down here. Now ef I thought Sary knew I might hev a heart to try an' make up fur some things; might try to help the young uns, you know. Sary, I know, would think I'd made it all right ef I helped them to git on a little, as Sary used ter want to herself, but cudn't, you see;" and here his voice grew husky, and he paused to wipe his eyes with his ragged sleeve. "I didn't help Sary much, an', now I think on't, I must o' been awful discouragin' to Sary."

Miss Persis's eyes glistened; she began to have a strange, tender interest in this shiftless man. She said decidedly, and yet with a compassion in her voice, "I think your wife will know if you try to help your children, and perhaps all the angels will know too."

"Daddy" seemed then almost like another being.

"Do your best," the woman continued, "and I will do what I can for you."

This last talk was what Miss Persis had on her mind to think about as she went to her shady seat, where she might be alone. The man whom she had despised—the man who had seemed not to deserve the name—had astonished her by showing that he, even he, had, after all, a germ of a better purpose that was springing toward the light. Her theories and decisions with regard to inherited good stood face to face with this newly-discovered fact. Then came the old question again, like a specter, to rob her even of a thought of rest, "What things might become possible with the proper sacrifice and labor?" There could be no better answer than this, "All things are possible with God."

She roused herself at last at the sound of carriage-wheels, and, looking again toward the gate, saw her brother, with Harry and Edith. She met them at the gate, and gave them such a warm, motherly greeting that the two felt that they had found their home again.

"How fast Harry is growing to look like you, Ansel," said Miss Persis, "and Edith looks more and more like her mother."

That night, as Miss Marcel talked with her brother, a strange tenderness was in her soul for him, and she said, with a tremor in her voice, "Somehow, Ansel, it seems as if this must be our last talk. I cannot bear the thought of your going."

He laughed lightly, too lightly, Miss Persis thought, to have it real, and said, "You are a little nervous, Persis. A year will soon pass—nothing lasts long in this world, Persis."

"But it's the wide waters, Ansel," replied his sister; "the wide, cruel waters, they make the separation seem so dreadful."

"I feel a little more reconciled, Persis, and this is what I wanted to tell you of, especially to-night, although I could wish the story might be different in some particulars. I believe, Persis, to come directly to the fact, I believe I have a hold upon a better life. It may seem late to begin, and it may to you seem a little cowardly, the way I came to be led—but God knows I mean to follow my leadings bravely now. I'll tell you, Persis, I was brought to it through disappointment in my hopes and plans for this life. If all had gone as I wished as regards this life I might perhaps have kept on. I shall have to leave that now. I can only look forward, only act as a higher voice calls me."

"And he, too, is following a voice," thought Miss Persis.

There was a silence for many minutes; and then the brother said in a low tone, "Dear sister, I could not go until I had told you this and had asked the highest favor of you. I know I need not ask you to

love my children, to eare for them faithfully, to be a mother to them. I want to ask if you will teach them to follow this higher voiee!"

Miss Persis had bent her head and was sobbing. Never since she was a child had she before any mortal given herself up to sueh a real fit of weeping. Ansel let the tears have their way. As he sat and witnessed these signs of emotion it brought back the days when they had their griefs together and were not ashamed to tell eaeh other their child woes.

When the tears were spent they talked of the old happy past and of their early love for each other; of their lost sister Matilda; of her happy death; bnt nothing was said more of the brother's wish—his best wish for his children.

The parting the next day was a sad one. Harry and Edith elung to their father, and it was harder than this father had supposed it would be to give his last embraee to them.

At the very last, just outside the gate, he had elasped his sister's hand and had whispered, "You did not promise me, Persis, what I asked for my children; but I shall trust that the voice that I believe is now leading you will, through you, lead my children on to the Highest."

The earriage passed down Campaign Street, while Miss Persis followed the path to her old thinking-

place before she went back to take up life for those who must in future depend upon her.

It was fully an hour before she returned to the house. When she entered Iris was seated at the piano, playing a little air and singing in a sweet, pathetic tone something about the coming of autumn, with its faded roses and dead leaves. Harry stood with the portfolio opened before him, and had taken out the views of Europe, and was whistling a merry tune, while Edith was standing upon a chair, talking playfully to the canary, which seemed to be almost bursting with a melody it was trying to express.

Miss Marcel stood for a minute looking upon this scene. It was only for a minute for Harry and Edith rushed forward, saying, "We are so sorry for you, auntie, but papa will be back soon, you know." And Iris turned in her seat and cast a look of silent pity upon her aunt's tear-marked face.

"So their grief is nothing!" Miss Persis said within herself; "only the grief of children! It is well for them it is so."

Harry was a tall, handsome boy, fifteen years of age; he was overflowing with vitality, and his chief desire seemed to be to have something happen. He had a generous, kindly nature, and more and more Miss Persis had reason to say, "He's just as his father was at his age."

Edith was quite a beauty, she had her mother's blue eyes, lovely complexion, and regular features; and Miss Persis noted with pain that she had much of her mother's selfish nature also.

"Here will lie my cross," the woman decided; "it will be so hard to love her as I should, to be lenient, as these traits, so well developed, continue to strengthen."

But in face of this prospect she had no thought of shirking her duty; no thought of being faithless to her promise; she could have gone to the stake for duty alone; duty even without love.

"I have a houseful now," she said cheerfully to a neighbor, who spoke to her of her new charge. "We ought to be a happy family."

She made all her plans with this idea of happiness in view, happiness for her children, as she called them.

She began the very next day after their arrival to show them Ethraton—its long shaded streets, its parks, its old Revolutionary relics, and the park monument to one of its heroes. Harry was quite delighted, and made up his mind that it would be a grand thing to live in a place where brave people of the old fighting days had walked, and fought, and died.

He decided, too, that he would read every thing he could get that told of these old forefather days.

Miss Persis, in her particular care to interest Harry,

did not neglect Edith. She took her around to the home of Mrs. Sterne, and Stella tried her best to interest the little stranger.

Miss Marcel remembered the introduction there of her poor, crippled Iris; and a pang went through her soul for this child of her love, for, instead of a start of surprise and horror upon Stella's face, she saw that the lady gave glances of admiration toward the well-formed, fair-faced Edith.

Iris, alone that afternoon, suffered; and she thought, "Stella has begun to love me, I think, just a little, has begun to forget that I am a cripple, and now when she sees such a beauty as Edith is she'll despise me again." Then leaning back upon her cushion she sobbed as if her poor little heaving soul would break with its pain.

A feeling of jealousy came to her, and she felt for one dreadful half-hour that she almost hated this cousin, that she never could bear to see her handsome face each day, never could endure to see her walking so straight and running so lightly, and hearing her Aunt Persis speaking to her fondly.

But the truth was borne back upon her helpless child-soul, 'You must bear it somehow."

Her Aunt Persis, coming back with the two, whose flushed, happy faces, told of a delightful afternoon, saw the signs of this new grief upon the face of her

darling; and, wheeling the chair in which she lay into her own room, she whispered, as if love were defying duty, "My poor little lamb! Now we will have an hour together! What is it, my precious one? What has been troubling you?"

Then the crippled Iris stretched out her arms—as was her manner when her sorrow was more than she could bear alone—stretched them toward Miss Persis in a helpless way, and in a plaintive voice cried, "O! I want so much love! I want more than any body in the world can give."

Miss Persis heard it, and what would she not have been willing to give could she have proved to the asking soul that she was sufficient for all its needs?

CHAPTER VI.

NEPTUNE SMITH'S PLAN.

THE October days had set in; the mills had been running for a month at Ethraton, and there seemed an outlook of prosperity for the poor, including the family at the white-washed cottage.

It was upon one of these days that seem perfect, when we would neither add to nor take from nature if we could, the sights and sounds and odors seeming just what are best, that Neptune drew his boat to land and sat down in a strange state of excitement. He had just returned from a fish-selling trip. He had been to the home of Mrs. Sterne. He had also been to Gurnet's Garden. On the whole it had been a remarkable experience to him. "I'll go up to the hiding-place," he whispered to himself, after he had sat upon the rock above the sands for a few minutes. "I can't see a person! I don't want a person to see me, either, when I'm thinking about it." So he went up higher, to the thinking-place, and, thus hidden amid the bushes, he went over, all to himself, the events of the day; and we will give them just as they had happened.

"Whatever be you fixin' up so fine for, sonny?" asked his grandmother, as he put on the very best clothes he owned and brushed his hair with unusual pains.

"It's time I fixed up a little, I think," answered Neptune, evasively.

"Be you a-goin' to that rich woman's to sell fish to-day?" she went on, looking at him sharply.

"They're all rich, I think," answered Neptune, as he put on his only neck-tie—a blue one that he had bought the last time he was at Ethraton.

The old lady said no more, and Neptune, looking back as he took up his basket, said in a tender tone, "Don't be worried, grandmother, if I don't get back early. I've a great many places this time to go to, and I may stay late."

His grandmother went to the window to look after him, as she always did as he started, and, coming back when he was lost to her view, she sat down in the cushioned high-backed rocker, crossed her hands, and said to herself, "He's just like his father. Something'll be sure to happen to him!" Then she put up a prayer, "O Lord, let me live long enough to see Neptune in his twenties! For whatever would the boy do without me? If we could o' been 'lowed to go together it would have been so beautiful!"

As the old lady was putting up this petition Nep-

tune was untying his boat and thinking of the vast possibilities of the long life which he believed stretched out before him; thinking in a vague, boy way, to be sure, but there seemed much of the man about him, if one noticed the resolution in his face and manner. He went his regular fish rounds, reserving Gurnet's Garden and the Sterne house on Campaign Street until the last.

It was noon when he went up the back steps to the Gurnet Garden house and knocked at the door. He heard the voice of a boy inside, "It's only that fish boy, aunt."

His cheek flushed. "Only that fish boy!" For a minute he felt he could not stay, but must turn and run away. But Miss Persis herself came to the door and greeted him so cordially that he forgot his shame and indignation, and, recovering his resolution, uncovered the basket and said, "I have brought the fish you ordered."

"I am very glad," she answered; then, turning to Sarah, she said, "Take this basket and attend to the fish," then to him, "I have wondered where you were—why you did not come to see us when we expected you—we enjoyed the day so much at your house on the island. Come right in here," she went on, and there seemed nothing left to him but to follow.

She led him into the parlor. Then, surely, he would have turned back if he could have done so without seeming rude, for there sat Harry and Edith and Iris.

Iris held out her hand to him and welcomed him warmly, and this gave him a little time to get ready for what must come.

"This is my niece, Edith," Miss Persis said, "and this is her brother Harry."

Both came forward as if they had been used to meeting people politely all their lives. But how Neptune did shrink from Harry. He seemed still to hear the words, "It's only that fish boy!" and he thought he felt them even in the touch of the smooth white hand that held his own coarse brown one. At that moment he was conscious of every threadbare part of his clothes, and he nervously clutched the patch in his sleeve.

Miss Persis saw all this and kindly provided for Neptune a refuge. She knew what his winning points were, and she determined that he should win in the eyes of Harry and Edith. So she drew a chair close to his and said, "I have wanted to hear more of the old days ever since I was over at your island, and there were some things that your grandmother touched upon that I should be very glad to hear the particulars of." Then she began asking of

brave deeds done during the Revolution, done by Neptune's own relatives. Nep forgot all about himself—forgot all about his old clothes and the basket of fish he had brought—and began telling what he had heard of the old times, and the old deeds, in a proud, happy way. He spoke with a clear, rich voice, and his eyes grew bright, and his whole face shone with his enthusiasm.

Harry and Edith listened, and Harry was quite astonished at what the "fish boy" told. He even had a strange feeling of envy take possession of him. He felt it was worth every thing to have such grandparents, and to be able to tell of such brave things they had done. He was sure he would himself have been willing to exchange places with Neptune and become a fish boy if he could be able to give the same story.

Miss Persis kept him engaged until Sarah came to say that the dinner was ready, and then the lady said, "We will hear the rest at dinner, if you please."

Neptune blushed; he had not thought of such a thing; but Miss Persis had given him to understand that he was doing them all a favor, and so he followed out to the dining-room. Harry himself began to ask questions at last, and, altogether, they had an interesting, happy time of it.

When at last Neptune said he must go Miss Persis

took his hand and said, warmly, "I hope you will give us a like pleasure soon."

Harry followed him down to the gate and said, "If I were you I should want to do something great myself; I should never be willing to let all those old fellows away back have all the glory! But I suppose there isn't much use in trying, for, after all, what can any one do in these days, when there's nothing great going on about us?"

Neptune had shaken his head as if he were in doubt, and yet Harry's words, as well as those of Miss Persis, had not dropped lightly upon his waiting soul. He went down Campaign Street with a springing step, and whispered to himself, "Who can tell what may come to me—who can tell?"

He was prepared, in one sense, for what waited for him at Mrs. Sterne's, and yet he was not quite prepared to receive calmly her cordial greeting.

She urged him to come in; she took him also into the "best room," showed him pictures, and then asked, "Do you like music?" And when he answered that he did, she took him into the room where Stella was playing, and then it seemed as if there could hardly be a higher honor in life for him.

Stella smiled upon him; she would smile upon a dog, he thought; she could not help it. But nevertheless he treasured that smile as something priceless.

She played for him, and when she had finished she turned to him and said, "That was the Brook Song!"

Mrs. Sterne after a little silence said: "As you have lived all your life by the sea you must have heard better music than we can give you."

Nep gave a questioning, and at the same time a grateful look to the lady, as he thought, "She must know about the sea too!"

"Did you ever listen to its music and wonder what it all meant?" she asked.

"Yes, ma'am," he answered, a little embarrassed, as if he hesitated to tell some of his best secrets. "I've thought—I've thought, ma'am—that it was telling us a great deal that we can't exactly understand."

Mrs. Sterne looked wonderingly at this fish boy, and at last said in a sweet, solemn way, "Yes; there are voices calling to us from the sea, and from all nature, that we do not really understand."

Then she began in a cheerful way to talk with him of life upon the island, and to ask him about what he had learned of his ancestors, and at the end she said, "And you must make your mark in the world; I suppose you have not thought of any plan for your after life?"

Both Mrs. Sterne and Stella gave him a hand at parting. And Mrs. Sterne said, "I should like to have you come here often, and if you are fond of

music Stella will play for you, and then perhaps I can help you in making out your plan."

It was this unformed plan that Nep had come to the hiding-place to think about.

He had, ever since he had been old enough to think at all of his future, expected to do brave, great things in the world, but he had never made up his mind how he should do them. There had seemed to him nothing really for him but to follow his father's course, and live by the sea.

Then, too, he loved the water; life away from it had always seemed to offer nothing really pleasant to him; and there was his grandmother to be taken care of. He had never before thought of her as being very old, and passing out of life before him. She had not changed, he thought, since his memory, and he never had reasoned that she would not always remain with him. But this time, as he sat there among the bushes, almost carried out of himself by all that had happened through the day, and this new idea of a plan, and of the possibility of carrying out one as others had done, presented itself, he began to reason with regard to a course for the future. He thought forward ten years. "In ten years grandmother will be ninety;" he said. He did not remember having heard of a Smith that had lived to be ninety.

"If grandmother dies I shall have nothing to keep

me here," he whispered; "nothing but my love for the sea." And he cast a loving glance off toward the waters that lay in beauty and peace under the light of the sun. "I can't stay here and fish all my life, that is plain;" he whispered, "but what can I do?" Then he began to think what he needed toward a plan.

"I must have an education. I know that; but how am I to get it? I can't leave grandmother, else I could go away and work for my board. 'Squire Field, over at Ethraton, would give me my board and clothes and schooling for what I could do out of school hours." His face lighted up at the idea of what this might bring to him, but the thought came back again, "There is grandmother! I cannot!"

Much as he loved his home by the sea, and his life upon it, in that hour he would have given all up but for his grandmother.

He sat a long time in silence, then he started suddenly to his feet and threw up his cap, crying, "I have it now! I'll row over to Ethraton every day; row over to school! I've got enough fish money to pay all! I'll get in the winter's wood and get Sachem to look after grandmother once in a while through the day." Sachem was a neighbor's boy, who lived half a mile from the Smith cottage.

He almost flew into the cottage, and Granny, who was taking a pan of seed cookies from the oven,

dropped them with a start and cried, "Why, sonny! whatever can have happened? You almost scart my life out!"

Neptune told his plan, and Grammy sat down in the wooden chair by the oven and put her apron to her face to catch the tears that began rushing out from her old eyes down upon her withered cheeks. "And the sea aint good enough for you, Neptune? It satisfied your father, and you couldn't find in all Ethraton a greater man than your father was. I was afraid them quality people would put sich notions into your head. Mark my words, sonny! You was born to live by the sea! It's agin natur that you should be happy away from it!" She held out her withered hand, and her eyes took on a far-seeing look; and to Neptune she seemed like a prophet.

But she did not convince him. He felt called to carry out his plan; he meant to, in spite of any obstacle.

The next day they had another talk about it. "I'll fix up around here for you," said Nep, pleadingly, "and you sha'n't want for any thing, any more than you ever have. I'll care for you just the same, but, grandmother"—and here he lowered his voice and spoke in an awed way—"I've seemed to be pushed to it; I must try, at least!"

"Jest like yer poor father! Any thing that he got

into his head never could be got out, though he never wanted to leave the sea, where he'd been brought up. And he said, Neptune—he told me only a week before he went out never to come back—he told me, sonny, that he felt sure you'd live and die by the sea."

"O, grandmother!" cried Neptune in a piteous tone, "did he expect that—expect that I would live to be an old man, and catch fish all my life? I do love the sea. I know I love it as much as my father did; but O, the other things! I must do something in the world!"

"Granny" was surprised and a good deal awed by his words and manner, so that she began to doubt whether it were best to try and influence him with regard to the matter. And passing him a seed cake she said, soothingly, "Never you mind, sonny; I s'pose you oughter have a say by this time, bein' you're nigh on to sixteen."

"It seems too old to begin," said Nep, "but I shall try it, and I know what others can do I surely can!"

It ended in Nep having his way; and each day when it was possible to manage a boat he went over to Ethraton to the "Academy," and a new, larger world was opened to his vision.

He made delightful visits to Gurnet's Garden and

to the quiet, happy home on Campaign Street, where Mrs. Sterne and Stella began to regard him as a necessity. And Stella, the beautiful Stella, had become to him a star to lead on to the best and the bravest things in life.

Neptune could not explain it all to himself, even if he had tried. I think he never did try to explain how and why she thus led him. Beauty is a gift. It is God-given, and has its high mission.

And then Mrs. Sterne helped him to reach out in a feeble way toward the great guiding star—Christ himself. Perhaps he did not then realize this fact in its fullest meaning. It might come to him, the full truth of it, at a time when he would need it most. Who could tell of his future?

Harry and he attended the same school and became fast friends, and Harry's books found their way into Neptune's hands and gave him a vast amount of pleasure. Sometimes he read parts of them to "Granny," who became much interested in what the "quality people" read, and looked with admiring eyes upon Nep, and said sometimes softly: "I raly don't know, sonny, but you'll be a greater man than your father was, if you keep on."

But as the spring advanced the old lady began to feel lonely through the long days without Neptune, and to long for the time when he would take up the

fish-selling, which he would be obliged to do for the summer.

Nep did not look forward with a great deal of pleasure to the fish-selling, but for his grandmother's sake it seemed endurable: and then—had he not gained for himself through the winter something that made him better able to bear all?

Miss Persis through the winter months had not been idle. She went weekly to the home of "daddy," for "daddy" had been added to the list of those for whom she cared.

He had worked steadily in the mills ever since they started in the autumn, and his growing purpose began to show itself in his very walk. Polly and Jabey were in school, and were hardly the children of a few months before, in appearance. Johanna had taught her house-keeping art well, so that Mrs. Leib said one day to Miss Persis, who came to see her, "It's so nice—so very nice!" She had such a pleasant way of saying this, dwelling long upon the sound of each letter, as if she loved to. "You must do it for the love of Gott, Miss Marcel."

Miss Persis with a lifted look answered, "I believe He is teaching me to make the work light by doing it for him." And so the dear Lord was teaching her, as he teaches all who are willing to follow his voice, that leads in the path of duty.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RAINBOW NAME.

STELLA and Edith were much together. They took long walks, visited all the places that seemed attractive around Ethraton, and found many enjoyments that Iris, by reason of her lameness, could not share.

She seemed to feel the privation more and more; and she could hardly bear the sight of Stella when she came to take Edith for a walk or to talk of some pleasure plan.

Miss Persis noticed the growing pain and felt helpless in the matter. She redoubled her care and effort toward her, but there seemed to be no improvement. One morning she started out for the purpose of having a long talk with Mrs. Sterne upon the subject.

She found that lady in the yard among the flowers. She rose as she saw Miss Marcel approach, and came forward to meet her, saying with a smile that was her own—few could smile as Mrs. Sterne did—"I have had such a delightful hour out here with the new blossoms; there is so much to me in this communion with the flowers;" but, seeing a troubled

look upon her friend's face, she asked, "Is any thing the matter?"

"It's Iris," Miss Persis sobbed, and could say no more.

"Come in," replied Mrs. Sterne, "and we will talk it over."

When they were seated in a corner of the parlor Miss Marcel told her story, and after a short silence Mrs. Sterne said, "I have been watching her carefully for a long time, and I can see that she is failing, and I know that as she fails the world must hold less and less for her that can satisfy. She is reaching out, as we all must, for the love and the joy that can fill her. You must have seen all this yourself, Miss Persis."

Miss Marcel's whole frame was shaken as she sat with bowed head, trying to stay the torrent of grief that had been so long held back but must now have its way. Mrs. Sterne sat in silence waiting for the answer. The spring breeze moved the light window-drapery, the birds sang outside in a sweet, joyous way, in strange contrast to the sadness inside.

At last Miss Persis raised her head. "Yes, I've felt for a long time," she began, "that the dear child was gradually getting away from me; I thought once that my love would be enough for her, but she's had a strange, yearning look, of late. And only a short

time ago she stretched out her hands and cried, 'I want so much love! I think I want more than the whole world can give!'

"I didn't mean to speak of it to-day, I really did not; I meant to tell you only a part, but not that. I wanted to tell you that I think it makes the poor child very sad to see Stella and Edith able to walk and to go every-where, and she must always be left out. I wanted to ask you what I could do about it."

Mrs. Sterne answered, "Perhaps we can help her, in a measure, but, as I have said, nothing can really fill her but the Divine love and joy. You can lead her to that, my dear friend, can you not?"

"O! I know so little of it myself; I have only just begun to take hold of it! Only just begun!" the woman cried. "You were Matilda's friend, will you not help me?"

Long the two talked upon the subject that touched the other life, which all of us sooner or later must consider, or be taken at the last with an awful surprise at our mistake.

Before they parted Mrs. Sterne asked, "Can not you send her to me to-morrow? for you know Harry and Edith and Stella go with Neptune for arbutus. Neptune brought me some last week when he brought the fish, and it was so lovely! You've no idea how he has changed, if you've not seen him lately."

"Yes, I do know," answered Miss Persis; "he came to see us two weeks ago, and Harry and he are very intimate. Harry admires him, and I've inquired about him of Mr. Dene, of the Academy, and he says he is very bright, and very resolute, and very true. All those things going together will tell, you know. And then he has a strong sense of duty—it was born in him. His father had it, and I've noticed it in his giving up for his grandmother. The teacher at the Academy talked with him about giving up the cottage over at the island and taking his grandmother to live at Ethraton; but he answered him, 'O, how I wish I could! but it would break her heart to leave her old home; I'll never do that, if I go without an education. I can't do that,' he said, wistfully, at last. And Professor Dene said that he felt that the boy, if he never should show greater bravery, had become a hero."

Miss Persis promised to send Iris to Mrs. Sterne the next day, and, after the others had gone to one of the islands, she sent Sarah around with her.

It was after Mrs. Sterne had showed Iris the flowers, and the birds, and every thing that she thought would be of interest to her, that she took her into her own room, and, drawing an easy-chair before a window that commanded a view of the garden, she placed her in it and said, "Now we can enjoy a pleasant talk.

I have been thinking to-day that you are so much like your mother—the same eyes and the same mouth; only I wanted to tell you that your mother's face had more hope in it. I felt that I must tell my dear Matilda's child this; must tell her of the joy that might come to her, and of her mother's beautiful hope when she gave her the name Iris—for Iris, you know, means a rainbow, my dear."

There was an eager expression in the face of the listener as she said, "Tell me more about it; tell me about my mother and about this joy; and tell me, do tell me, how she got it! I want more than I can tell you; I think I want every thing!" Mrs. Sterne put up a silent prayer for help before she said another word, and then she told, from the rich experience of her own believing heart, the story of repentance and faith—told it simply—and it fell as a welcome rain upon a waiting, thirsty ground.

"I've thought so many times of what you said the day we were over at the island," said Iris, "and I was lying upon that old lady's bed, and my face was close to the linen that she was keeping for her death. That was dreadful to me! I can't tell how dreadful, to be lying there and to hear her say that she did not think I would live long. You did not know that I heard it, and then you talked of heaven as if you were glad to think of going there, and expected to meet friends

and be happy with them, and then you spoke of some of us getting perfect bodies in the place of old, homely, out-of-shape ones! You didn't say just those words, but you meant that, I think. I never had heard any one talk just that way before, and it made me think more about heaven, and I've longed to feel as you did, ever since; and then, I had almost forgotten to tell you, I had a dream that day. I thought I was taken to a beautiful garden, away from the earth, and I had a straight form given me; but I was not happy after all; and when the gardener saw it he asked, 'Did you sow any seeds of love down below?' And I told him I never had, and then he said, 'There lies the trouble; for every seed of love planted below a thousand flowers spring up here, flowers of joy for the one who sows.' And when I thought it all over I said, 'That is why I seem to get no joy; I don't do any thing for others.' And then I thought Aunt Persis does a great deal for others—she always has—but she doesn't seem to get any joy. O, I'm so unhappy!" she ended, with a sigh, and clasped her hands and gave a beseeching look toward Mrs. Sterne.

"It is just here, my dear Iris," began Mrs. Sterne, "where the Almighty love and wisdom offers to take up our cause, and, teaching us how to follow, promises to add all things to us if we honestly wish to follow. But we must wish so much that it becomes a

purpose—a purpose to find Christ! When we go so far, all heaven will take up our cause, and we have nothing more to fear for this life or for the next. And then the overwhelming joy may be saved for us until the last; but there will be peace and hope in our hearts, and that will satisfy—it should satisfy—any one for this life!"

"I've thought lately," began Iris, "that Aunt Persis seemed to have this peace—a little of it. But the joy—Do you think she will ever have the joy?"

"I cannot speak for this life; perhaps she may not, but I think she will have a peace to satisfy here."

"O, I do want her to have the joy; she's done so much and she's tried so hard to make others happy! If Aunt Persis cannot have the joy I don't think I want it."

"One thing I wish to say to you, before I leave you to go down and prepare supper for you all; is this," and Mrs. Sterne came close to the invalid's chair, and, bending over Iris, whispered, "Don't look for the joy now; don't think at all of any reward, but only follow; from following a blessed peace will surely come." Then she left the girl alone.

Long she sat and looked out upon the flowers and the well-kept lawn, and thought of what she had heard. She felt that the lady had spoken from her own knowledge, that she had followed the voices that

called her, and that she had been filled with this satisfying peace of which she had spoken. Then she brought to mind what she had said of her own name, and how she had called it the rainbow name. She remembered, too, that hour after the storm when her aunt had taken her out to the porch to see the rainbow, and had spoken of beauty and peace after the storm; that she had herself asked, "And joy too, auntie? Is there not joy too?"

She brought to mind her aunt's manner, and how she thought she saw something that might mean an answer to her question—might mean that she saw joy in it; she could not really tell.

At last she heard merry voices in the hall below, and soon steps upon the stairs, as Stella and Edith came rushing into the room with the arbutus blossoms.

She forgot, for the moment, all her questionings and all her fears, and clapped her hands, saying, "O how lovely! Where did you find them?"

They had a long answer for her, and, with cheeks glowing and eyes sparkling, they told the day's story.

"And we've had such an adventure, really an adventure," said Stella excitedly; "and O, it seemed so strange!"

"And kind of dreadful too," joined in Edith.

"I'll tell you all about it," went on Stella. "You

see, Neptune told us of a little island where we would find the flowers in plenty, and Neptune knows all about those things, for he's been almost every-where around Ethraton. He rowed us over to the place, and we landed at the loveliest spot!—in a little kind of cove; we landed, and the boat had just been made fast to the bank when a man came running down toward us; the strangest sort of a man he was, with a long beard and very wild-looking eyes. 'It's Wild Aaron,' whispered Neptune. 'He's come to look for his family; they're all dead, every one, but he's expecting them to come back, at least when he's a little out he expects it. Don't be afraid; I know him; I'll speak to him.' He went to meet him, and said so very kindly, 'How do you do, Uncle Aaron? We've come to see you a while.' 'And you've brought 'em back?' the old man asked. 'You've brought back Mary?' and he came toward me. 'It's Mary just as she left me, with her bright hair and blue eyes.' 'Don't be afraid,' Neptune said, coming forward to me. 'Don't be afraid! I'll take care of you.' I don't think I moved: I couldn't. The old man came close to me and gave a long, deep look into my very eyes. I don't know how I bore it; I couldn't if Neptune had not stood by me and looked so brave and able to take care of me. He seems as strong as a man, you know."

"He started back, and said in a way that was enough to break one's heart to hear, 'No; it isn't Mary! There's no glory in the face! They never 'll come back! never!' And then he ran away.

"'Poor old man!' Neptune said; 'he comes to this island whenever he can get any one to bring him over, for he lived here once. There's an old tumble-down cottage where his ancestors lived, years and years before him, and where he used to live with his family. He goes to it now when he comes to the island, and he stays until some one finds him and takes him back. Last year he was nearly starved, and he lay for weeks close to death; it was a wonder to all who saw him that he got well.'

"Sure enough, when we had gathered our arbutus, and went to look at the ruins of the cottage, we found him lying upon the old floor—there's no roof to the house now; and the boards that are left are so old! But there are great shady trees around the spot, and we had decided to spread our lunch under one of them. Neptune, when he saw him lying there, beckoned us out to one of these trees, and told us that he should like to take something back to the old man to eat, and he whispered, 'I must take him back to Ethraton.'

"'O, don't try it!' we all cried, 'you must not

try it! you will both be drowned!' But he shut his lips very tightly, and that wonderfully brave look came to his eyes; and then I knew he would do it—that he would take the old man back to Ethraton!

"He took him something to eat; and then, after we had finished our lunch, he said, 'I must coax him to go with me, somehow;' and he really did get him down to the boat, and took him over to the 'Home.' We watched him. Harry offered to go, too, you see, but Neptune said, 'no; if any thing should happen, the fewer there are to share it the better!' Wasn't that brave?

"But he came back all right, Neptune did; and I do think his father must have been a very wonderful man, for all the people around here say he's just like his father.

"But I wonder what the old man really meant by 'the glory in the face.' I wonder if his Mary was very beautiful, or whether"—and here the little beauty glanced toward the mirror.

Iris, who had been listening with rapt attention, shook her head, and said—"No! I don't think he missed—" she was about to add, "the beauty;" but she did not finish. The bell rang for supper, and Mrs. Sterne came to help her down stairs. She said, as she went, all to herself, "It might have been joy, or peace, that he missed."

They had a merry time at supper, and each one had something to tell of what had happened through the day.

Late in the twilight Harry and Edith and Iris returned to Gurnet's Garden, and Neptune rowed back to his home, having gained a fresh purpose to do worthy things in life.

"Granny" was watching for him in the door-way, and as he closed the gate she called out, "O, sonny, I've been a-waitin' and a-watchin' so long! I get afeared now, and I'm a-thinkin' some time that the sea 'll be cruel to you as 'twas to your father; then, again, I think the Lord wont 'low it."

"O, grandmother! don't think such things; you know I can manage a boat, and I'm going to live to take care of you, and perhaps of others, and to do great things in life!"

"I'm sure o' that, sonny! [illegible] she said, and stroked his broad hand.

"Grandmother, I wish you wouldn't call me sonny, just as if I were a little boy!" Neptune replied a little pettishly. "Over at Gurnet's Garden and at Mrs. Sterne's they almost seem to think I am a gentleman, and it kind of raises me, and I feel like being polite to myself."

"They can't think more of you than I do, the quality people can't, though they may have a finer

way o' showing it." And she raised her hand to her old eyes to stay the coming tears.

"O, grandmother! don't mind me, don't!" Neptune pleaded in a distressed tone. "You know how I care for you, and I'd give up 'most any thing for you. I'll always do it; but I can't help thinking it would have been a very great thing to have been born a gentleman, and not have to work into it, and it must be so nice to have pleasant things about you, and all that. I thought of it all the way over from Ethraton, and I think it made me cross. I wont be so any more."

"But, la! Neppy, it's all a mistake," Granny began in an earnest way; "you were born a gentleman, and your great grandfather was a hero. I've told you so many times; did you forget it? They didn't maybe live in stone houses, your folks away back, nor keep their posies in glass houses, neither, but they were solid, brave folks, after all, and the blood that runs through your veins would hold its own with any. I'm sure o' that, sonny; sure!"

Neptune that night, as he lay in his bed and listened to the sound of the sea, thought over all the events of the day, and at last fell asleep, to dream of a pair of lovely eyes and a wealth of bright hair; and he thought he heard a sweet voice saying, "Neptune, you're a gentleman!" He did not waken until his

grandmother's voice called from the foot of the stairs, "Sonny, the pancakes air a-sp'ilin!"

Iris awoke that morning to hear, in the sound of the bird songs, something of the voice of hope; and when her aunt came to her she said, "I think you must have had a very happy time yesterday."

Iris looked a little confused; she longed to tell her aunt all she had heard and felt and thought; but she did not feel quite ready to begin, so she answered, "I had a very quiet time, auntie, and Mrs. Sterne, I think, has a great deal of joy."

There was a questioning look in Miss Marcel's eyes as she heard this, as if she, too, would say a great deal, would know of all that was in the soul of her precious charge, but she also did not find herself ready to speak.

But that day, as she put on her hat to go down to Fisherville, Iris asked: "Can I go with you, auntie? I want to help! I must do something for others! Why can't I?"

Miss Marcel turned and looked at her in silence, as if there were something in the words that shocked her. Then she answered, slowly and decidedly, "No, my dear one, you cannot go!"

"O, but auntie, I must do something! I can't live so! I want to sow some seeds of joy." Then she told her aunt the dream, and they had a long, sacred,

sweet hour of mutual confidence—an hour that lifted and strengthened them, and revealed to each of them strange, delightful truths and hopes.

"You shall do something, my dear child. You shall have garden parties for the poor children at Fisherville, and you shall make bouquets for them, and play for them, and do all that you would like."

"O, auntie!" cried the delighted girl, "can I really do that? *Will* you let me?"

As Miss Marcel took her way toward Fisherville she felt in a happier frame than she had for months. There was really something like joy in her soul.

CHAPTER VIII.

GARDEN PARTIES.

MISS MARCEL had been out all the morning among the children at Fisherville, giving invitations for the first party at Gurnet's Garden. Of course Johanna, and Jabey, and Polly were invited.

Such a delightful stir as the news of this party made down among this people who never had invitations!

The older ones said, "The old times have really come back—the 'Mother Gurnet' times!"

And there was a strange joy and a loving pride within them as they put the mending stitches in the little worn garments of their children, to make them presentable.

Toward noon Harry came running in, crying, "O, Aunt Persis! do come out to the gate. There's the funniest sight! Such a lot of little ragged objects looking in! I know they've come to the party! I know it!" His aunt went out and, reaching the gate, saw at least a dozen children to whom she had not given an invitation to the party.

"Did you want to see me?" she asked.

One boy, bolder than the others, stepped inside and said, "Please, ma'am, they said as how yer was goin' to have a party, an' as how you was 'Mother Gurnet' come back to make good times for the children, an' as how you meant it fur all of us, an' — an' — didn't mind ragged clothes!"

He stood tugging at his queer little cap as he waited for his answer, which was a long time in coming, for a conflict was going on in Miss Marcel's soul.

"An' we'd mind an' not step on the posy beds; we would!" a little voice began, as if there was need of its small help.

Is there no choice for me? Miss Persis groaned within herself; must I surrender *all*, even a last preference? And a voice, the voice that had led her on through sacrifice, thus far, rolled back the truth upon her soul.

Yes; all!

Her answer was ready then, and she said to the waiting group, "Yes; you can all come. Come back here to the garden again at two o'clock; but you must go away now, for I must get ready for you!"

Such a shout as went up then from those children! And they went down Campaign Street crying, "Mother Gurnet has come to give us all good times!"

Miss Marcel turned back a new woman; for, even

as she stood and gave her answer, "You can all come!" she was baptized into joy; for she had in that moment fully surrendered her will to the Divine one. Henceforth she must walk in an illumined path, must, as Johanna's mother had said, "find all easy because doing it for the love of Gott."

She went back to the house, not to go to her room to meditate upon this strange exaltation, but, like the Saviour himself, to take account of the loaves and fishes, that she might feed acceptably the hungry multitude that must wait for her kindness.

"Sarah," she asked, "how many cakes and sandwiches are there?"

"I think, ma'am, I counted for three apiece all round! An' I'm sure that's a deal sight more'n their stomachs oughter bear; indeed it is, ma'am!" she added, as she saw an uncertain look on the lady's face.

"I have invited more; in fact, I don't really know where the invitations will end; for I believe Mother Gurnet has left her mantle of good deeds to me; the little ones believe she has come back."

Sarah stood with her arms akimbo, surveying the long array of good things already prepared for the "young barbarians," as she called them. She took in with the survey the prospect of future labor; and she answered with a little show of spirit, "It's agin' reason, when you took this place for a bit of a spot

to rest in; it's really agin' reason that you should try to take care of the whole of Fisherville. There's others at Ethraton that don't seem to have any call to do such things; and they're church members, too, ma'am!"

"But the Master lays his burdens upon a few—or seems to," Miss Marcel answered. "Don't you remember, Sarah, that it says—the Bible says—he chose twelve, only twelve, to live close to him, and to do his glorious work? I have found in this hour, Sarah, that it is a blessed work and a glorious call that I've had! It almost seems that the doing can never be hard for me any more."

The girl looked into the woman's face to see it lighted as she had never seen it before, and she answered meekly, "It's just as you say, of course."

"Then we will make more cake," replied Miss Marcel, cheerfully. "I am a quick hand at it."

They went to work, and by the time the children had gathered the refreshment table held an extra hundred seed-cakes for the extra guests.

Is there a living person who can describe a child's experience at its first party? I believe not one of us who are grown can really bring to mind our own. The years have placed a film over our vision, so that we find it impossible to discern the brilliant colorings

of that far-away hour. Then, certainly, I cannot expect or even attempt to describe the feelings of these Fisherville children, who came to Gurnet's Garden that summer afternoon to enjoy the shade, and the flowers, and the music, and the games offered there.

As the twilight was coming on Miss Marcel stood at the gate, saying "good-bye" to each one as they passed out; and when Polly and Jabey and Johanna went to say "good-night" to Iris, who sat in her chair with a flower for each, Polly, looking toward the gate, said, "There's daddy! I wish he could come inside, only once; he's never been, you see, since mother and he came here together."

But Miss Marcel had seen him, and when she had said "good-night" to all the group around Iris she went out and invited him in.

He came slowly in; he walked carefully, as one might who was treading upon sacred ground.

Miss Marcel did not trouble him with questions. She had no wish to disturb his mood, and allowed him to go where he would.

The man wandered over to a seat under one of the oldest trees; he sat down, he looked around him, he brought back those first days of love and hope when he and "Sary" sat there and life was all before them and great things were possible.

He bowed his head and wept like a child. At last he sat erect. He remembered what Miss Marcel had said: "Your wife, I think, will know what you try to do for your children!"

He would be a new man; he would set out again; he had made a beginning in the last months; he would make another. Sary was seeing it all; she would see, too, that he was trying to make up for the past.

Polly and Jabey came up. "Don't you like it, father?" asked Polly. She had never before called him father. Iris had just been telling her to do so.

"That sounds kinder fine, Polly," he answered. "I b'l'eve I like it better'n 'daddy;' a good deal better!" he said, as he took her hand in his.

"Miss Marcel wants you to come into the house and hear some musie," said Jabey.

The man looked down at his coat. "I don't b'l'eve I oughter, jest now," he answered. "I guess I'll wait till next pay-day. I'm goin' to buy a coat then." But Miss Marcel had come up and urged the matter, and somehow, he could never tell just how, he found himself in the parlor and sitting in one of the best chairs while Iris played for him.

If the children were enchanted with what that afternoon brought them, "daddy" was carried away from himself surely, and was so lifted from the old

plane of thought and expectation that he never could fall back to it.

And so, in rising step by step, he led the children on toward what their mother had hoped, and became at last a real father to them. He was helped on to his dying day by the thought of the approval of his lost Sarah, and he died at last with the words, "I am trying hard to make up, Sary!" upon his lips.

"It's wonderful," Iris whispered that night before she slept, "the feeling that comes from helping;" and Miss Persis, coming into her room afterward, saw a smile upon her face as she lay dreaming.

There were several garden parties through the summer, and their influence toward making not only the children, but the homes from which they came, better and happier was a very great one.

Iris was finding the words of Mrs. Sterne very true. She had found peace through patient, cheerful following. It was true that she had not realized an overwhelming joy, but she had learned to feel that she could wait for that; and her young soul that was in one sense so old—old through an experience of sorrow—was expecting everything *some time*. When would that some time be? Miss Persis, when she watched the delicate face and saw that it was growing paler and thinner, answered that question within her-

self, but there was none of the old rebellious conflict with the truth as it forced itself upon her, for she knew that heaven alone would furnish the joy for the crippled child.

September came at last, and Neptune Smith was happy again, for he could give up the fishing as a business and return to school.

"We have a nice little sum for the winter," he said to Granny, counting the summer's gains as the two sat by the kitchen fire the night before he was to begin study again.

"I've been a-thinkin', sonny, for the last month, that I sha'n't stay long now; and whatever can you do without me? I've thought it over an' over again, but I can't seem to fix things; leastwise, I can't be willin' to leave you, sonny, all alone in the world. Now if you were only twenty-one! I did think all along, till lately, that the Lord would let me stay till then, but it seems agin' reason now, an' there's signs, sonny, signs!"

"Don't, grandmother!" said Neptune, tenderly. "Mrs. Sterne says all will come right for those who trust and do all they can; she says that's the only true way. I never thought much about such things until lately, but I believe that kind of living is what makes brave people, after all. I want to be brave. I mean to be! My father was brave!"

It was toward the last of September, when Neptune had become deeply interested in his studies and made his daily trips over to Ethraton, that Granny began to fail. She said nothing to Neptune, and he did not notice it until one day, a dark one, he came home to find her lying in the best bed, faint and almost speechless.

"O, grandmother, what can I do?" he cried.

She gave him a look of unutterable love and said, in broken sentences, "Git the hops; they're a-hangin' from the beam in the garret. You've seen me steep 'em."

"Yes, I know, grandmother," he answered. "I know just how; I've seen you do it."

He sprang up the garret stairs with all the faith of youth, believing, perhaps more firmly than Granny did herself in that hour that hops would cure her.

He steeped the hops, he chafed her hands, he spent the hours until the night set in trying his skill to help her if possible, until Granny whispered, "If I could see Doctor Mede, from Ethraton, he might cure me."

"I'll go for him, grandmother," answered Neptune.

"I'm almost afeerd to have you, sonny—fer—the—wind sounds as it—did—when—when your father went away—and didn't come back!"

"But I'll go!" he repeated. "I'll get Sachem's mother to stay with you while I'm gone."

"Lay yer hed down—here—for a min e, sonny —jest here," she pleaded; and he laid his young face close beside Granny's withered one upon the linen covering that she had so carefully preserved for the hour that was coming so fast. "Whatever will you do—without me—sonny?" she asked, with a faint voice that was full of a yearning love.

"O, I sha'n't have to live without you, grandmother!" he said, with forced cheerfulness.

When he went out of the cottage it was so dark it was with difficulty he found the gate, and when he told his errand at the cottage of Sachem's mother she raised her hands in astonishment, crying, "You mustn't think of going! There's a dreadful storm coming, and the night is going to be awful; and don't you hear the wind?"

But Neptune answered, "I must go," and the woman made herself ready and followed him back to Granny's cottage, saying, as he left her at the door, "Just like your father, for all the world!"

He found his boat, untied it, and, getting in, took up the oars, this strong, brave boy, while his soul sent up a prayer for help.

The wind had increased almost to a gale; he saw nothing, but he felt that if he landed anywhere upon the Ethraton side all would be well.

* * * * *

The hours passed. Midnight came, and by the one feeble light of the candle the watcher at Granny's bedside could see the awful signs of the fast-coming change.

Suddenly Granny raised her gray head and asked wildly, "Where's sonny? Whatever can he do without me?" These were her last words, and she went over the waters of death to find the answer to the question that had so long troubled her loving soul upon the other side.

The object of her care, the beloved Neptune, had even then passed on beyond the need of all her care. Bravely had he fought for the life that had become to him such a precious thing, fighting the maddened current with all his strength until that strength became as nothing.

How did the young spirit bear the burden and the horror of that hour when the awful truth was forced upon it that all was over, for him, of coming joy and victory in life? We can only find our answer in the fact that a soul that has really been brave in life must be in death, and in the promise that spans our sky like a rainbow, "When thou passest through the

waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee."

* * * * *

At Gurnet's Garden and at the quiet home in Campaign Street, where his young, hopeful, happy presence had brought strength and happiness, there reigned deep sorrow.

For days, the news could not really be believed, so loath are we to accept the truth that death has really conquered a strong soul that we have loved.

Harry was almost overwhelmed with grief at the tidings, and he never really knew, until he was gone, how he had held Neptune in reverence for his brave life.

This friendship, broken so suddenly by death, had a marked influence upon his life at this, the starting-point, and it prepared the way for him to receive other influences that at last led him on to do worthy things himself.

At the Academy his teacher told to the new boys of successive years the story of Neptune's sacrifice for his grandmother, and of his other brave acts, and many a boy, down deep in his heart, received the truth that they should teach; and it sprang up to bear fruit in the form of noble acts.

And Stella? For weeks she seemed inconsolable,

and it was months before she could be made willing to hear her mother speak of Neptune.

Another spring came round, and one morning she said to her mother, "I wish, mamma—at least I have been thinking lately that I should like to go over to the island where Neptune lived."

The man that rowed them over said, "I s'pose you've heard the story of the drowning of Neptune Smith. He was known all about here as a smart, fine, brave fellow! And if he'd lived he'd have made his mark, just as all the rest of the family did. He belonged to a race that couldn't help being brave, it seemed."

They landed, and took their way toward the cottage; they opened the front gate and passed up the path to the front door. On either side the tulip beds were aflame.

Stella bent over them; the tears fell upon their beautiful forms, and she whispered to her mother, "Neptune cared for them last year."

The two knelt in silent grief together there; then, gathering the bright bloom and the delicate lilies of the valley, they went to the mound where they had been told the mortal part of "Grandmother Bates" rested, and placed them upon it. "Neptune would have done it!" Stella pleaded. "I must do it for him."

The sea became almost sacred to the girl, for it held the form of the one who had come across her early vision to make an impression upon her memory and life that never could pass away; and, now that she is a woman, she often goes to the sea to watch its moods, and to find if possible in its voice what *he* found—"The story of life and of death."

CHAPTER IX.

JOY AT LAST.

THE soft delicate beauty of spring was about to pass into the richer, fuller life of summer. The atmosphere around Gurnet's Garden was full of the sweet flower odor that rose from the well-kept beds; the shaded seats were delightful resting-places, and the cool arbors offered an agreeable retirement.

Each evening the garden had its visitors, but they were not from the first families of Campaign Street; they came from poorer localities—mostly from Fisherville.

They walked where they chose, or sat and told the stories of the old Mother Gurnet days, and thus lived over their youth again, and blessed in all the goodness of Miss Mareel, the later "mother" who was giving so much to them and to their children.

Miss Mareel walked less among them than formerly, for Iris was day by day passing away.

Her chair was no longer wheeled to the garden that she might talk with the children, but through the open windows she could hear their voices, and she smiled to know how happy they were.

One beautiful day, just as the evening was coming on, they were gathered—Miss Persis, Harry, Edith, with Stella and Mrs. Sterne—around her; for the death angel had made sign of its coming.

"Let me sit here in my chair to the last," Iris whispered to her aunt.

There was a silence within, but outside the children's laugh was heard. Miss Marcel went out and hushed their mirth as she told them of death's coming; then she went back to the side of Iris.

The sick girl was lying with lifted eyes, and her thin hand was pointing up.

No one spoke, all watched.

At last a light, like the coming of the sun, grew upon her face, and every feature seemed to be bathed in joy—a joy beyond what earth had to give.

Mrs. Sterne, looking toward the open window, saw curious eyes peering in—and the children saw the coming of Death, saw it without terror, and through all their lives the remembrance of the glory upon the face of the dying girl remained with them to strengthen the belief which grew in many of their souls in the triumph of a Christian's death.

Miss Marcel is now an old woman, and still lives at Gurnet's Garden; and little children yet call her "Mother Gurnet," and many bless her for her deeds of love.

Yet she herself, when wandering among her flowers, or sitting alone in the shaded arbor, finds blessed comfort and hope in the expectation of being called to the garden on high to receive the full harvest of joy, the seeds of which she planted below.

THE NEW BOY AT SOUTHCOTT.

CONTENTS.

THE

NEW BOY AT SOUTHCOTT.

CHAPTER I.

THE COMING OF THE NEW BOY.

As I write the word Southcott I seem to hear the eager boy-voices calling from out the future, when young eyes may rest upon the word, "Where is Southcott; and is it much of a place?" As I have made up my mind to try and please these boys I hope to make my story able to answer for itself any curiosity it may arouse in any boy's mind.

Southcott, or the place I shall call by that name, is situated in the eastern part of the United States; in which State I do not say. It is not very near any mountain or river, and is not, on the whole, a noted place; it has even been called by stirring people a dull, sleepy old town; but there are others who call it a quiet, beautiful spot, and love to visit it each year as the summer comes.

Old as the place was, Nature thought it worth while to dress it up in young fresh colors each spring

as if it had just started a new life. She would have done just the same, I suppose, if no human eyes could have enjoyed her work, but it really seemed sometimes that she did it all for the boys who came by scores each spring to enter the boys' school at Southcott.

O, how she did seem to enjoy their coming! You saw signs of her sympathy with them, from the nodding of her graceful tree branches to the laughing of her brooks; she seemed ready and happy to help on in the new spring joy.

So the boys had Nature on their side, and they needed her, for they did not always have the people of the place.

Some dreaded the opening of the school, because they dreaded the coming in of the boys; perhaps not always without good reason, as we may see by-and-by; but at the school, "Southcott Home," as it was called, there were those who waited with an honest, tender welcome for any boy, however unlovely and disagreeable he might seem to others.

Mr. and Mrs. Morell, the founders of the school, had chosen their work not simply because they felt they loved it, but because they loved the boys.

To be surrounded by boy-life was to them happiness. It was settled, in the minds of those who knew that they had not taken up the work because they had

failed in something else, that they were just the ones to be at the head of such a school.

They were not young people at this time, but their hearts kept young, and each boy felt this sooner or later, while perhaps they only noticed a gray hair here and there, and then forgot they had seen these signs of coming age upon the heads of their teachers.

On this particular spring morning of which I am going to speak, this opening-day morning, the grounds about the Home seemed alive with boy-life; the boarders had nearly all returned, and the day scholars were one by one coming up the long walk and joining their old playmates.

"There's to be a new boy, they say!" said one boy, whose hurried breathing would hardly let him tell the news. The boy to whom he told it was bending over a tulip-bed, looking at the gayly-colored blossoms.

He seemed quite unlike the ruddy-faced, stout boy who spoke to him, for he had a slight form and his face was thin and pale, but an eager look came to it as he listened to his companion's words, and then asked, "A boarder, or a day scholar?"

"A boarder, I believe," answered the other, "though he's got an uncle here, who lives over at Norf's Mountain; but of course he would not stay there, for they are very poor, even if they did not live so far

away. They say his people are very rich—very! and that this new boy has every thing he wants."

"That would be a very fine thing, I think," answered the other, whose name was James Mason, but he shook his head in a doubtful manner and added, "I wonder if a boy can really have all he wants!"

"I mean to, one of these days," said the stout one, whom we must call Harry Prichard. But here the conversation was ended, for a carriage, the only really fine one in the place, was entering the avenue. It belonged to the stable of the one hotel, and was rarely seen except at weddings and funerals. The eyes of every boy in the yard were watching it as it came slowly along. The people inside seemed to be looking at the flowers and shrubbery, and it was not strange, for the coming of spring had brought a new beauty on grass and flowers and trees.

"It's the new boy," began to be whispered, as the carriage stopped at the south portico; then, as it passed from lip to lip, an expression of interest sat upon the face of each, for the coming of a new scholar who was rich, and had just what he wanted, and did exactly as he pleased, was not an every term's experience. Most of the boys at Southcott, although they came from comfortable homes, did not have all the money they desired, neither did they have liberty to do just as they would like at all times. In this, I

suppose, they were quite like other boys in other schools than Southcott.

While I have been explaining, the new boy has stepped out of the carriage and stands by the side of a gentleman who is talking with Mr. Morrell. The boy—and I may as well give his name now—Roland Morton, is looking off at the school grounds and really watching the boys so earnestly that he does not see the motherly form of Mrs. Morrell coming toward him; not until she has laid her hand upon his shoulder does he notice her, and then he answers her warm greeting quite coldly—which the boys beyond, noticing, regard as something new in Southcott experience, for the kindly welcome of Mrs. Morrell had always brought at least a smile in return from each stranger boy.

"How smart he seems!" said Harry Prichard to one of his mates; "just like city fellows who have seen almost every thing and don't mind *people* even. I wonder how he'll act when the Latin teacher gets hold of him. I've never seen a boy here yet that could be very smart when he got into Mr. Sizer's hands."

"We'll see!" said Ned Cummins, and his eyes sparkled as if he expected a great deal of fun to come.

The stranger pupil was left sitting in the willow

chair upon the portico platform, while the gentleman was taken into the parlor to have a private talk with Mr. and Mrs. Morrell.

"You see, I am only his uncle and guardian," said the gentleman; "and, of course, a guardian and a father's brother cannot do what a father can for a boy. I am afraid I have allowed him too much liberty already; however, he is only twelve, and, I trust, has not gone so far wrong that the treatment here cannot make every thing right."

"I trust all will be well," Mr. Morrell answered cheerfully, while the features of his wife softened perceptibly under the influence of the new sympathy that had sprung up for this orphan stranger. She always kept a place in her heart sacred to sympathy for orphans.

"Perhaps," the gentleman went on, "I have done wrong; at least I think it has been indiscreet for me to allow him to discover that there was a large amount of money waiting for him, and that he could have all he wished for within reason. He has had a great deal and he's seen a great deal of the world; he has traveled with me; been to Europe, and—well, he's only twelve, and the idea seems quite laughable, but it really seems as if he had, like old Solomon, found all vanity. His father was the salt of the earth—a great man—but he always kept his heart as pure and

simple as a child's, and I thought his son would be just like him, but you cannot always tell about these things; however, I leave him to you. I know, from what I have heard, you can make all right if any one can."

"Yes; if you mean that I will try to direct him, to help him to find the great Helper, you are right. I give you my promise for that; I am only an instrument, you know; a mightier than I must make all new," answered Mr. Morrell.

The gentleman bowed, but wore a look that seemed to say, "This is a subject, this talk of a higher power, with which I really have no sympathy."

He then said, "Good-morning," promising to come again at the middle of the term and visit his charge.

The scholars were all gathered in the school-room when Mr. Morrell entered with the Latin teacher and Miss Reid, the regular school assistant. Mr. Sizer was a man of fifty years, who wore a stern look and stooped very much. Miss Reid had a pleasant face, although no one, if she were judged from her features, could have called her a handsome woman. The impression she made was one with which features and complexion had nothing to do.

The new boy looked sharply at the three teachers as they took their places, and did not seem to notice

the boys around him, who were all steadily looking at him.

The bell rang and each passed to his place, and Mr. Morrell, after reading a psalm, gave the school a few words of welcome and then kneeled and prayed, and was followed by the school through the Lord's Prayer.

Then all arose, and the duties for the term were entered upon.

Mr. Morrell came forward and spoke to Roland Morton and led him to the desk, to introduce him to the teachers and to talk of his studies for the term.

Harry Prichard watched closely through the introduction to Mr. Sizer. He was very much astonished at what he saw. This new scholar did not seem to be afraid of the Latin teacher at all.

Mr. Sizer looked down at the boy in a way that Harry thought he understood perfectly.

"He means to bring him to terms. I can see that," he whispered to his seatmate. "Wont there be fun watching them?"

His studies were soon decided upon, and he took his seat, a very unhappy boy. All that day he thought himself a persecuted boy—persecuted by his own uncle; and when he thought what Mr. Sizer had asked him, and what remarks he had made upon his answers, he felt that he had been insulted.

"To ask me if I had ever studied Latin! And then, when I told him I had been through the grammar and reader, to laugh and say that one of my age could not lose much to begin at the very first of the grammar! Uncle ought to have known more of the teachers before he put me here! O! O! it is dreadful!"

The first day at a new school must always be a marked one to any boy; the strange teachers and the new rules and the new faces are trying to crowd out the old ones to which he has become so used that they seem really a part of himself; and so a boy who loves these older days seems to fight with the new ones through every part of his nature.

It takes time and love and a new purpose, and the taking up of work again with faithfulness, to settle this difficulty.

I think all the old scholars tried to be kind to the new ones; and if they did not feel kindly toward Roland Morton it must have been his own fault.

After the school hours were over, on this first day, they went in groups or singly to try and become acquainted with him and interest him in their pleasures, but each and all came away disappointed; and a few made up their minds to get even with him for what they called his "mean" way of treating them.

"Who ever heard of any thing like that before!" said Harry Prichard to the boys, who had not recovered from their astonishment at what they had seen and heard. "He acts as if he thought himself a young king! I've got a cousin who has lots of money, and he's been almost every-where, too, but wouldn't you laugh to see him play at leap-frog and at ball! Well, he's just splendid there! And he lets me call him 'Joe,' too, and 'old fellow,' and such kind of things. But the way this one looked at us!" And Harry straightened himself and tried to put on a look of contempt and of dignity at the same time.

He made such a funny figure at it that the boys all laughed, and then, sitting down under an oak in the corner of the yard, they held a kind of council and decided to have no more to say to this haughty new scholar, but to go on having their old fun by themselves.

"I have just made up my mind to one thing," said Harry. "I have made up my mind to get all the fun out of this year that I can; for father has said that he may send me over to the city to school by another year. I should like that if it were not for leaving the boys here. I do like them, at least some of them; but this Roland Morton! Pshaw! Has he got any more money than Jimmy Mason here?" And he

crept a little nearer to James, who lay close to him on the grass.

"Jim was a little uppish himself when he first came," spoke up another boy. "I remember he used to stay by himself alone and cry for hours together, and the term was half gone when he began playing with us."

"But that was so different," answered Harry, and he looked closely at the speaker and shook his head, and then glanced toward James, who had shaded his eyes with his hands.

There was a silence then for some minutes, and, Harry giving a signal to the one who had spoken, the two walked away by themselves.

"Didn't you know," Harry began, "that Jimmy came here just after his mother died, and that was the reason he acted so? He's a different sort of fellow from this new one; you ought to know that! Perhaps you would if you had him for your room-mate. He isn't a bit like me, I know, and sometimes I have wished that he had a little more strength and could bat a ball better, and row without getting tired, and all that."

"Yes, I know," said the other. "I've heard you say he hadn't any vim, and wasn't stronger than a mosquito, and lots of other things like it; you ought to remember it yourself."

"I know I did; but I tell you that was before I knew him well; I'm going to take it all back, and if I ever say such a mean thing again I just hope some one will give me a beating, for I've watched him, and —well, we can't all be alike; perhaps he's strong in a kind of a way that I couldn't be; but, at any rate, I'm going to stand up for him."

CHAPTER II.

JAMES MASON.

JAMES MASON lay for a long time upon the grass with his eyes shaded. Only the spring before he had come for the first time to Southcott. He could never forget that day—a day outwardly just like this new-term day; so like it that it seemed he could hardly bear to notice the beauty around him. He went back over all that happened before he left the old home.

He seemed to live again the last months of his mother's life; he brought back the day when his aunt called him into the parlor and, folding him in her arms, told him that his mother could not live; he recalled his wild words of grief, and remembered how he had broken away from his aunt's embrace and rushed to his mother's bedside, and had flung his arms about her and cried, "O, my mother, my dear mother! Nothing shall take you from me!"

They came and took him away; and the next day his mother sent for him and, while his face was hidden in the bed-clothes, she sweetly and calmly told him the truth given in his aunt's words, told it as she passed her thin fingers through his hair with a ten-

derness in her touch that seemed almost to take the sting from her words.

"I am going to your father, my boy. I cannot take you; there lies the pain of it all, my precious one. I must leave you. Life, at the longest, cannot be long, while heaven will be forever; the years will pass swiftly; you do not believe it now; you cannot, with your young life; but it does not really matter so much, Jamie, how long the years may be, or where your life will be passed, but only *how*. If I thought my dear one could forget the pain and the disappointment and all the hard ways of life, in thinking of the other life—the life of which this can only be a beginning—I should go away rejoicing." He could only sob, he remembered, then—sob with a dreadful weight upon his heart.

Afterward—he was glad to think now of it—he promised this dear mother that he *would* try and forget all the pains and sad things of this life in trying to live as she would like to have him live, and, living thus in this life, be ready for the next. "Give your heart to God each morning anew," she said gently, "and then, whenever he shall send his angel for you, you can follow, feeling safe."

Then there was the day that seemed so blank—the day that he followed the slow-moving hearse that bore his mother's form to the grave.

All this he recalled as he lay upon the grass, with the boys' voices sounding in his ears.

How long he might have lain there alone with his grief I cannot tell, if Mrs. Morrell had not, in walking down the yard, seen him, and said in her kindly heart, "There is Jamie Mason, poor child! He looks paler than he did last term; I must have more care of him."

She went down to the oak and walked around, until the boy raised his head and saw her. He rose as she came toward him, and she noticed the tear traces upon his face, and said in tones that she made very motherly, "My dear boy! would you not like to walk with me? I am going over to 'Long Road;' the spring has made it ready for visitors, I think."

The "Long Road" was a way through a wood, about half a mile from Southcott Home; a place where the school-boys had found a large amount of fun at all seasons of the year, even in winter.

They set their snares for rabbits when the snow was on the ground; they gathered evergreens, ground pine and Princess pine, and then they made wigwams, sometimes, and built a fire inside and sat around it and told their stories, and imagined all sorts of adventures.

And the wood, always in spring, dressed itself up anew before the coming of the boys, and offered

its leafy shelters and mossy beds and singing brooks to them.

James thanked Mrs. Morrell as he followed her out of the school grounds toward "Long Road."

"I saw you were all by yourself, Jamie," she began when they were well on the road, "and I thought you might be a little lonely, and that a walk to the wood would brighten you up a little. I always get cheered by going to Nature. You see, she seems to offer to tell us the secret of cheerfulness."

"But she's gloomy enough herself, ma'am, sometimes, I think," answered James.

"I wonder if she really is," said Mrs. Morrell. "I wonder if she does not show a shining face even in winter, if our eyes would only let us see the light. I believe she does; an old person who must give up active life, and who, long before, has parted with a young strength, can be very attractive in his resting, I think, and gray hairs are certainly very beautiful sometimes. We have seen very happy old people, I am sure."

"I do not think I should like to be old," answered James, "because—because it would—" and here he began to sob again. They had now reached the wood, and the lady said, "Sit down here by my side on this little moss cushion and tell me all about it. Why would you not like to live to be old?"

"It would seem so long to wait, and so long to be afraid, and so long to be away from them."

"O, yes, my boy, I see; they are gone; your father and mother, you mean; it would be a long time to wait to meet them." And she took his hand in her own as she spoke.

"But you spoke of being afraid. Of what are you afraid?"

"Afraid I might forget all about what my mother told me, and so not be ready to die when I was called."

Mrs. Morrell was silent for a few minutes, and she looked up at the tree branches above them and said, "I wonder if the little branches were in any doubt of being able to meet the great change that came to them only a little while ago. How could they be, when they had been getting ready for it and asking for it so long? They must have been conscious, through a leaf sense, that every vein, even, was a part of the coming glory, and then when the voice told them to break forth into beauty the tree-life, that had never gone out, obeyed it, and came forth. I know, my boy, that to you now the meeting with your father and mother is your one thought with regard to the other life; but by-and-by, when you begin to get very near to Christ, you will want to go to heaven for his sake. I believe you will want to see him."

"I think," said James, as he shook his head, "I think it must always be my mother that I would think of first, because—because—she loved me so much."

"And Christ loved you very much too, my boy; so much that now he has a tender patience toward you when you are not caring for his love. He sees just how it is with you, and he will draw you toward himself, and will have patience with you all the time.

"But I wanted to say one thing to you to-day, and it is this. The new boy, Roland Morton, is an orphan like yourself, and a stranger in the school. I thought you might help him in many ways; and that you could understand how one would need help without a father's or mother's care."

This was quite new to James. He had supposed that the gentleman who came with the boy was his father.

"No father and mother?" he asked. "But they must have been dead a long time; at least he does not seem to miss them, I think; and I don't believe he really needs me; he does not seem to need any thing."

"I think he needs a great many things that he does not possess. I want you to try and make friends with him, at least. Will you try?"

He promised; and then they went on to the brook

and listened a while to its music, and talked of the school picnic, and of rowing upon the lake, and of an excursion to the mountain, until he had forgotten his troubles and was looking forward with pleasure to the events that might come to make the term a pleasant one.

That night, after supper, in his room James sat thinking of Mrs. Morrell's words and of what she had said of Roland Morton. "To think he is an orphan like myself! I should never have thought that. He doesn't act as if he missed them—his father and mother. And I promised that I would help him; I don't see how I can, when I should not know how to even begin. If he needed money I could do something; but they say he can have any thing he wants —just any thing."

At this point in his meditation Harry Richard rushed in, saying,

"O, Jimmy! Mr. Morrell says that he will take us over to Norf's Mountain next Saturday—the whole school! He wants the new boys to see what nice pleasure spots there are aronnd here; and we'll take our dinner and spend the day. The new boy, Roland, will go, I suppose, but I can't see the use of it; he wouldn't care for any thing around there, I am sure. I should really like to know if there is any thing in the world that would seem nice and new to him.

I shall never again try to have him like me. I can just tell you that!"

"But he's lost his father and mother, Harry! Just think of that."

"Now, Jimmy, don't you believe a word of it; there can't be a bit of truth in it. If there was he would not act as he does."

"But Mrs. Morrell told me so," answered James.

"Well—perhaps—yes; if Mrs. Morrell said so it is so, but, you see, he doesn't seem to mind it a bit. Well, it may be he's got used to it, as he has to every thing else. He seems dreadfully old, to me."

"I promised Mrs. Morrell I would try and help him, and I was just wondering, when you came in, how I could begin."

"Well, I'm sorry you promised," answered Harry, "but, now you have I suppose you must keep your promise; yes, of course you must; it's so awfully mean for a fellow to back out of one. I've promised too; I've promised not to have any more to do with him, and I just mean to keep my word."

"He's got a cousin up at Norf's Mountain who's very poor. You see, his uncle has three children —two girls and a boy—and their mother died last

summer; and the girl—she's very pretty, the boys say —keeps the house."

"I wonder how he will treat his poor relations. Just to think of a boy two years younger than I am putting on such airs!"

Soon after the two went to bed, and in a few minutes were fast asleep.

CHAPTER III.

NORF'S MOUNTAIN.

I SAID at the beginning that Southcott was not situated near any mountains or rivers. I was right, for I am sure the map-makers would never have named the hill upon which Norf's house stood a mountain; but the Southcott people, nevertheless, delighted in calling it so.

The name of the man, whose father had lived there before him, was Andrew Norfolk; but people will take strange liberties with names, and at the time of which I write every body called him Norf.

He was a well-meaning man, and at one time had been very ambitious to make his mark in the world, but, somehow, he had not seemed to succeed, and at last appeared to have settled down contented to live upon what his ancestors had done.

His wife had been a delicate, gentle creature, who loved her husband and children devotedly and spent her life and strength for them. One person, who knew her well, declared that she was worn out waiting for her husband to accomplish something in life —something worthy of his promises.

She left her children at an age when they needed her sadly. The oldest—a boy, Tom—was fifteen, and he had his ambitions to carry out, little schemes of his own; next came Florrie, and last Clara.

Florrie was thirteen, but seemed much older. She had been her mother's companion, and had for several years shared the home work and care, so that she had been called "the little woman" by many.

Her mother, in dying, had even left her brother Tom to her care, saying at the last, "Do for him, Florrie, my precious one, do just what you think I would have done!"

The little Clara was eight—a gentle, loving child, who thought her sister Florrie the most beautiful girl she had ever seen, and did not find it hard to do just what she thought best.

But Tom—Tom thought Florrie was a better sister than most boys owned, and yet he could not be made to think that girls knew any thing about the world or about business, or could judge correctly.

The fact was, Tom believed too thoroughly in himself, to ask advice of any one.

He had his plans for life all drawn; he had decided upon the first steps, and he never had a doubt that all the after steps would come in just right.

He had never told any one his plans, really, but had gone so far as to say that he meant to astonish

the people one of these days. If he had known the truth he might have seen that he had already astonished them by his reckless doings.

These "doings" had been discovered through Florrie's watchful eye of love, and had cast a gloom over her sky and made her more anxious than ever to try and guide him just as her mother might have done. She never could speak to any one of her troubles—not even to her father.

He believed that boys should have their day, and this, coupled with his faith in the Norfolk blood, made him quite secure, if not hopeful, in his mind with regard to the boy.

The house stood in a lonely place, and yet it was a beautiful spot near the top of the hill, and was surrounded by forest trees.

The grandfather Norfolk had intended it for an elegant place; had laid out acres of pleasure-grounds; had made arbors, and summer-houses, and little retreats the ruins of which could still be seen. He had possessed plenty of money, and perhaps never dreamed that those who should come after him would not have the same; and so things were planned to last, and with care the place might have been preserved from a shabby, tumble-down decay, at least.

One might have wondered how the family lived if they noticed that the father did not seem to have any

business; but the truth was there was a very small income left to Andrew Norfolk, the principal being held securely by the provisions of a will, and to be equally divided among his children; their shares being given them as soon as they should become of age.

His wife had managed so carefully that she had kept her family with good food and respectable clothes, and had also contrived to buy them a new book occasionally.

Florrie was trying to do the same, but Tom insisted that he knew better than a girl did about marketing, and dry goods, and books.

So, to save difficulty between them, she often delivered up the monthly allowance of money to him, and he went forth to the village feeling as grand as a prince. It often happened that his coming back was not such a grand affair, for he knew in his heart that his sister would find out that he had not used the money faithfully, but had spent a part for his own pleasure.

"O, Tom, this is not all the money that you brought?"

"There's every cent that was left!" he would answer in a decided way; "every cent!" But he could never bear to see the grieved look in his sister's eyes; and in the end he always felt sorry that he had

taken a part of the money to spend foolishly, and always promised to be more careful the next time.

But he either forgot the promise or was not strong enough to keep it, for the same thing happened many and many a time after.

Tom was quite a hero to the boys at "Southcott Home;" for there was no spot, high or low, around Southcott that he had not explored, and as to rowing and fishing and hunting, no boy in the school pretended to equal him.

Tom was really a handsome fellow, and would have been attractive to others than those at the "Southcott Home" but for some very grave faults. Harry Prichard could see no sign of a fault in Tom, and the going to Norf's Mountain was a delightful thing to look forward to because he expected to meet him.

The only drawback in relation to him seemed his poverty. Tom himself had often spoken of it to Harry, and had seemed so cast down at the thought of it that Harry had pitied him greatly, and had tried to think out ways to help him.

When he first heard of the coming of the new boy, and of his relationship to Tom, and that he had all the money he wanted to spend, he said to himself, "Here is a chance for Tom. He'll perhaps, this new

boy, give Tom something, or lend him something for a start until he becomes of age, and then I'm sure he'd pay him back, every cent of it."

What Tom intended to do in life he had never told. He had once given Harry a hint of it by saying, "It's a business that will help me to see the world! I sha'n't stay moping around Southcott! And, perhaps, I've been thinking I might get you a place. It would be just gay for us to go together, wouldn't it, now?"

Harry thought it would; but in his heart he had some doubts as to the working of the plan as regarded himself; for he knew his father had intended him for a physician.

When he saw just what kind of a boy the new scholar was, he had very little hope that Tom Norfolk would get much of his money.

The Norfolk family occupied only a part of the old house; the rest was almost a ruin, the windows had lost most of their lights, and were loose and shaky in this forsaken spot.

One room in the second story was used to store the old family relics, and all but one window of it had been carefully boarded up against the changes of the weather, Mr. Andrew Norfolk's family pride leading him to care for the pieces of old china, of furniture curiously carved, and to now and then take from

the old chests the ancient articles of dress and hang them out to be aired.

These had always been great days for the children. It almost seemed that they saw again the great ladies and gentlemen dressed in their rich clothes.

Their father never neglected to tell them stories, that had been told him by his own father, of the grand things that had happened in the old house.

So, strange pictures of weddings and funerals and banquets were in their minds, and they added to them by their young imaginations; and Tom, when repeating what he had heard, put in a word here and one there, so that in the end after several repeatings he really believed, I think, that these extra colorings belonged there.

Whenever the "Southcott" school visited "Norf's Mountain" the coffee and tea were made in one of the old rooms, from whose fire-place a crane was hung, the very crane from which had been suspended the tea-kettles and pots of these people of the very old days.

The boys could almost believe that those old days were back again, especially when, after dinner, Tom took them by groups and told them all about the strange, wonderful doings of his ancestors.

I doubt if a single boy could be found among them at such times that did not feel a kind of envy of

Tom rising in their ambitious little souls. To be sure this feeling did not last long with many of them, but, as you will see, Tom had many of the qualities that in a boy's mind are supposed to belong to a hero. And boys must worship heroes; they always have worshiped, they always will!

It is well that they should; only boys, as well as men, sometimes make great mistakes in deciding who the heroes really are.

Roland Morton's mother and Tom Norfolk's were sisters. They had been separated early by marriage, and had never during their lives, but once, met since, although they had exchanged letters a few times.

Their circumstances were very different, and Mrs. Morton was in Europe much of the time, and she never returned from her last visit there, but died suddenly, and was buried in one of the Italian villages.

When her husband saw that his own life must be a very short one he left his child with his sister in the United States and took a last journey, that he might stand once again by the grave of the one he had loved so well.

He was buried by her side at last, and so the little Roland was left alone, and at length came under the guardianship of his father's brother.

He was but six years old when his father died, and

remembered very little of a mother's care and love, she having died two years before his father.

The uncle had heard of Andrew Norfolk, and knowing that the family had once been known as wealthy, respectable people, he determined to find out something of him and also of the school at Southcott, which had been described as an excellent one, that would be the right place for the boy Roland.

He found out the facts about the owner of Norfolk Place, and he also found that the school was all that it been recommended to be, and so made his arrangements to send his nephew to it at the opening spring term.

He told him his relationship to the people at "Norf's Mountain," and tried to describe them fairly. He said nothing to him about visiting them, set no commands upon him, and granted no liberties; he left that to the principal of the school and to the boy's own preferences.

On the morning for the excursion to the mountain the room-mate of Roland said, as they were dressing, "They tell me you have a cousin living up at Norf's Mountain!"

"Yes," answered Roland a little indifferently; "My uncle said so."

"Tom is a splendid fellow, I think, or he would be

if he had any money to help him to a chance," said Harry.

"He knows all the nice places around Southcott, and he is never afraid of any thing. You see, all the people that ever lived in the old house were very wonderful. And, well I can't begin to tell you all the strange things that have happened there. You ought to hear him tell it!"

There were four long carry-alls, besides the school wagon, standing at the entrance to the avenue at precisely nine o'clock, which had been ordered to take the boys and their teachers to the "mountain."

They were a merry set, and as they started cheer after cheer rose, Harry Prichard leading off and swinging his cap above the others. Close by his side was James Mason, and even his usually quiet face seemed to be glowing with enthusiasm.

Roland Morton was the only one who did not seem to think it all very fine.

"I suppose he's seen so much before, had so much nicer times, and all that," Harry whispered to one of the boys. "And he's only twelve. Pshaw! I never can like him!"

But the object of his dislike seemed to be caring very little whether the boys liked him or not. He appeared to be in a deep study, which, it must be owned, was a strange thing for a boy of twelve on a

beautiful spring morning, with a set of merry boys around.

James Mason glanced at him, and the promise he had made to Mrs. Morrell came into his mind; then he gave a long, steady look at the new boy and wondered how he needed help, and just how he could begin to help him.

"If I thought he really cared about any thing—about his mother's death or his father's—I might show him how sorry I am for a boy who misses the old home." Just then some one shouted, "It's in sight!" and Harry Prichard rose and swung his cap with a long "Hurrah!" and even Mr. Morrell began singing, "To the hills! To the hills! To the hills away!" And Roland still kept his seat without any show of interest upon his face.

But Roland Morton was deeply interested, after all, in all that concerned Norf's Mountain, and he was very anxious to see it, and, more than all, to meet these cousins of whom he had heard, but whom he had not seen.

They began at last to ascend the hill, as they wound slowly around, and the sweet mountain air brought freshness to their faces and a ring of delight to their voices. Mrs. Morrell, watching them with her usual tenderness, said to her husband, "Are we not paid many times, Bernard, for all our care and pain, when we see such happiness?"

"Yes, yes, wife," he whispered, "but I've been watching the new boy—Roland. I don't exactly know what to think of him; I am making a study of him now; I feel a kind of weight upon my mind with regard to him."

"Yes," answered the wife; "he's an orphan. Give them all the love we can, and help them as we may, we never can make up for their great loss. We have had so many orphans come to us since the school was first opened, and I have found myself thinking so many times about those who have gone out from the school and wondering if I mothered them as I ought when they were with us. It is a great responsibility, as you say, Bernard; and sometimes I shrink from it all. But we have been called to it, husband, really called; and so, can we not expect to be led just right by the One who has called us?"

"Yes, my wife, if we are willing to follow so closely that we can hear His whisper to our hearts for each one of our flock, all will be right; but sometimes I forget about the real good and the true end for each of them, and think only of pleasing them now, and giving them an easy, happy time." And again he looked long and lovingly toward his boys.

His wife saw as he looked off upon the spring beauty that his lips moved, and she knew that he was asking to be led through the day.

Another prolonged shout from those in the first wagon was taken up by those behind, and the woods used it as an echo, and it seemed as if all the world must hear the news, "We are there!"

All the family were out to greet them—at least, all except Florrie. She was never expected to come out with the rest.

Mr. Norfolk was shaking hands with Mr. Morrell, and Harry Prichard was saying, "How are you, old fellow?" to Tom, while Roland Morton was narrowly watching Tom.

He knew Harry was telling this cousin something about himself. He caught an inquiring glance cast toward him from Tom, and he heard these words: "We'll show him!" And he felt that they meant nothing pleasant for him.

Mr. Morrell soon came forward, and, taking Roland by the hand, led him forward to Mr. Norfolk. "A fine boy he is," said the latter, "and he's been used to better things than we can show him here. Seen a great deal of the world for a boy of his age, too, I learn. Here, Tom! come and see your cousin!" he said pleasantly.

Tom came slowly forward, looking Roland in the face in a steady, defiant manner.

Those who looked on thought it a very strange greeting for cousins. "They'll be good friends one

of these days; I'm sure of it!" said Tom's father. "You see, their mothers were sisters. But come in and see Florrie; they say she looks just as your mother did—just that lady-like way she has, too. Her own mother—my girl's own mother—was a lady to be sure, a real lady! But she never had the chances that her sister did." And here he sighed.

Roland followed into the old kitchen. He had never seen such beams and such window-seats before.

The little Clara stood before her sister, who was listening to her childish recitation, her back was toward the door, and she did not see her father enter with Roland.

Mr. Norfolk came close to his daughter, and, touching her shoulder, said, "Florrie, my girl, come and speak to your cousin."

She turned quickly, dropped her book, blushed deeply, and went toward the boy, who wore a look of real surprise and interest. Now, if only the boys and Mr. and Mrs. Morrell could have seen him, perhaps they might have thought that he did, after all, care for something.

He was really thinking of what Mr. Norfolk had said about his daughter, and wondering if she was a bit like his mother, of whom he only had an indistinct remembrance.

If the boys had only known this perhaps we will

believe that they would have put away the unkind thoughts that were growing up in their hearts toward him, and would have let their young sympathies have their way.

But boys do not always believe more than their eyes can see, and so many a mistake is made which the after years make known.

Florrie was thinking also of Roland's mother, and wondering if the boy was at all like her. She remembered her mother's letters from her, and also how delighted she seemed when she received one. All this flashed across her mind as she took her cousin's delicate hand and told him she was glad to see him.

They sat down, and the sound of the voices of the boys outside stole in through the open door.

"Do you like Southcott? or, rather, do you like the school?" asked Florrie.

"I don't like it much," answered Roland, moodily.

"But you will, by-and-by," said Florrie, "when you know Mr. and Mrs. Morrell and Miss Reid better; and Southcott has beautiful spots around it. I know it's all new to you, and you've left your home; and no place can be like home, it seems."

"O! I don't believe I mind that so much," said Roland. "I don't think I have ever really had a home since father and mother died; we've always been going a great deal, uncle and I."

Florrie had a pitying tone as she said, "I'm so sorry for any body that doesn't have a home to love, and people that are dearer than all the world beside." And she gave a fond look at the old ceiling above her.

There was almost a tear in the boy's eye at this. If only the boys outside could have seen his look then! But they did not; they were busy talking over the plans for the day, and their teachers were helping them, all except Mr. Sizer. He had never been known to join in any real fun, and never played at ball and never went fishing and rowing, as did Mr. Morrell.

Mr. Sizer always seemed a sad man, and appeared to live just because he was made to. As soon as he stepped out of the wagon he took his book and started toward the woods for a quiet time all by himself.

"What will you do first?" asked Mr. Morrell of Harry Prichard, whom he considered a leader among the boys.

Harry looked at Tom with the same question in his eyes.

"There's ball," and in a lower tone, "I caught some fish, fine ones, the other day down at Juno's Lake," answered Tom.

Most of the boys shouted, "A game at ball!" and

the few that had heard Tom's undertones to Harry shuddered slightly, for some had heard the story of one of the Southcott boys and Juno's Lake.

It had happened six years before, when Tom was nine years old, but he remembered every circumstance connected with it, and how they had brought the lifeless body up the mountain and had laid it out in the room that was used for the old family treasures and how he had gone in when the moonlight was streaming in, holding his mother's hand, and the light had been blown out by a sudden breeze, and he had screamed and clutched his mother's dress, and she had quieted him, saying, "My child, you were not afraid of him in life, why need you be when he is still in death?"

He had been led nearer by his mother, and she had uncovered the face and had passed her hand over the hair, saying, "Dear boy! Poor mother, God help her!"

He could never forget that night, nor his mother's after-talk, when she spoke of the sorrow that the mother must feel when she heard the sad news. "Awful as it must be," she had said, "I think it must be easier for any mother to feel that death has taken her boy than that sin has laid a strong hold upon him. My precious boy, such a knowledge of sin's hold on you would break my heart."

Tom, try as he might, could not get rid of these memories; they would follow him; and sometimes when Florrie reproved him for his wrong-doings it seemed as if her voice sounded just as his mother's did that night, and that her eyes held the same deep expression of love and pity for him. Of all things what Tom disliked most was to have a person pity him.

Tom was glad enough that the boys generally did not want to go to the lake, for he wanted to see Harry alone and learn more about the new boy, his cousin Roland.

When they were well on their way he said, "And you don't like him, Harry! I know I sha'n't, then; and if he doesn't care to have fun, and has seen all there is to see in the world, why, I despise him."

"Perhaps he thinks his money makes him a great deal too good for other boys," said Harry; "but I don't believe he's got a cent more than Jimmy Mason has, and Jimmy seems to think that every other boy is better than he is himself. He's a soft-hearted little chick, and what I'm afraid of is this: he'll go to trying to pity him, and that boy will give him a settler. I ought to have brought Jimmy along;" then, in a softer tone, "I'll tell you what it seems to me—it seems to me that Jimmy wont live to be a man! He has a kind of look of all the people that die."

Both the boys were silent for a few minutes, and

then Harry began again, "He's awful in some ways —for holding on, I mean. He wouldn't break study hour rules nor fool away his time nor tell against a fellow if he died for not doing it. I think it's a little bit strange that a boy that can't hold out at ball and can't row without getting faint should hold on about the other things as I told you."

"Yes," answered Tom; "our Florrie's just that kind. I know all about it."

"I almost hated him at first," said Harry, "because he couldn't get up the strength to play as the rest could; but he did me a good turn once, and I've been watching him ever since to see if he would hold out; and it's just wonderful how he does it! But I can't get rid of the idea that he wont live! I really believe dying wouldn't be so dreadful to him. I've heard him say some things that make me think so—talks about seeing his mother, and all that."

But the boys have come to the lake, and they sit down and are silent for a while; perhaps listening to the birds, that are giving one of their best concerts.

"I should like to know my cousin, after all," broke out Tom at last. "Do you believe he can bat a ball if he tries?"

"Well, I shouldn't wonder if he could, but he can't be got into a game," answered Harry.

"I wish we'd asked him to come with us, after all;

he must be a little bit lonesome," said Tom. "Suppose we go back after him?" he added.

They were well on the road again when, in the distance, sitting upon a trunk of a fallen tree, they saw Roland and James Mason side by side.

"Let us go up behind and listen," said Tom, and Harry, without thinking of the meanness of the act, stole up, and the two, lying upon a moss bed and shielded from view by the thick shrubbery, heard the whole conversation.

"I shall never like the boys here," Roland said. "They don't seem pleasant boys, and the one they call Harry Prichard, why, he couldn't have looked at a slave in a worse way than he did at me; and as for my cousin Tom, I don't like his looks at all, and I heard him say something about me that no decent boy would say. I'm not quite thirteen, it's true, but I know better than to act that way. His sister, now, is just a beauty, and she has the ways of the people I've met—the ladies, I mean."

"But," James began, "the boys are really kind, and if they all knew that you hadn't any father and mother, and that you wanted to be friendly with them, it would make such a difference, I think."

"Do you?" Roland asked, and then the two were led to talking of other things, until Roland began telling of what he had seen in Europe, and James

seemed almost another boy, so eager was he to hear all about it.

When he stopped talking Tom whispered to Harry, "I guess we had better be going now."

"Yes," answered Harry, "the sooner we get away the better, for I for one wouldn't be caught here for the world."

They had joined the other boys, and Mr. Morrell had come out and was saying, "I must count heads to find out if my whole flock is here," when James and Roland came up.

Every eye turned toward them, and each boy thought, "What has happened to them?" And no wonder, for both faces wore a new look.

Mrs. Morrell, coming out with the dinner-bell in her hand, saw the two boys together, and, noticing their expression, grew happy with the thought, "Jamie has kept the promise he made me, and has begun to help the new boy."

They began their march to the house. The long table was set in the old room; the tea-kettle, from which the coffee-pots had been once filled, was again singing as it hung from the crane in the fire-place; and as they went in, two by two, they glanced curiously at the old-time crane and kettle and hearth.

After the dinner, however, came the real event of the day, when they were all taken into the room

where the treasures were kept. Mr. Norfolk went before and took the boards from one of the windows, and let in a little light and air where they had been strangers for months.

Then he laid out the coats and dresses and china, with the muskets and pistols and the sword that had been in the battles of the Revolution; and he told the old stories again, and Tom, with a group of wide-eyed boys about him, told things that made their hearts beat faster and their cheeks glow with excitement.

Tom must have known that he was a hero in the eyes of the boys. He did know it, and the knowledge seemed to inspire him to give more glowing accounts than usual; perhaps, also, the fact that Roland Morton was regarding him closely and seemed interested in what he was telling helped in the inspiration.

Florrie at the other end of the room was listening too; listening anxiously, and as she now and then caught a word a blush came to her cheek, a blush of shame for Tom; for she knew he was making much that he was telling of the strange, wild, wonderful deeds of those who had once lived in the Norfolk house.

"And he shot three men right from this window, and he buried their bodies under that biggest oak over there." Half a dozen boys, Roland among

them, rushed to the window to get a glimpse of the tree, and came back with a strange awe upon their faces.

But Harry Prichard did not look out, he had heard the story before.

Next Tom told how one of his ancestors had buried some gold many years before—somewhere near the house, no one could tell exactly where; but he went on, "I am going to dig for it one of these days. I've been looking 'round, and I've made up my mind just where it lies. I shall need some help; one can't expect to do it alone. May be some of you boys would like to help me." And here he paused as he looked into the eager faces about him. Tom in that glance made sure of one thing—he could have plenty of followers at his call.

The wagons were again filled as the twilight came on, and as the school rode home at this still hour there was very little conversation; the boys were busy with their thoughts, and the common verdict for Tom must have been, "He is a hero!"

Roland Morton as he parted with James Mason in the school hall said, "I should like to see my cousin Tom again. I want to ask him a great many questions."

Harry overheard it and told another boy, who told another, and the news went around, so that half the

school knew that night that Roland Morton had really become interested in something.

"How pale you are, Jamie!" said Harry, when the two were alone in their room. "Are you tired?"

"Yes, a little," answered James. "And—and—I wish Tom wouldn't."

"Wouldn't what, Chick?"

"O, talk so."

"Why, Jamie! don't you like it?"

"I think his sister did not;" said James.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FIRST SCHOOL MONTH.

PROFESSOR JOHN SIZER, formerly of one of the leading colleges of New England, afterward of the "Southcott Home" school, had been a hard student. When he was very young his parents died, and an uncle took him with the intention of educating him if he should prove worthy of the interest he should show toward him.

This uncle had himself worked out success through many difficulties, and he expected others to do as much as he had himself done.

He made up his mind to begin right with his nephew, and try to make him understand that his future depended entirely upon his own exertions.

"You'll have to study for it," he said to the boy again and again, "but it will pay!"

The boy did study, and had his perfect marks and the approving words of his teacher; but no advancement and no amount of praise from teachers seemed to really satisfy his uncle; there were always heights to be reached so far away, and so he urged him on, until, at seventeen, he was ready to enter college.

"You'll have to give up every thing else if you would make a scholar!" was the cold, unlovely prospect that he laid before John.

Just before the college term should commence, and when the youth was filled with a feverish expectancy of the examination, he was stricken with fever, and through weeks of suffering he lay in his room with the awful truth above him that he had nearly given his life for this education that from a little boy his uncle had impressed upon his mind was his only object in life.

He lived, however, and taxed himself more severely than before to make up for the time that had been lost in the sick room.

He entered college, distinguished himself in the study of languages, and afterward became a professor where he had been a learner.

At forty-five he seemed a broken-down man; and why should he not? He had, as his uncle had taught him, given up all for this knowledge of languages.

He never had found time to take any of life's joys, never could use his eyes to look at beautiful things, nor his thoughts to dwell upon them; he was in reality a withered soul, and his uncle had done him a wrong that could never be repaired.

He was obliged to give up his situation in the college from ill health, and it must be owned that his

resignation was gladly received; for, although faithful to the core, and exacting almost to perfection, as far as the text-books were concerned, he had no idea of ranging beyond them and bringing forth new things to embellish the old dry husks among which he had always lived.

One morning five years before the date of my story Mr. Morrell called his wife into the study and read her a letter from Mr. John Sizer, which contained an application from him for the position of Latin teacher in the Southcott school. Mrs. Morrell's face wore a disturbed expression as she listened, and at last, when her husband had finished, she said:

"It is a very hard matter to decide, Bernard! You know what my cousin John's life has been; what a barren experience he has had; but it is only for our boys I fear. If he should expect them to put all the sweet and pleasant things out of their lives as he has put them out of his own it would be ruin to them. You know that, Bernard!"

"Yes, Prissy, I know; but I've had it thrust upon me of late that you and I have made things a little too easy for them, and—perhaps—I can't say that it wouldn't be better if our management had an offset."

"Yes, it might be," the wife answered, thoughtfully; "but there are the orphans, poor dears! I could not bear to see them used badly."

"A finer teacher than your cousin John Sizer could not be found in these parts," went on Mr. Morrell. At least he knows the books thoroughly, and he exacts almost perfection from his scholars, I am told."

"There is the trouble, Bernard!" still pleaded the wife. "I fear it would be all an exaction and very little leading!"

"Oh but, Prissy, I don't really see how it would be possible for boys to get abused in any way when they have such a sympathizing mother in you."

It was settled at last that Professor John Sizer should be engaged as Latin teacher at "Southcott Home."

He proved to be really a very exacting teacher; but, as Mr. Morrell had predicted, the boys were never abused; for Mrs. Morrell's watchful eye of love never seemed turned from them.

Harry Prichard had clashed most with the Latin teacher; for Harry inherited his father's love of getting knowledge wherever it was to be found, and could not be made to see that the text-books held all that could be desired in this direction.

In the end it happened that Mr. Sizer kindly met him half way, and the two got on together afterward quite pleasantly, if not peaceably.

But Harry had his own experience always before

his eyes, and waited to see how that of other boys would compare with it.

It was not strange that he should expect a disagreement between Roland Morton and Mr. Sizer, and it came during the very first month.

Roland Morton was in disgrace! He had told Mr. Sizer openly, before the class, that he would not take the declension of a particular noun again, for he knew it well enough.

"Until you know it perfectly you do not know it well enough, and until you can be subject to my wishes you are banished from the Latin class!" said Mr. Sizer.

Roland rose haughtily and, taking his book, left the room. What a hum of astonishment there was among the boys that day! And how impatiently they waited for the dinner-hour, to see Roland again! But his seat was vacant at the noon meal and also at the night; then they knew that he was disgraced.

They also knew it from Mrs. Morrell's face, for she never could help showing her grief at the misfortune of any boy, especially that of an orphan.

"I wonder how it will all turn out," said Harry that night to James, after he had been the rounds and talked with all his friends about it. "Ned Cummins believes he'll be expelled; for he says he never will give in—he knows that—and he is quite sure Pro-

fessor Sizer will not. You see, he thought he knew all about Latin too! Just think of his setting himself up against Mr. Sizer!"

Harry must have forgotten how he had himself set himself against his opinion, and still held his own first view of the matter although he had thought it wiser to outwardly submit.

Roland Morton's meals were taken to him for a week, and each day Mrs. Morrell knocked at the boy's door, and each day, in her gentle, persuasive manner, she tried to have him understand that it was not only a wise but a noble course for people to submit to those in authority.

Many a time she came away from him discouraged, and sought her own room and asked of the Lord wisdom for herself and help for her orphan pupil.

James Mason, one night, prayed too. He was all alone and the twilight had deepened in his room, and as he entered he thought, "No one is here." And he sat down by the window and began to think of Roland. The words of Mrs. Morrell came to him, "He's an orphan, like yourself; I want you to try and help him."

That night Mrs. Morrell had said to Roland, "I want you to go over to James Mason's room; he is alone there. I saw him enter, and he is an orphan, like yourself."

Roland did not wish to go, but he would not displease Mrs. Morrell where he believed there could not be much at stake; so he took off his shoes and went softly over. Mrs. Morrell had said, "Go right into the first door around the corner to the right, and then there is an inner door at which you can knock."

He opened the outer door and then he stopped, for he heard a voice. It was Jamie's, and he was praying. He was praying as one does who feels he is alone with God, and cares for nothing else but that his prayer may be heard and answered.

This was really the first time that Roland had heard a boy pray to use words of his own. He had himself, when quite small, said the Lord's Prayer every night, but he had never thought much about its meaning, and had not been at all anxious that it should be heard.

He could not move. As Jamie went on he listened. He pleaded again and again for his orphan friend. "Why should he call me his friend?" he asked. He waited until the prayer was ended, and then he crept back to his own room and went to bed.

But he lay thinking long after the sound of voices had died away in the halls. Why should he pray for me? I'm sure he *was* praying for me! Then he remembered how he had seen Jamie glance toward

him with so much pity in his pale face many a time during school hours.

"I really believe he does care for me, after all," he thought, "and Mrs. Morrell I know does. I am going to please her if I can." But here came back the truth, "Then you must submit to Mr. Sizer!"

It was a hard struggle that went on within him that night, and when it was ended Mr. Sizer's cause had not really gained; it was only for the sake of pleasing Mrs. Morrell and Jamie Mason that he went into the class the next day and followed the Latin teacher's plan for him to the letter.

The boys watched him closely, and when he stood up to recite they were astonished to hear him repeat the lesson, word for word, without betraying the least feeling of any kind.

This was quite contrary to their experience. They had seen boys come to terms with Mr. Sizer many and many a time before, but had never seen anything like this! There had always been tears and a faltering voice and a reluctant obedience; but Roland Morton surprised them. And, as I am writing about boys as they are, not what we would wish them to be, I must say that many were disappointed at this turn of affairs, and seemed to feel that they had been cheated out of something that really belonged to them.

With most of these the feeling was only a transient one, but there were others who held it until it led to something quite serious.

When they noticed how Roland seemed to enjoy the society of James Mason, and to look across to his seat and actually smile upon him, things began to grow hard for James.

There was one boy—Ned Cummins—who had always disliked James Mason. It was certainly no fault of Jamie's, for he had never been unkind toward him. I am obliged to say that it was only on account of his goodness; for it is very true that ever since the perfect One said, "They hated me without a cause," there have been those who have hated and persecuted others whose characters and lives have been beyond their own.

Boys do it; men and women do it as well.

There was something about Jamie's unselfish, quiet nature that Ned's selfish, unquiet one could not understand, and he hated it with all his might; and, more than that, his influence with the other boys with regard to it, after his jealousy was roused, was very great.

Jamie began to notice the change and to hear whispers against himself, and the more Roland Morton showed him attention the more he noticed the growing dislike.

There are sensitive natures who seem to wither under distrust, who keep the pain of it all to themselves. Jamie was of this number, and many a night he went to his bed to think of what the boys had said to him and to wonder why they did it.

He did not tell Harry his trouble, but Harry guessed there was something wrong with his friend, and he longed to know what it was.

They were going to have a rowing match upon the lake; for boys at Southcott liked to follow the fashions of larger schools, and at that time the papers were full of the prize rowings between two of the first rowers in the country.

"Let's row against Roland Morton and James Mason," said Ned Cummins one day to Harry Prichard.

"Against Jamie and Roland! What can you be thinking of?" said Harry. "Jamie isn't strong enough to handle an oar."

"I've heard you say so before," said Ned, with a sarcasm in his tones that he was not able to hide; "but I'm not so sure, after all; we can try him, at least. If Roland, who seems to think he is so perfect and wont look at any one else, is willing to take him for a partner, we ought to be satisfied, for Roland, you know, has seen every thing."

"It's my birthday, and I'm thirteen at last," said Roland, as he ran down the steps leading from the

school-room, and almost stumbled upon Harry Prichard.

"I wanted to see you," returned Harry, "for we're going to have a rowing match upon the lake, and Ned Cummins wants you and Jamie to row against us."

Roland straightened himself. "I should say that would be hardly a fair thing," he answered, haughtily. "You are both much stronger than we are, and have had practice in rowing!"

"All right," said Harry, "I will tell Ned what you say, and he will ask two others."

After supper, as the boys were all out upon the lawn, Ned seeing Roland talking with Jamie, went up and said, "So you think you are not strong enough and don't know enough about rowing to try against Harry and me?" And his voice was very derisive as he looked scornfully at Jamie. "I've been telling the boys what you said, and I've come to find out whether you've made up your mind for good and all that you are not able to row against us."

Roland felt the sting of the words and glanced toward Jamie and noticed that his cheeks flushed and his eyes seemed to gather a new fire. Jamie cast an appealing look toward Roland, as if he would ask a great thing of him, something which he could not be denied.

"What do you say, Jamie?" Roland asked at length.

"Let us try! We can try, at least!" said Jamie.

Ned went back to the boys, and soon after there arose from the group peal upon peal of laughter. Ned had told them in this way: "Boys, there's to be a rowing match after all; the renowned Lord Morton has consented to show his dexterity with the oar, and the famous midget, his page, Mason, will assist against our poor weak selves." And he looked across at Harry's stout figure.

But Harry did not seem to enjoy the joke; he really felt grieved on account of Jamie, and was very sorry that he had himself consented to be a partner in the affair; but it was too late to retract, he thought, and after all it might not be a great injury to Jamie, and if it only took down the airs of that haughty new boy, why, that would be a great gain for the whole school. So when the boys threw up their caps for the last shout he was ready to join as loudly as any.

But after Jamie and he were in bed he could not get to sleep; and when his bed-fellow went off into a disturbed slumber, and he looked through the moonlight into his pale face and heard him sigh, he began to be quite miserable with a sense of his own ingratitude.

But a boy's grief seldom keeps him long from

sleep, and at last he was lost to all thoughts of Jamie, and of himself too, and was in a sound sleep, from which he did not waken until the rising-bell rang, long after the sun was up.

He rubbed his eyes as he sat up in bed and then glanced around and saw no Jamie.

He got up quickly, ran to the window and looked out; his own guilty conscience suggesting the worst accident. A little way off, upon the lawn, he saw his room-mate going through gymnastic performances; he was using his arms as he had never seen him before; by and by he saw Roland Morton meet him. The two had a long talk together. He watched them carefully until it lacked a few minutes of the breakfast hour; then he dressed hastily, saying to himself, "I wonder what they're up to! I'll be bound that smart fellow, Morton, will teach Jamie his ways, so that very soon he'll be just like him, foolish little chick! I shouldn't wonder if he'd turn against *me* in the end!" Just here there was an accusing thrust from conscience, "And why shouldn't you expect it?"

CHAPTER V.

GETTING READY.

THAT day at recess Ned took Harry aside and said, "I've something to show you. I've just got something from Lord Morton. It's a note asking for time—a full two months!"

Harry said quickly, "Don't give it!" And he was about to tell what he had seen in the morning, but a sudden impulse stopped him, and he thought, "I wont be so mean."

"I don't know. You see it says, 'as there is so little time to practice, and you have the advantage of us so far, I cannot consent to row unless you consent to this arrangement!' Did you ever hear any thing so pompous as that before?

"But I want to tell you what I've been thinking. If we say we wont fall in with his terms then he'll back out; and there's really no fear of his getting any advantage of us if we give him a year to get ready in."

"But you know there are ways," said Harry, "by which they can get stronger; at least I've heard of the students in the colleges practicing with dumb-

bells and such kind of things, nights and mornings, and at all times when they did not practice with oars."

"Yes, perhaps you have; but there's no fear of those two practicing more than we can. They have Saturdays, but we have the same. It's really too laughable, anyway, to think of Jamie's trying an oar with those slender arms!"

"I wouldn't like to beat Jamie, after all," said Harry, thoughtfully. "He's a good fellow, though he does follow the new boy. And he just takes to him from pity! You can be sure of that! I know it isn't because he likes him."

"Well, for my part I want to see him taken down! I never could bear these boys that are so good and never get into any kind of a scrape. I can't bear them, I say!" And he stamped his foot as if he wanted it understood that he meant every word of it. "But as to the waiting, I'd agree to that if we could manage to get up a little fun in some way, to make the time pass away."

"There'll be another school picnic by-and-by," suggested Harry.

"Yes, I know; but it wont be over at Norf's Mountain; most likely it will be around at Cranty's Bend, where there is not much fun to be found."

"I would like to see Tom Norfolk," said Harry,

musingly; "he's always planning grand things, and tells such stories!"

"Yes, Tom is a smart one; so different from this cousin of his! When he gets his money he'll do something great, I'm quite sure."

"I wish," said Harry, after a little silence, "that my father was not so set about my being a doctor. I know I shall never make a good one. I'll tell you," and he lowered his voice to a whisper, "I sometimes almost hate people who are sick and pale, and can't do just as they want to."

"That's why you used to hate this Mason so, eh?"

"Well, I did; at least I wished he could be stronger; and now, well I may as well tell you, I have just those feelings toward him now sometimes; but then I know it's awful, for he did me that good turn—well I've never told you just what it was. I guess I wont now, but I ought to be very kind to him, I know that. I am going to try; I've made up my mind to fight it out all to myself. Though why I wasn't made to be as kind to weak things as my father is I don't know. I've actually seen him take a spider up that he knew our housekeeper would kill if she got the chance—I've seen him take it up and say, 'Poor spider, why shouldn't you live!'

"Our Mary Ann, the housekeeper, 's death on spiders, and so am I, and all kinds of weak things too. I do like strong things and strong people; I can't help it!" And he held out his arm without seeming to think that he was doing so, and cast an admiring glance at it.

"Well, what do you say," asked Ned at last, "about writing him a note? You can do it better than I can; you know just what to say; fix it up all right, and don't give in any."

After school Harry handed Ned a folded sheet of note-paper upon which was written, in his best hand:

"ROLAND MORTON:

"Your request for more time for preparation for the rowing match has been received by my chief. After consideration he has concluded to grant it. He hopes that you, with your assistant, will be ready to keep the appointment at the lake on the day at the hour mentioned in your note."

Ned read it, raised his cap a little from his forehead, read it again, and, slapping Harry upon the shoulder, said, "Well, if that don't beat Lawyer Benson all to pieces! I've always thought you'd make a lawyer or—or a minister."

Harry blushed a deep red at the idea of his making

a minister; for the minister in his father's church at home he regarded as almost perfect, and the one at Southcott, he felt sure, was so far beyond any thing that he could ever expect to reach himself that Ned's words made him very much ashamed of himself.

"You could not have done better! Nobody could, old fellow! And if Lord Morton don't get a set-back I'm no judge! Now all we've got to do is to spend our Saturdays rowing. We've got to stick to it, whether we want to or not; and even if we have the headache, and can't study, we've got to row. Of course there's no fear about our beating; but then I want it to be a brilliant victory! Most likely there'll be others than the schoolboys to look on; there'll be Tom, and perhaps his sister and some of the ladies of the village."

Ned felt the necessity of impressing the importance of faithful practice upon Harry, for he knew his failing. He was something of a shirk, and had been known to have headaches at review times and to be confined to his room for the day.

Ned had watched his friend closely, and, spite of his liking for him, was obliged to own that he was a little in doubt about the headaches.

But Harry promised with so much enthusiasm that the chief felt quite sure he could depend upon him.

When the boys heard the decision they were a little disappointed, for it seemed a long time to wait for the great event that was so surely to take down the new boy's pride.

The first Saturday after the plans were perfected the two chiefs, with their assistants, met at the lake ready for work. When I say that the lake was only a quarter of a mile across I can imagine I hear boys who know something of the great lakes saying, "Why, that is only a pond!" Perhaps they are right, but then the boys at Southcott called it a lake, and they must have known more of it than any one else, and, I am sure, had their reasons for naming it so.

Whatever rights it had to the name of "Stella Lake," these had nothing to do with the question of its beauty, for a lovelier spot could not be found around Southcott, and, as I have said before, nature had done very much for Southcott.

Here and there, along the edge of the water, were groups of trees, some of them leaning and dipping their branches in it. Back in the wood beyond might be found all the rare things in vines and shrubs and blossoms; so that "Stella Lake" and its vicinity had a variety of attractions.

The school owned boats, and the boys often rowed up and down, or across to the opposite shore, but a

rowing match had never yet been undertaken by any set of boys since the foundation of Southcott Home.

Roland Morton had decided to have a boat built; he had talked with James about it, and both had agreed that it would be a fine thing. Roland without much thought had at the first meeting at the lake told Ned Cummins his plan. "You see we want something light and pretty if we're going to make a show of our rowing, and I am told there is a boat-builder up at the head of the lake who turns out boats that are really handsome."

Ned heard this and experienced quite a shock, for it rushed upon him that Harry and himself were going to be severely tried; perhaps, too, a sense that they deserved it might have added to the unpleasantness of the situation.

But he made a show of unconcern and said, "Yes; true enough; we do need something better than these old school arks;" but he glanced uneasily at Harry, who did not seem to be at all troubled.

The truth of it was, he had not only spent his own monthly allowance, but had borrowed from Harry every cent of his; he could not have been so disagreeably affected by any proposed arrangement in the world as by this one that required an outlay of money, he felt.

But the boys who had come to see the opening fun were getting impatient, and the two chiefs, with their seconds, stepped into their respective boats, took up the oars and started.

Roland Morton did not seem so sure, although, as was usual with him, there was not a trace of confusion upon his fine face.

Jamie seemed paler than ever, but his eyes were very bright, and he took his oars almost eagerly.

The first oar strokes were very unsteady, and the boat wabbled around in a ridiculous way that brought a shout from the boys upon the banks.

Roland bit his lips, but kept the motion of his arms without stopping for a minute.

At last they gained something like an even movement and followed slowly behind the first boat.

Ned had gained the other side when Roland was only half across the stream.

Ned rested his oars in their locks, and, turning to Harry, asked, "What's to be done now? I haven't a cent, as you know, and you haven't either. I can't ask my father for any more; he told me I should never overdraw my monthly allowance; he's pretty strict, my father is, as you know, and I should be an undone boy if he knew every thing!" And here he gave a low whistle. "I say, Harry, how is it with your father? He's a trifle easy, I guess; at least I've

always thought so by the way he lets you spend money. Could you get a little on time—enough to pay for the boat, at least a part of it down?"

"I don't think I could," answered Harry; "you see, father has given me quite a sum since school began, and a boat—at least my part of it—would cost two months' allowance at least." After a short silence he said, "I think it would be better to use this boat, and not think of a new one. You see we shall beat anyway, and, after all, it can't make much difference whether it is an old boat or a new one, so long as it wins."

"But it *will* make a difference!" said Ned, this time very impatiently; "it will take off half the glory! Every bit of half! Just think of this old concern pulling out by the side of Lord Morton's splendid new affair! I've got a little pride in the matter, I can tell you, if I have not the money of Lord Morton and Sir James Mason!"

By this time the other boat was alongside, and both started, without an exchange of words, for the place from which they set out.

Thus ended the first day's practice, for Roland felt too fatigued for further effort, and James was quite exhausted with his exertions.

Ned could not feel easy in his mind until the boat business could be settled satisfactorily. He was one

of those boys who, not desiring to bring pain or discomfort to others, are willing to shift their own burdens upon any body that will take them.

He did not want to get Harry into a scrape, but he really saw no other way of getting out of one himself. All the rest of the day he turned over the facts in his mind, and wondered what he could do to mend matters.

The next day, Sunday, was a beautiful day, one of the brightest of the season; but its calm beauty and clear light almost maddened him. The rising-bell rang, but he turned over toward the wall, saying within himself, "I cannot get up. I want to think; to lie here all day and think it out. That dreadful new boy has made me this trouble! And Harry! I did think Harry had a little generosity about him!"

But Ned's trouble commenced away back beyond the first thought of a rowing match; and while he is thinking I must give the history of his wrong goings.

Sandy, the boat-builder, was a Scotchman who lived with his wife at the head of the lake, in a little two-roomed cottage. He was a man well along in life, and had come to America more than twenty years before the events in my story took place. He seemed to possess a wonderful fund of information, and had a very fascinating way of giving it.

Ned had at one time, in rowing up the lake with a

former pupil of Southcott, discovered the old man's cottage. As both he and his companion were in search of adventure this seemed a grand opportunity to satisfy their cravings in this direction.

Sandy was very happy to see them. He invited them into his house, set some home-brewed beer before them, and even offered them each a clay pipe like his own.

They had refused the pipes then, but had taken the beer and had listened to Sandy's description of his life in Scotland, which he illustrated so charmingly. Then he told them stories of Robert Burns and related what he had heard of his wild ways; and when, at the end, he said, "He was a braw laddie, was Bobbie Burns!" Ned felt quite carried out of himself, and above the range of Southcott boys.

To be a "braw laddie" like "Bobbie" seemed something quite worthy a life's effort. And then the good times that this wild poet enjoyed!

When he told Sandy as much, the wife, an old lady who sat knitting near by, said with a cracked voice: "But Bobbie was a sair troubled soul at the last; his own sins made him sick and full of remorse, and he told other young men in his verses—don't you remember, Sandy?—

"'The smile or frown of awful Heaven
To virtue or to vice is given.'

He surely felt the sting of his own sins! Boys ought to be told that—told that their doings, good or bad, will turn to bless or to curse them!"

She cast a severe look upon her husband, and then she went on with her knitting; but Ned was sure he saw a tear steal down her withered face, and the thought flashed across his mind, "Perhaps she knows of some one who has felt the sting of the words; it may be that Sandy has gone wrong!"

Ned visited the cottage many a time after that, and at last began going alone. Sandy told him many wild stories and gave him accounts of the doings of other reckless young people; but he always preferred to hear of Burns, who seemed to follow out his desires, however lawless they might be.

Sandy never told these things before his wife; at least he had not since the day when she had reproved him for it. He took Ned out to the shade of an oak, and they seated themselves upon a log, and Sandy gave Ned a pipe and said, "Try it, my laddie, and make believe you are Bobbie!" Ned had taken it and, after repeated tryings, had actually learned to like it; and thus, though only fifteen, had learned to smoke.

Sandy had a kind heart, and would have suffered much himself rather than injure any one else, particularly a boy, for he loved boys, and was happy when he

could have them around him. The truth was, Sandy's sense of right and wrong had been dulled by his own indulgence in habits that destroy the purity of man or boy. He saw how Ned was attracted toward those who had caroused and had done just as they liked, and he meant to place before him pictures that should hold at least enough of this feature to keep the attraction. He certainly had not the least thought of doing the school-boy a harm.

He supplied Southcott Home with fish for the table, bringing them on Saturdays during the fishing season. At such times Ned usually returned with him to his cottage, or, if he could not find it convenient to go then, he went alone later in the day.

Sandy began to consider him quite a companion, and if it rained and Ned did not keep his appointment he was quite out of temper—so much so that his wife noticed it, and once, after she had imagined the reason, said sharply, "Sandy, you're a strange man! What keeps the younker but your strange cracking o' Bobbie and his ilk?"

Sandy passed it off with a good-natured defense, but the watchful dame was not so easily pacified, and she kept her watch.

Her own life had been very pure and her duties had been performed with the greatest of faithfulness, and her earnest and upright nature had been sorely

tried ever since her marriage-day by her husband's careless, godless course.

As I have said, Ned had learned to smoke, though that was a secret between himself and Sandy; and he was learning another thing: he was learning to crave something beyond harmless drinks, and he had advanced the money for a keg of lager that Sandy bought at Southcott and carried home in his boat.

To do the generous thing in regard to the drink and tobacco seemed very Burns-like, and quite the proper thing.

This was the way that he had got rid of his allowance; this, and another fear in connection with the boat, was what was making him so miserable on this Sunday morning.

Sandy held his secret—a secret which, if divulged, would be the means of expelling him from Southcott and of bringing down upon him the anger of his father.

The more he thought of it the worse the situation seemed and the greater the improbability of deliverance from it.

"I hate those two boys!" he said, over and over to himself, with his head under the bed-clothes, and he clinched his hands in his intensity of hatred.

"It has all come from the new boy and that mean James Mason! I'll get even with Jim; but the

other—it will not be so easy to get the best of him. If Sandy should let out any thing, when they go up there to see about the boat, what should I do!"

Thus, he was harassed again and again, and in this way the whole day, which was made for a day of blessed peace, passed.

Did it enter his mind that day that all this was the sting of wrong-doing, of which Sandy's wife had spoken?

CHAPTER VI.

TOM.

THE next week, Saturday, Roland and James started early in the morning for a row up the lake to Sandy's cottage to talk about the new boat. Ned had said to Harry, "If you will not write to your father we shall have to wait for something to turn up. Lord Morton and that weakling have gone up to Sandy's now; I saw them start. I suppose the old man will just be taken with his smart ways. I shouldn't wonder at all if he just dropped the rest of us!"

"We don't care for that," answered Harry. "What do you care what an old fish-seller think?" Of course Ned could not explain how much and why he cared about Sandy's opinions.

"I wish I could see Tom Norfolk," said Ned in a troubled way, "he's just splendid to think up ways of doing things, and he always has a little money to spare; he's like—" he was going to say he was like "Bobbie Burns" in his free, daring way of doing things, but he checked himself in time to save his secret, and said, "he's like the great men I've read about, that would do any thing for a friend!"

Harry felt the rebuke that Ned intended to put into his words, and looking down began to think in earnest about trying to do a fine thing toward his chief.

While he was thus thinking the voice of Tom sounded out on the clear air. His greeting was after the war-whoop style, and by the time the two had turned he had bounded to their side and had commenced talking.

"Just the one I wanted to see!" said Ned, in a new and delighted way. "In fact I've wanted to see you for more than a week. You see, I'm a little short of money, and I thought—well, I didn't know but you might tell me where I could borrow a little; say for a couple of months. It's pretty hard on a fellow to be fixed in the way I am."

Ned was taking into account what he had heard Tom say about wanting money, and he felt sure of his sympathy.

"Yes, it is hard; I know all about it myself. I've had rough times enough trying to manage."

"I know," said Ned, "but you always contrive to get out of scrapes, and get out of them without any one's knowing it."

"I've always managed," returned Tom, "to borrow a little, but I've got to pay it all when I am of age. Dear, dear! The time does seem so long in passing."

He did not explain that the little sums he had managed to borrow were taken from the home allowance with which his sister Florrie had intrusted him; but it must be said in favor of Tom that he really did mean to pay back every cent whenever his own money should fall into his hands.

"You can't wait for something to turn up?" began Tom again. "Because if you could I might in some way—and if nothing should turn up—why, as I said, I might, if you could wait awhile, do you a good turn." Then, as if a new idea had flashed into his mind, "Where is my cousin? Where is Roland Morton? I want to see him!"

"He's gone up to the lake, he and Jim Mason." And then Ned explained all about the rowing match and his difficulty regarding it, to which Tom listened with a great deal of curiosity.

"Well, that is a fix, I'm sure;" he said decidedly at last. "How did you make out to get so far behind? And you say your father wont help you? Nor any friends?" And he glanced in a suggestive way toward Harry.

Harry began to feel a little awkward, and he kicked the grass at his feet and beat the life out of an innocent little daisy, and then stammered, "My father is kind and generous, but he's—well, you don't know my father; if you did you'd never think I could ask him

for money above the amount of my allowance; he's very particular about some things, and about my habit of spending, more than any thing else. I wish he didn't have such strange ideas about it. He says that if a boy spends more than his allowance he will, when he grows to be a man, live beyond his income; and he despises a man that does that. No; I can't ask my father. I'd rather, a hundred times rather, row in the worst-looking boat in Southcott than do that!"

Ned turned his back, and said to Tom, "Let's go down to the lake and wait until they come back from Sandy's."

Harry understood that his presence was no longer wanted by Ned, and he turned and walked rapidly back to the school-yard, feeling quite unhappy and wishing that he were rich, like Roland and Jamie.

"Why couldn't I borrow a few dollars of Jamie?" he asked within himself. "He's a generous fellow! Why, I never thought of that before." And with this idea started in his mind he sat down on the grass to imagine just how he would manage to ask for it, if he decided it to be best to ask at all.

While he was thus engaged Ned and Tom were seated by the side of the lake, under an old tree, talking up the boat matter. "Couldn't you get two months' time from Sandy?" asked Tom. "The old fellow doesn't have a chance to spend much, and he

could wait as well as not." Ned winced at this; he knew how much he had risked in order to create a reputation for doing things and spending in a Bobbie Burns style; and could he undo it all now by acknowledging in this way his inability to raise enough money, or his part of it, in payment for a boat?

No; he could not think of it. He would not. He told Tom as much; and Tom gave one of his whistles and said in a wise way, "Then you must depend upon me to get you out of the scrape; I see that!"

Tom found a great satisfaction in the thought that others were dependent upon him, and to have Ned place himself under his guidance was really something that he never had expected; for Ned was himself a leader.

Tom meant to do what he could for him, and to show that he appreciated the confidence he had placed in him.

After two hours' waiting Tom began to be impatient, and, rising, said, "I'll go and look, and if they are not coming we'll take a boat and go up and see what has become of them." He ran down to the water's edge, took a look up, shading his eyes with his hand, and called back, "I see the ship come round the bend," and sprang up again to Ned's side and waited.

The boat was pulled to shore, and Roland and

Jamie joined them under the tree and answered the eager questions of Tom and the anxious ones of Ned.

"He's a fine talker, the old man is," said Roland, "and I like to listen to him, for I went to Scotland with my uncle last year and saw some of the places where he once lived. And he told us stories, too—stories of Burns, and all about his wild doings; he says you like to hear them too, Ned, and that you've been up there often. He invited us to come again, and his wife took a great fancy to Jamie here. She says he's so much like a boy of her own who died."

Ned began to be very uncomfortable, and when Roland went on to tell of the bargain with regard to the boat he became a very miserable boy.

"He says he can get up any style, from the cheapest to the handsomest; of course I shouldn't want any but a handsome one, with the name painted on it. I chose the name for ours," Roland went on, while Ned felt almost paralyzed as he imagined the cost. "I chose the name *Undine*. By the way, did you ever read about Undine, the water sprite, and how a soul came to her? It seemed a wonderful story. There was a great deal of trouble about the coming in of the soul, at least the trouble of thought. I've sometimes wished—" But his words were cut short by Tom, who said, "Never mind about the story now, we would

like to hear about the cost of the boat, and all that."

"O, yes," Roland answered, "I know; the boat will cost twenty-five dollars. Cheap enough for such a beauty."

Ned turned white at this, while Tom put on an unconcerned air as he asked, "And when do you pay for it?"

"Why, when it's finished," answered Roland, with no little surprise. "Of course you would not suppose that I would use a thing I had not paid for?"

Suddenly Tom said, turning to Ned, "We'll get right into the boat and go up to Sandy's and see about a boat."

But Ned found an excuse; "he wanted to go alone;" he wished to see Sandy before any mischief could be done by any word the old man might carelessly drop.

At last Tom said, "I came down to see if you would not come up to the mountain, Roland, and spend Saturday and Sunday of next week."

"I should like to, if Jamie could go too."

"Why, yes," answered Tom; "we should like to have Jamie come; and I'll go and ask Mr. Morrell if he'll let you, though I'd much rather you'd go alone with me."

"Mr. Morrell allows each scholar to go home once in each term, I'm told; but I've really no home, neither has Jamie, and we can take the mountain in place of a home visit, I suppose."

When Tom and Roland went to Mr. Morrell with their request that gentleman passed his hand across his forehead in a thoughtful way and answered, "Well, really, my boys, I can't say. I'll think of it and let you know in about an hour; take Tom into the museum, Roland, and interest him while he waits; there are some new things there."

The museum deserved its name, for it had curiosities of all kinds—shells, stones, stuffed birds, bones of fishes, parts of skeletons of strange animals and reptiles, remarkable specimens from China, India and Japan. There were some works of art, in a few pieces of statuary and two or three rare paintings. Then there were drawings of former pupils and portraits of two or three.

Altogether Tom was quite delighted with every thing he saw, and busied himself examining curious specimens. When he had seen what he thought were the most interesting ones, he turned to a boy's portrait and asked, "Do you know whose picture this is?"

"That's just what I like to look at," said Roland; "and I asked one of the boys about it, and he said

that it was a picture of the boy that was drowned up near Norf's Mountain."

"You don't mean," said Tom, "you can't mean—at least *they* didn't mean—it was that boy; the one that was drowned up at our lake, and mother took me in to see him, and the light went out and the moon shone on his face? O, I can't tell you how dreadful it was!"

"I don't know about that," replied Roland; "but they said he was drowned up near Norf's Mountain."

"At Juno's Lake, did they say?" asked Tom.

"I didn't hear that, but we'll ask Mr. Morrell."

"He looks just like boys that always die," said Tom. "I can tell the look every time; it's about the eyes you'll notice it most."

"Do you think so?" asked Roland. "I don't know about that. I've seen people with just such eyes that live; why, Tom, your sister Florrie has such eyes. I noticed the look when I was up there, and you don't think she is going to die soon, do you?"

Tom grew pale slightly at this, and said at last, "I never thought of that. I should want to die myself if she left us. Florrie is as sweet and good as she can be, though she has some strange notions. I never thought of it before, but father often says Florrie seems to be living in another world half of the

time. I never thought it meant much. I wonder if father really ever thought she wouldn't live."

And Tom resolved he would be a better brother to Florrie in the future. We shall see how well he kept his resolve.

Mr. Morrell, on receiving the request of the boys, went to the library to consult his wife.

He laid the matter before her and said, "I really do not know what to do about it. Tom Norfolk is rather wild, and I fear for his influence upon the new boy. What do you say, Prissy?"

"Well, Jamie is to go too. I can trust Jamie, and he has given me his promise with regard to Roland; he has promised to help him, and I believe the dear boy understands what real help is, for, husband," and her eyes were luminous with the thought she was about to express, "he is about to find—if he has not already found it—the true path himself. I cannot rest, I think, until the orphan boys at least have laid their hands in Christ's hand of love; life without that must be so lonely for them! And there is Tom—poor boy! I wonder if his mother, when dying, did not hope that there was some mother-heart waiting to pity and to help her boy. My heart goes out so to the motherless boys—to all boys, Barnard! I cannot be limited by the bounds of Southcott Home. I feel that a necessity is laid upon me; I must reach forth

a hand to them; I must 'spend and be spent' for them."

While she was saying these words in the library Tom in the museum, standing before the picture, recalling that night when his mother took him in to see the face of the drowned boy, remembered also that mother's words: "I think it must be easier for any mother to feel that death has taken her boy than that sin has laid a strong hold upon him. My precious boy, such a knowledge of sin's hold on you would break my heart."

He was wondering if his mother could know just what he was doing and what he was about to do, when the door opened and Mr. Morrell entered.

The boys still stood before the picture, and Roland, advancing, said, "We have been looking at the picture of the drowned boy, and Tom wanted to know if it is a picture of the one drowned at Juno's Lake."

"Yes," answered Mr. Morrell, as he went close to the portrait; "and I have blessed God so many, many times that he made the dear boy ready. If death had come to him only the year before it would not have found him ready. He was not then a faithful boy; there was a great change came to him during his last year with us—a great change! He was a leader here to the last; a brave, bright boy, afraid of

nothing in the wide world, it seemed— Yes; he was afraid of something, he was afraid—afraid of sin. As I told you, he was a leader: the best rower, the best at target-shooting, the first ball player, and with it all he was sweet and pure and true."

Tom shrank from these words; in fact, he did not quite believe them. He had never seen a boy who was all that Mr. Morrell described this boy to be. He knew many that came up to the mark in some things. James Mason, for instance, was surely sweet and pure and true, but he was not any thing by the side of Ned Cummins at ball and rowing and shooting. He felt sure that the smart boys always laughed at these pure and true ones.

And yet down below all this reasoning there was a memory that held its place and had its influence. Who could tell when and how it might become powerful to change him entirely?

Mr. Morrell gave his permission for Roland to visit Tom, and both were quite delighted, although Roland did not have the way of showing his pleasure that Tom did.

Jamie was quite happy at the prospect of visiting Norf's Mountain, and going over the old house, and talking with Florrie and looking at the happy face of the little Clara. There were no girls at Southcott, and, after all, perhaps there never was a boy who did

not like to look into a girl's face when he had been accustomed to the faces of boys alone for months.

Tom managed to get the chance to whisper in Ned's ear before he left for home that day, "Keep up your courage! I'll do what I can for you! You'll hear from me the same day that Roland and Jamie come back; for I shall come down to the village with them!"

That afternoon Ned went alone to the lake, took the first boat he came across, and rowed as fast as he could up to Sandy's place.

Sandy was expecting him and went out to meet him. Ned began telling his errand as soon as they were seated under the tree where they usually sat.

"You want a boat, do you? a first class one—as good as the young gentlemen's who came up? They have the stuff for gentlemen, both of them, I tell you!" And the old man brought his hand down in a decided way.

The flush rose to Ned's face as he listened: "So you thought that proud Lord Morton a gentleman, did you? I can say one thing—all the boys hate him at Southcott; and that Jim Mason is as weak as a kitten! One of the good sort. I must say I hate him!"

"O, ho, that's the way it goes, is it? Well, I didn't say the two were exactly my kind, but mother,

in there, said they had the ways of gentlemen, and mother's pretty strict in her ideas; the old Scotch strictness, you know; and I must own she's seen her share of gentle folk in her day. But as to the boat: What sort of a boat do you want? and do you want a a name painted on it?"

"Why, I suppose I can't take up with any thing less than the other; in fact, I should like to have it better, if it differs at all."

"What do you say to Bobby Burns for a name?" asked Sandy.

"I don't know," answered Ned, a little perplexed. "Wouldn't that seem a little strange to"—he was about to say to the boys—but he checked himself and said, "to people?"

"Well, Bobbie was a poet, you know, and he wrote some o' the best o' things; the mother, in there, owns that. There's that poem, 'To Mary in Heaven;' pious folks, even, couldn't find a thing against that. No, I can't see how there could be any thing a bit out o' the way in naming her 'Bobby Burns.'"

"But I wanted to ask about the price."

"The price? Yes, I know. Well, I charged those fellows twenty-five dollars, but you know both of them are rich, and a few dollars, here or there, would not make much difference; but you, let me see—well of course I wont be hard on a friend, and I wont

charge you more than an even twenty; although if you ever mention it—of course I know you never will, but if you should—it would go hard against me."

"Of course I never shall," returned Ned, "for there are some—well, I mean, I shouldn't like to have you tell little things about me."

"About the pipes and the beer, do you mean, laddie? I'm a Scotchman; an honest man too. Don't fear for *that*. I'll never tell!"

But spite of this promise of Sandy's Ned did fear, as all who go out of the true way, no matter if only a few steps, must fear. But, notwithstanding, he turned his face toward Southcott that day feeling in a more hopeful mood than he had felt for days before. Here was the bargain all made for as good a boat as the other at a much reduced price, and the money to pay for it he felt sure Tom would answer for.

That night Harry gave Jamie a hint with regard to money. "I have somehow managed to get rid of all my spare money."

"I am so sorry," said Jamie, "that I cannot let you have some. I have promised mine for the boat."

CHAPTER VII.

THE VISIT.

EARLY the next Saturday Roland and Jamie started to visit Tom.

"Three miles is not far," Roland had said, "and you know we can rest if we get tired; there are so many beautiful things to see."

James had agreed to this. And Mrs. Morrell said when bidding them good-bye, "The walk will not hurt you, dears, if you stop to admire nature as you go."

It seemed as if every boy belonging to the school was out to see them off; and many were quite envious, forgetting that they themselves had once started for a pleasant time in which the others could not join.

When they were out of sight of the school grounds Jamie threw up his cap and almost shouted, "O, I'm so glad!"

Roland looked at him a little curiously and asked, "Did you care so much about coming? I thought perhaps you did, but you did not say any thing about being glad when I first spoke to you about it."

"No," answered he; "I was so happy I couldn't."

"Then you like Norf's Mountain, and Tom, do you?"

"I don't think it was that; I think I wanted to get away from Ned and Harry for awhile."

"Away from Harry? Why, I thought you liked Harry!"

"I do; but I think he does not really trust me as he used to. Sometimes when he is asleep I lie awake thinking of it, and I have such sad thoughts about it; and I wonder why he does not trust me as he did once, and I make up my mind to ask him, but when the daylight comes I can't; and so I'm all the while unhappy about it."

"I wouldn't care at all!" replied Roland, with a great deal of dignity for a boy. "I wouldn't care. Any body who doesn't treat you well isn't worth caring for. I want to tell you something. I've always been shy of people and of new boys at the schools where I've been, and I've kept to myself pretty well. Uncle taught me that. He keeps to himself; for he says, 'You can't trust most people.' He never tries to make friends with any one. I suppose he does not need to; for he never needs favors."

"But I thought every body needed friends; mother used to say so, and she used to tell me that

we ourselves must show that we want to make friends of people."

"Did she?" Roland questioned meditatively. He did not know how to answer this; for he was too well-bred to speak slightingly of the words of the boy's dead mother.

At last, however, he asked, "Is that why you showed that you wanted to be friends with me?"

Jamie blushed and said, "I knew you must be lonely, and that you had no mother, and I felt so sorry for you when Mrs. Morrell told me."

"Well, I want to tell you," replied Roland in a softened manner, "I never heard any thing like it before—I never heard of a boy who tried to help a new boy and be kind to him when the new boy didn't seem to care a bit about it. I never would have stayed after that Latin teacher treated me so if it had not been for you and Mrs. Morrell. I really don't care at all what the rest of them think, now. I'm all right if you two are; for I really do care for you both. I never said that to a person before in my life!" And here he straightened up, as much as to say, "and that is quite remarkable for one of my years."

Jamie was quite astonished to hear this, and said, "That seems very strange to me; for I've always been caring for people, and I couldn't help showing that I

did; but sometimes I think I'll never care again, for something happens to spoil it all." And he looked very sad as he said it.

"Well, I wouldn't; I'd just keep my caring for people who deserved it. That's my way!"

By this time they had passed beyond the village limits and were well on the mountain road.

Such a morning as it was! It seemed to the boys that there had never been another like it in beauty.

Nature must have laughed within herself when she heard them talking as if it were the first morning of the kind, when every blade of grass and every leaf seemed to be telling the story of other years through what appeared to be a new beauty and a young, first life.

They had gone half the way up the road toward the "Norfolk House" when they saw Tom, in the distance, coming to meet them. "Ho, there! Ho!" he shouted, and "Ho, there! Ho!" sounded again as an echo.

It did not take Tom many minutes to reach them, and, as he came up with cheeks glowing and eyes sparkling, Roland thought, "What a splendid looking fellow he is! I wish he was not so poor; he ought not to be; he was made to have money!"

But Tom did not leave him to his thoughts. "I'm

so glad you've come," he began, looking at Roland; "and Florrie will be glad to see you both." this time glancing toward Jamie, as if to partly include him in the idea. "We couldn't have had a better day, and we are to have grand times! If only to-morrow were not Sunday it would seem a little too good, wouldn't it? But we'll manage somehow, I guess." He led the way with a rapid pace, Roland keeping step with him.

They paused once and looked around to see Jamie far behind; but he did not notice them; he was looking intently toward the woods at his right, and seemed to have neither eyes nor ears for any thing but what he saw and heard in nature.

The two sat down within a few rods of the house and waited until he came up, and then they all went in together.

Florrie met them with a quiet greeting, but Jamie thought he noticed tear traces upon her face.

But if that was the case she hid whatever might have troubled her, and talked very cheerfully of the morning, and of their coming, and of Southcott Home and many other things.

Then Tom took the boys out of the house to show them all the little nooks and places of interest, and to tell them a story of each, until Roland and Jamie were quite carried beyond themselves, and were un-

happy at the thought of ever leaving such an enchanted place to go back to the dull school life.

They wondered, too, how Tom could ever get unhappy or lonely in such a place or wish for a life away from it.

"O, I'm used to it all!" he answered when they asked him how it all could be. "It seems dreadfully old and dull here now, and I feel it's time I started out to make my way in life; but, you see, I've no money; there's the trouble; and there's no likelihood of my getting any until I'm twenty-one. Now there's Florrie—gets hers at eighteen, and she's only a girl! But I'm going to start out soon, see if I don't!"

Roland inquired what he expected to do in life. Tom didn't feel free to tell, but it would be something that would allow him to see the world; he felt sure of that.

Florrie called them to dinner at last, and Mr. Norfolk, as they sat down, said, "You see, our Florrie is a little woman; she has learned to keep house as well as any body. I don't believe there is a woman in Southcott that can roast a chicken better than this," he said, as he helped each one; "and as to making bread—do you have bread like this at Southcott?"

The boys thought not; at least Roland said as much, and Jamie looked his answer.

"Then there's the sewing, and the flower-beds, and

teaching Clara. Why, she's a hard worker, our Florrie is!"

The girl blushed deeply and looked as if the subject were painful to her, and Jamie noticed a tired look come over her face.

Mr. Norfolk and Tom should have blushed at the thought of the load laid upon the life of this frail girl. Tom did move about a little uneasily. Perhaps he was thinking of what Roland had said of her the week before; perhaps for a minute this load and the idea of an early death for her might have seemed to have some connection. But, whatever Tom might have thought, I am sure the father had no fear or care of the kind; for, as Tom had remarked of himself and the old Norfolk home, "I am used to it," so Mr. Norfolk, being used to seeing his daughter overburdened, had become so hardened that he could not only see her bear old burdens year after year, but could help to lay new ones upon her from day to day. He never stopped to consider that his child had been cheated out of the things that belong to childhood, never felt the necessity of trying to bring brightness or cheer into her poor limited life by a little exertion of his own. If the father felt none of these things could it be expected of Tom to feel them?

After dinner the boys went out together to one of the summer-houses.

"What a curious little house this is!" said Roland; "I never saw one like it before. It is very old, too, I should think; and this must have been a writing-desk."

"This was my grandfather's summer study," replied Tom; "he used to study a great deal about the stones and rocks, and I've heard that he spent a great deal of time getting specimens. You see, he had money, and could spend his time as he liked. Here are some of the stones now. He must have been a strange man, I think, to spend his time that way. I can't see what fun he could have got out of it, though Florrie says he must have found pleasure in it. Florrie is so queer about some things! She says we ought not to spend our time to get fun, and that pleasure and happiness mean something better."

"Mother used to talk just that way," said James, "and my mother always said just the best things."

"Well, for my part, I want fun, and I'm going to have it, one way or another!" said Tom.

They talked on, Tom telling stories of the old days of the Norfolk house, until, turning to Roland, he asked, "Wouldn't you like to go to the lake?"

Jamie was sitting by the latticed window looking out upon the grounds. With the reminders of the life that had once been lived by people that had been long dead around him, he was thinking of what Tom

had told them of the man who had so many times sat in the little summer-study, perhaps where he was sitting—the man who found pleasure from the stones. He wondered how he had found happiness in the study of rocks, and thought "Who cares now about what he did? Tom doesn't, and he was Tom's grandfather." Then he glanced toward the desk and the few specimens upon it, and thought, "Perhaps he believed some one would love the rocks too after he was gone; it's such a pity some one doesn't!"

How long he might have gone on dreaming I cannot tell, if Tom had not roused him by asking, "Will you go down to Juno's Lake with us, or will you stay here and look out of the window?"

There was a little derision in Tom's voice, but James did not mind it, as he answered absently, "I'll stay here."

Tom felt a great relief when he heard this, for he wanted to see Roland alone; for he had to settle the money difficulty with which he had been charged, and he felt that it would be no ordinary achievement.

"Come, then," said Tom to Roland, "we'll go on to the lake!"

They had not been gone more than half an hour when Florrie, with the little Clara, came to the door of the summer-house and looked in.

James dropped the stone that he was handling

and blushed slightly, as if his thoughts had been read.

"I thought I should find Tom," she said, after a minute.

"They have gone to the lake," replied James. "I wanted to stay here," he added, more as an apology for what might appear a lack of courtesy toward himself.

"Do you like the stones?" asked she with timidity in her tone.

"I was thinking," answered James, "that it—that perhaps your grandfather might have thought some one would feel just as he did—some one after him would love them too."

Florrie, who had come into the summer-house, had seated the little sister beside her on one of the old seats. She looked at James with a question in her eyes.

"I mean," said James, who understood the look, "I was thinking of what Tom told me about your grandfather—about finding pleasure in the stones."

"Tom doesn't," she answered, as she lowered her eyes. "Tom doesn't seem to like such things, and he doesn't love study; though that may come by and by. I have thought it might."

"Tom loves fun, he says," said Jamie, "and he says he is going to have it!"

He was very sorry he had said so a minute after, for Florrie's eyes filled with tears, and the little Clara put her arms around her sister's neck, saying, "Don't cry, don't, Florrie!"

The tears did not fall, and the girl with a strong effort controlled herself and said, "I think I'm a little foolish about Tom, for I suppose really he is wiser than I am; he is almost two years older, but mother loved him so much, and—and she expected me to look out for him. Tom is very bright and very handsome, don't you think so?"

Jamie nodded at her question.

"Poor Tom! If things were different; if he could have a chance, he would make something very wonderful, I think. And then he would love all these things that the Norfolks who lived long ago loved so well. Mother used to mourn about it, that my father couldn't—was not able to be like the old Norfolks; you see my father wasn't able. Mother used to cry over it, and I remember when I was a very little girl I was so sorry for her. And when I asked her if he never would get able she would shake her head and tell me she was afraid not.

"Then I would cry, too, for fear my father would die and leave us, if he was so sick that he could not be great and grand like my grandfather; but mother told me not to cry, that it wasn't a disease that would

make him die. I don't know really what it is yet, but it's a kind of weakness that keeps him back from doing great things. He's not strong, like other men. I think that is it, and I've been afraid poor Tom, although he looks well, is going the same way.

"I try to do all I can to make it pleasant and easy for father, and I am so very sorry for him, for I think a weakness that keeps one from doing any thing in the world must be so much harder to bear than a real hard sickness; where you may suffer, perhaps, dreadfully, but you'll get up again and forget it all just as soon as you go to work."

Jamie said he thought it might be easier to bear.

Florrie went on to tell him of the old books she had found, and one her grandfather had written about the birds that he saw in some of the islands that he had visited.

"Such strange, bright birds, they must have been," she said; "and grandfather loved them. I know he did by the way he speaks about them; and he wrote about the rocks, too, and he did love the rocks; he must have loved them, for he spent days and days with them. He left the books to father, and I think he thought father might be able to carry on what he had begun; but he never will now, and I've been afraid Tom will not. O! how I wish *I* could!"

"Couldn't you?" inquired Jamie.

"You know I'm a girl. And then there are so many other things. But I've sometimes thought I should try if Tom didn't, for grandfather expected some one to go on; I know he did."

Then the two were silent—this girl whose pure heart held a trust so sacredly that she could sacrifice personal ease and pleasure to be true to one, and the boy whose inborn sympathy would cause him to sacrifice as much that he might help those who were in need.

Down by the lake Tom and Roland, seated so that they could look into the clear water, were talking earnestly. Tom had a purpose in the talk which the other boy did not know.

"If I only could get a little money!" Tom said at last. "I've been bothered to get money for the commonest wants all my life."

"Have you?" Roland asked, with mingled curiosity and pity in his tone. "I can't quite understand it! I never wanted for money in my life; I've really sometimes wished I could know what the feeling is. But you know that some of the greatest men in the world have been awfully poor."

Tom declared—"I know I never can do any thing without money, but if I had some I could do something great."

It ended by Roland's promising to divide his

monthly allowance—a large one—with Tom, until the latter gentleman should become of age.

And Tom, without a thought of the meanness of accepting it, was very happy to take it, promising to pay all back when he became of age, or sooner, if fortune favored him sufficiently.

In Tom's favor it must be said that this maneuvering had been prompted by a desire to do Ned a good turn, although he expected to reserve a part of the loan for himself.

When the four young people met at supper there was a great change in at least two of them. Florrie's eyes shone with the new comfort she had received from the sympathy of James, and Tom, why, he seemed handsomer and brighter than ever before!

Sunday morning set in with a rain, and Mr. Norfolk said at breakfast, "I believe we shall have a rainy day, my boys, and you'll have to stay in doors; but our Florrie's a good reader; she reads to me by the hour, and I ought to know. She's got some good Sunday books, not the dry sort. Florrie couldn't be made to read any but Sunday books."

The old books were brought out, and the new ones too; and spite of Tom's assuring them that there was not a bit of fun to be got out of them Roland and Jamie did manage to become very much interested.

At the last Florrie read them the story of a boy

who fought his way up through poverty and trials until he became a great man. Roland glanced toward Tom as much as to say, "You know what I told you!" But Tom did not seem to understand the look.

Then, just before the twilight came down, they all went into the old curiosity room, and a strange awe fell over all as Florrie told the story of the drowning of the Southcott boy as she had heard it from her mother. And one of them dreamed of it that night.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE NEW BOATS.

THE following Saturday Tom made his appearance early, but, although it was not more than nine o'clock, Ned had waited for a full hour, he was so impatient to hear what his fate was.

He saw by Tom's face that all had gone well, and when Tom ran to meet him and said, "It's all right, old fellow!" Ned felt there was not a boy in the whole world who could beat Tom Norfolk as a friend.

"I'll never forget it, Tom!" he cried; "never! I'll ask father to let me invite you home with me next vacation and give you a chance to see the city. Father and mother are going off to the mountains—real mountains, you know—and I shall be left by myself. No, there'll be Aunt Delia; she'll trouble us some. She promises father to keep a watch over me, but you've no idea how I cheat her; she goes to bed at eight o'clock every night, and she used to make me too; but I managed it. I got up and got out of my window on the roof of the piazza and then let myself down from that; and when father got home I heard Aunt Delia tell him that I'd been to bed

every night at eight o'clock! I tell you she beats old Sizer for strictness, my Aunt Delia does!"

Ned, I suppose, thought this was very manly, and really spoke of cheating a lady in as proud a manner as one might who had actually done something to be proud of.

Tom began at last to tell just how he had got the money, and as Ned listened a pang shot through him at the thought that Roland might find out that the boat in which he was to row against him was paid for with his own money.

"If he should find out!" gasped he at last.

"He never can find out; be sure of that. Can't you trust me for keeping a secret?" said Tom.

"Yes; I can trust you, trust you for any thing!" he cried, as the full sweetness of the thought was revealed to him that the boat difficulty was no more.

"Of course you mean Harry to pay his part, don't you?"

"Why, of course, though I don't know how he's to get it just now, for his money's all gone too."

"And nobody'll help him," said Tom, "without it's James Mason. It would be funny enough!" And here Tom was seized with an uncontrollable fit of laughter, so that he was obliged to throw himself upon the grass and have it out.

"What is the matter?" asked Ned.

"Why, I thought it would be funny enough," began Tom, and then he stopped to laugh again, "funny enough if they should have to furnish the boat and not know it!"

Ned was quite angry and said, "I sha'n't take a cent if that is the way you're going to act!"

Tom got up and laughed no more, but went on to talk of the new boat and of the coming match, and the two started for the lake.

Roland and James were already there, and were half across the stream when they came up. A crowd of boys were looking on, and Tom and Ned heard murmurs of astonishment and such remarks as, "I never would have thought it!" and, "They've gained ever so much!" and, "Who knows that they wont beat?"

They had reached the opposite shore by the time Ned and Harry took their places.

Ned was very much excited and Harry was quite out of his common easy mood. The boys noticed all and said among themselves, "They're not quite so sure as they were; I can see that."

But a few oar-strokes from Ned sent a thrill of admiration through the throng, and a round of applause burst forth and reached the ears of the rowers.

Many a Saturday they practiced, and from each trial of his strength Jamie went home to spend the

greater part of the afternoon upon the bed, the excitement and overtaxing proving too much for his frail constitution. He never spoke of this to any one; he had always longed to be like other boys—strong and able to do what others could do; he believed that he should be, some time, if he kept trying his strength. And then he desired that Roland should win! He felt that he could not bear that his friend should show himself weak before the boys; for the boys, he knew, did not admire others who were weak like himself. "I cannot bear it!" he said many and many a time; "they must not laugh at him; I will do my best."

At last the boats were finished and paid for, and handsome ones they were, too; and as the *Bobbie Burns* and the *Undine* shot out from the shore it was difficult to tell which owned the prize for beauty and which was the better manned.

So the weeks passed, and each Saturday the rowers went to the lake, and each time the boys watched them from the shore and calculated upon their respective chances for victory.

The time for the promised last payment had come for the *Bobbie Burns*.

It was a very warm morning when Ned stood looking anxiously down the road leading to Norfolk Mountain; he had watched until his eyes ached and his heart was sinking within him for fear.

The minutes and the hours went by, and yet there was no Tom.

Sandy had been down with his fish, and had said in passing, "Meet me at the lake just after dinner. You promised to go up to-day, you know, my laddie! The two gentlemen came down handsome enough now, I tell you; paid for their boat as soon as 'twas done! But then they're rich. I didn't expect quite as much of you, I know. But you'll be along in time; I shall expect you!"

The dinner-hour was past, and yet Tom did not come.

Ned did not meet Sandy at the lake that afternoon; the did not row, and all the boys were asking why and only Harry knew. Ned was not to be found; he had gone to his room and locked himself in.

Harry had a long talk with him that afternoon, and Ned, as usual, upbraided him with what he was pleased to call a lack of generosity.

"Why, I've paid my part of it!" answered Harry. "You know I took every cent of this month's allowance."

"Yes; that was nothing but justice," replied the other. "Where was the generosity in that?"

Ned lived through the next Sunday somehow, but he was a very miserable boy. When Monday morning came he got up very early and went out to the

school grounds, for he wanted to be alone. He had been dreaming all night of his trouble, and Sandy had been enriously mixed with Roland and James. He had talked in his sleep, too; he knew that, for his room-mate had awakened him and said, "I should like to know what you mean by such screaming."

He remembered that he was dreaming that he had gone with Sandy as far as the lake to tell him that he could not pay the remaining debt on the boat, and that Sandy was very angry and threatened to drown him. What secrets he had divulged he could not tell, but he wanted to get away before this boy was up, so that he need not be obliged to answer any questions.

He saw Roland and James practicing with the bars and weights, and he hissed, "So this is the way they are getting strength for the race!"

A stronger feeling of hatred rose up within him than he had ever felt for them before.

He made up his mind then, when the feeling of hatred was swelling up in his heart, that the boat money should come out of James if Tom did not make his appearance.

He managed to see Harry after school and told him what must be done.

"O, I can't ask him! Why should I?" said Harry.

"And why shouldn't you?" asked Ned; "do you expect me to have all the trouble and disgrace?"

"We'd better have rowed in the old boat," said Harry, in a disgusted way. "I wish there had never been a thought of a match. It was got up to spite them; you know it was! And there's nothing but trouble will come from it. I'm sure of that. I can't look into Jamie's face now; I'm ashamed to, and—and, it's dreadful, after what he's done for me!"

"I hate him!" came forth from the other, in a way that almost frightened Harry.

"Well," answered the latter, "I don't believe you'll have a great while to do it in, for he gets paler every day."

"That's the way your puny white-faced fellows make fools of people," answered Ned. "But we'll see who is who, one of these times! Will you ask him to lend you some money, or will you not?"

This was a decisive moment for Harry. If he could have been morally strong enough so that he might have stood by what he knew to be the only right course all would have been well, and although he might have lost the chance of proving that he could win through physical strength, he would have been able to show a strength of soul that would in the end have made him a moral hero.

But Harry, like many another boy, had not strength to stand by the right at the risk of losing the good opinion of boys who, perhaps, were no braver in soul than himself.

With all this fear of other boys, and all his desire to seem strong and a hero to them, he did, after all, care very much for the opinion of James. A boy who can kneel each morning and night, in the presence of another boy who does not remember to pray, one who can kneel and silently ask God to help him and keep him, possesses something that commands the respect of others.

It is true it was a great cross for James to kneel thus before Harry; for he was a very sensitive child, and would have been glad to be alone when he went to God with his secrets; but he had promised his mother, and a promise with him was something that must be kept faithfully. Going at first because he had promised he began at length to go because he felt he needed to; thus does God lead on the one who even afar off is trying to follow Him.

That night Harry decided to ask his room-mate for a loan of money, but how he was to begin he did not know.

When they were both in their room he felt very awkward; he sat quite still, and he noticed that Jamie looked at him very anxiously. At last he crept up

to him and asked shyly, "Does something trouble you, Harry?'

Then Harry told him a partial truth, told him that he needed money, that he had spent more than he should; had, in fact, used up all his allowance. He did not say that it had been lent to Ned, all except what had been paid as his share of the boat money.

Jamie was delighted that he could help him this time, for he had just received money for which he had no use, and somehow he believed that Harry was beginning to trust him more, and he longed for the old confidence.

Ned was greatly relieved at this turn of affairs, and, although he despised Tom for leaving him in trouble as he had, he did not worry any longer about his coming.

Early the next Saturday morning, before Sandy could possibly get down to "Southcott Home," he took his way up to the cottage.

The old man was no less surprised than happy at seeing him land, and he went to meet him with an, "Eh, laddie?"

The money was paid, and Sandy, bringing his hand down upon his shoulder, said, "Bobbie had his trouble with debts and the like, but he managed to get out of it always. He was a gay one, was Bobbie! Have a smoke, my laddie?"

But Ned had no desire to stay longer at the cottage; he wanted to get away from Sandy. So he got into his boat and rowed down the stream.

Strange things had happened while he had been gone.

Mr. Norfolk had been down to the school inquiring if any one knew where Tom had gone. He brought a note to Roland from Florrie, which said, "Come up to the mountain, if you can, to-day! Tom has left us!"

Mr. Morrell readily gave his permission, and Roland started with Mr. Norfolk.

Neither said much; Roland was thinking over all Tom had told him about going out to make his way in the world, and trying to make out a clue to his plans.

Florrie came out to meet them with a pale face, and eyes that looked as if the brightness had all been drowned out of them.

Roland could hardly bear to look at her, she seemed so pained and changed.

She told him all she could, and how Tom had started out with money to buy things for the family, and how he had kissed her and Clara. And when she looked surprised he had said, "I've troubled you a great deal, Florrie, but I'm getting to be a man now, and I'm going to leave off my boy ways, and

I'm going to make it easier for you and try and be a great man myself!"

She had watched him as he went down the hill, and had been so happy in believing that there would be a change. Then, when he did not come, a terrible fear had taken hold of her that something dreadful had happened to him; and she followed the road that he had started on to try and find traces of him. She had come home in despair, and, going up to his room, had found a little note written upon the blank leaf of a book and directed to herself, which ran thus:

"DEAR FLORRIE—I have started out to find a business; now don't worry, for you know I always told you that I would go. You will hear from me in a month at the longest. Roland Morton, if you will tell him, will help you."

Florrie had no idea of Tom's real meaning when he said that Roland would help her; she supposed that Roland might have heard something from Tom about his going, and she was very eager to see him on this account; but Tom really meant that Roland would supply this money-loss she had suffered through his taking away the family money.

Roland did offer, in as delicate a manner as he could, to give her money, but she shook her head, saying, "I could not think of it; please don't speak of

it again. I could get along with the loss, but O, Tom, dear Tom! what will become of him? Who will help him?"

It was sundown when Roland went into the school-yard, where the boys were gathered in groups and seemed to be talking earnestly. He looked from group to group for a sight of Jamie, who was always first to meet and welcome him. But he did not see him. As he went nearer he heard whispers, and there seemed to be an expression of awe upon the faces.

"Jamie is sick, very sick, the doctor says!" said one at last.

"Where is he? I must see him, I will!" said the now excited Roland. "How did it happen?"

And he learned this:

After Ned had returned from up the lake and found that Roland had gone he started with Harry to practice. He found Jamie there, for the faithful boy felt that he must do his part, even though Roland was not able to practice with him. He dreaded to try alone, for he knew that the boys would ridicule him; but for Roland's sake, that he might in the end help Roland to win, and perhaps show to the boys that he was not himself a weakling, he would try.

A long shout went up from the boys as he got into the boat alone and took up the oars. It was really a cry of ridicule, and, as he understood its

meaning, his whole sensitive nature quivered with the painful knowledge of it; but he kept to his purpose—he had come to row, and row he would, in spite of the boys.

The other boat gained upon him, but he kept a steady stroke, and those upon the shore began to be astonished, and murmurs of surprise might have been heard and such remarks as, "Well, I never!" "What has come over the chick!" "All alone, too!" "Who says that twice his strength wouldn't win?" "I'm almost ready to bet the *Undine* will win at the trial!" "Such pluck!"

The *Bobbie Burns* gained by not more than a boat's length. When the two had reached the other side Ned was a very angry boy. "It's your fault!" he began to Harry; "all your fault! You shirked!"

"Yes, perhaps I did," answered the other; "but couldn't you stand your chance with a weakling? You know that's what you call him."

This made Ned more angry than ever—so angry that we must believe he hardly knew what he did when he reached out and gave the *Undine* a vigorous push that threw Jamie into the water. They were at the water's edge and it was shallow. Quick as thought Harry sprang from the *Bobbie Burns* into the water, and the excited, almost insane, Ned rowed off to the opposite shore.

Harry saw nothing, knew nothing, but that his friend—the one who had helped him—was lying in the lake! He pulled him upon the bank; he never afterward could recall how he did it. The face seemed still; a horror pressed down upon him as he called wildly,

"Jamie! O Jamie, speak!"

It seemed ages before he opened his eyes, but the sight of them at last was almost heaven to him; and when Jamie knew him and smiled upon him then he was in raptures.

He closed his eyes and asked no questions, only saying, "Let me rest."

Then Harry began to look to the other side. To his joy he saw two boats had started and were half the way across toward him. "They'll help me to save him," he whispered to himself, and I doubt if he had ever before been so overcome with a feeling of relief.

When the four boys came up and gazed down upon the face that looked so death like they became silent, and then their indignation knew no bounds, and one said, "I'll never speak to Ned Cummins again! What do you think he said? He said, 'I hope I've killed him.' He'll be expelled! It's all because Jamie came near beating!"

They took Jamie up, laid their jackets in the *Un-*

dine, and then placed him upon them, shielding his face from the sun.

"I'll be one to row," said Harry; "it's got to be done right away. He's got to be taken just as soon as we can do it!"

He chose one to help him and they started, and never were boys more astonished than those who saw Harry row that day; he seemed to have a strange power given him; he never could understand it himself. By the time they had reached the bank Mr. Morrell was there, for as soon as it had happened a boy had run to the "Home" and told the news of the upsetting of the boat.

He was carried to his bed, and a doctor had been called and had given his opinion that he could not be saved from a course of fever.

"I think," he said, "that he must have had something to try his strength and unduly excite him mentally before this happened; he seems like one who has really had a fever for weeks."

But Mr. and Mrs. Morrell knew nothing of the experience through which he had passed—nothing of the fearful strain he had suffered so long—and answered the doctor accordingly.

Ned was not to be found; he did not make his appearance at dinner, and when Mr. Morrell heard the story of his murderous act—for who could call

it any thing else?—he set about searching for him.

He did not find him then, for Ned, as soon as the boys had left the lake, took the *Bobbie Burns* and made a short run up to Sandy's.

"I've come to stay until I can get out of this fix," he said to the old man in a low, excited voice, as they stood by the boat. He told him all about it, defending himself as best he could. "I can't go back! I never will! You'll keep me a while, I'm sure you will, Sandy."

Sandy did not answer directly; he smoked his pipe in silence a while and shook his head, saying, "Bobbie himself couldn't have commenced his wild pranks younger. But Bobbie was a genius, and common folks must be a little more careful, you know, a little more careful of their doings."

Old Sandy was beginning to regret that he had helped the boy to admire "Bobbie's" wild ways. He was afraid, too, of what his wife might say with regard to Ned's doings. He felt quite sure that she would tell him that his influence over Ned had not been for good. But he looked at the anxious, troubled face that was watching his, and said, "But take heart, my laddie! I can't turn you away."

CHAPTER IX.

NED.

"That foolish, selfish, faithless ways
Lead to the wretched, vile, and base."—BURNS.

NED remained at Sandy's a week. He was a very miserable boy, for his conscience spoke loudly of his guilt, and Sandy's wife had learned something of his experience, and she did all in her power to rouse his soul to a sense of its great sin.

She had never given up daily family devotions, and Sandy, although he never seemed to take part in them, had really too much respect for his wife—there might, it is true, have been much of fear mixed with the feeling that prompted him to listen—but, as I began saying, he respected her too much to leave the room. She selected, on Ned's account, those passages that fitted the case of a wrong-doer; read the penitential psalms, and brought in at times such truths as, "He that walketh uprightly walketh surely."

But Sandy's wife had not only the desire to bring before Ned the words of wrath against wickedness, but she waited and longed for the time when his soul might be ready to receive messages from the Lord

that should be "the oil of joy" to his wounded soul.

Somehow that week brought a different view of some things to Sandy from what he had ever before taken. The passages that he had before heard again and again seemed to carry a new force. He could not shake off this new influence; he was almost frightened by it.

It was in this altered mood, that no one can really explain but which the Bible has declared is like the mysterious workings of the wind in nature, that he started the next Saturday morning for Southcott, with his fish.

His wife had told him in the presence of Ned, "You must tell Mr. Morrell that the boy is here! It would be a wrong to keep it a secret!" And after Sandy had gone, when Ned cried, "O, how can I ever go back there?" she came to him as a mother might, and, laying her hand upon his head, said, "Try and settle it with the Lord first. You have wronged him most." And then she kneeled and with shaking voice offered a prayer that the Lord would take the wandering one into his fold, and lead him as his great love and wisdom could. Ned was certainly softened, although, perhaps, not really repentant. He went out to the tree where he had so many times talked with Sandy, and listened to the wild doings of

Burns. He wondered if the great poet had really ever felt as miserable as he did then, and when he remembered all the reckless things he had heard of him he began to feel almost ashamed of his own soft-heartedness, as he called it, in being troubled at so slight a thing.

Then conscience asked, "Is it a slight thing—an anger that meant murder?"

But Ned had no idea that Jamie would be really injured by falling into the water. He knew it was very shallow; he had seen Harry draw him out, and yet he had not at the time cared whether he had lived or died.

He began to watch the lake as he never had watched it before; he seemed to note each tree upon its margin, each bend in its course. The picture of it as he saw it that day seemed burned in upon his mind, so that through his whole life it must always remain. It could never be the same lake to him that it had been before that dreadful day—never!

Thus is even nature changed and marred for one who has sinned.

At last he saw a boat rounding the bend; he knew it was Sandy's, and he began to tremble with the thought of the message that he might bring. He looked again. There were two boats, another behind Sandy's that he had not noticed before. As it came

nearer he felt sure it was the *Undine;* there were two boys in it! Who was coming? He waited almost breathlessly for its approach. Sandy gained the shore. Ned did not notice him; he had his eyes fixed upon the others.

They two reached the bank! It was Harry and Roland.

He cowered there on the grass that bright day, when all things were calling loudly of joy and peace. Nature held herself in perfection—where lay the wrong?

Sandy beckoned the two toward the tree; they followed slowly, as if they dreaded to meet the one for whom they were in search.

They had stood close to where he lay upon the grass fully ten minutes before any one spoke; then Sandy broke the silence with "Eh, my laddie!"

Then Roland Morton stepped forward and said, in a tone altered from his old one, "We've come, Harry and I, to take you back; we couldn't come before. It's—been—been so dreadful!"

Ned grew pale and weak; and the thought of an awful story yet to come made life a horror as he shrieked, "Tell me all!"

"He is going to live," Roland said. "If he had died I think I never could have come for you, never!" Then he sat down and Harry took up the

history of the days that had passed since the dreadful thing happened.

"He wants to see you now," he ended. "And we must start right away."

"Wants to see me—really wants to see me? Do you mean it?"

"We really mean it, and he wanted us to hurry."

"You had better go right down," said Sandy, his voice shaking with emotion.

They were all in the boat, and Roland and Harry had taken up the oars, when Sandy's voice was heard calling, "Stop! stop a minute! She wants to see you!" pointing to the figure of his wife coming toward the lake. "She's got a private word for you, laddie; it will take but a minute, she says; get out and speak to her, my mon!"

Ned got out and met her above the sands. "O, laddie, don't hang on to your pride! Ask the Lord to tell you just what to do. Ask him, laddie!" The boys in the boat saw the old lady raise her hands as if in benediction over the bowed head of the boy. When he came back and again took a seat in the boat they noticed that his face looked as they had never before seen it.

Sandy, in saying "good-bye" added, "I hope to see you here a happy laddie soon!"

Not a word was spoken during the row down. As

they came to the landing Ned glanced at the *Bobbie Burns*, that floated idly at the water's edge, and shuddered as he remembered the day he had last rowed in it and had fled with it from the scene of his guilt.

Sandy had, in the dusk, returned it to its place, to keep Ned's hiding-place a secret.

It was a trying hour to the boy—this first hour after his return.

Roland and Harry led the way to the library. Ned stood upon the threshold, overcome by his mingled feelings of fear and shame. It was not until Mrs. Morrell had come forward to meet him that he lifted his head, and then he looked into her face, and something that he saw there gave him courage.

Perhaps an expression that the kind-hearted lady saw in his eyes caused her to say, "My poor, poor boy!"

She led him forward and signed to the two to leave her alone with him.

Ned never told what passed in that room, neither of the particulars of the interview with Jamie. But he saw and heard and felt that which had such an influence over him that he could hardly be looked upon as the same Ned Cummins as before.

It was Mrs. Morrell's willingness to forgive him

that prepared the way for him to receive the sweet forgiveness and pity of Jamie.

Ned became a hero at the outset. Let me tell you how he took this step toward gaining a strength of which any one might be proud. He told all his meanness about the money-borrowing to Jamie, and added, with blushing cheek, "And I've got to tell; it was because I hated you both: the new boy, and *you most!*"

"And you really care for me now?" asked the smiling Jamie.

"Yes, I do! But O if you had died! How could I ever have lived! When you get out again I'll show them all how I can stand up for you!"

But the way Harry tried to make Jamie's sick days pass required an exertion and self-denial that made him a wonder to the boys. He was even a marvel to Mr. and Mrs. Morrell for the gentle, careful way he had in attending to Jamie. They trusted him to give the medicines at the exact time; and when Jamie pleaded that his friend might spend an hour with him they knew that he had become of value to him.

"You will make a good doctor, I am sure," said Mrs. Morrell one day to him; "love shows us how to use our powers rightly, my boy!"

Harry began to believe it himself when he could

take the thin hand and not look upon it with disgust because it was weak.

The boys had all learned, from the events that had followed each other rapidly, that the strongest souls are found sometimes in the weakest bodies.

It was near the end of the term, when Jamie became well enough to get around among the boys again, that he made his first appearance upon the ball ground. Ned himself started a "Hurrah!" in which the very youngest joined, for even those who understood least of his experience felt that he was a brave boy.

The new boy still held Jamie as his closest friend, but he no longer held himself away from the other boys, and he began to learn, slowly, it is true, for the best lessons are learned slowly, that we receive only as we give to the world about us.

The great rowing match did not come off at the time appointed. Ned said to Roland, "I can't bear to think of it now. Some time, perhaps, it will seem easier."

Ned still delighted in games and in feats displaying strength, and he batted his balls with the old vigor and was a leader whom the smaller boys, that once held him in such fear, admired, for he no longer bullied them, but treated them as if they had rights.

Let no boy suppose that Ned never again did

wrong nor had envious feelings toward others. I do not believe, if I should say so, those boys who heard it would quite believe it; for they all know, the boys of to-day, how hard it is to keep in the right way, and to be brave and kind and true.

But the lesson that he had learned at so great a price was never forgotten, and the good resolutions he formed and tried to keep helped him to escape falling into great evil, until at last his feet were led —this happened, however, after he had left school— into the green pastures and by the side of still waters, through God's love.

A month of the vacation had passed, and the few boys who remained at the school—Roland and Jamie among them—were in the school-yard one August day. Some were lying under the trees; the others were sitting in a group talking.

Mr. Morrell came up the walk and beckoned to Roland, who rose and followed him into the house.

"I have been up to 'Norfolk Mountain,'" began Mr. Morrell, "for Florrie sent for me to talk about Tom. Tom has come back. He has seen enough of the world for the present. I think he is ready now to work. He is nearly sixteen now, and he has idled away his time; but yet it is never too late, so long as there is a real purpose in one to accomplish something. Tom ought to be educated. Florrie has

set her heart upon it, and I have been talking with the boy, and I do believe he is ready to make a trial. Tom may make a man yet. I called you to tell you that you had better, you and Jamie, go up and spend a few days with them. They need you, I think."

Both the boys were quite happy with the thought of again visiting the mountain.

They set out just after supper in order that they might escape the heat.

It was twilight when they reached the high ground where "Norf's" house stood.

Florrie and Clara sat upon the porch, but Tom was not in sight.

Florrie gave a little cry of joy when she saw them, and when they came up to where she was sitting she covered her face and her delicate frame shook. When at last she trusted herself to speak she said, "O, it was too great a thing to expect, Tom's coming was! He's very miserable, poor boy! He cannot see you to-night, I'm sure. You see, nothing turned out as he expected. He thought he could bring back a great deal of money to us; he did it for us, I am sure, but he lost what he took away, or, at least, it took all of it to keep him. He tried a great many things after that—after what he tried first, I mean," she said with a little hesitation; "but he found—he owned that he found—poor Tom! that such places needed boys who

had some education, and he found he hadn't any. You see, he had thought he had learned enough, and he always laughed at a man's having the learning that the old Norfolks had. It will take a long time and a great deal of study, I know, and I'm afraid he'll get discouraged; but O! if he can, if he will care enough about it to keep on, I believe he might make as great a man as my grandfather did, and some day he might learn to love even the rocks about Norfolk House."

So they did not see Tom that night, and the breakfast dishes had been washed the next morning before he made his appearance, for Tom had come back in quite a different way from what heroes come, and no one could know it better than he did himself.

When Roland and Jamie saw him they were surprised at the great change; he did not look at all like the old Tom.

They went out together and took their way to the summer-house; then, when they were seated, after a short silence Tom began to be confidential.

"I've been such a simpleton to hang around here at Norfolk Mountain doing nothing; if I had only believed how much getting ready there was to be done I never would have spent my time so. Why, I found lots of places that just suited me, and I could have had them if I had known more of arithmetic. I would have given any thing if I could have been

able to pass when some of the men, with sharp ways and eyes that seemed to look a fellow through, asked question after question. One of them really tried me for a whole day, but that was before my clothes got shabby; but I didn't make change to suit him. I went into the store that Ned Cummins's father owned one day, but I didn't dare to ask him for a place nor let on that I knew Ned, for I knew it must all come out—all about my running away and all about the boat money. I am going to pay you for that, if I have to dig for it—that boat money, you know. I never would have told how it went if you had not found ont. I might have known you would, for I never did a thing that was not just straight in my life but a lot of crooked things all happened to me for it. I've often wondered if all boys get their pay as I have done for every mite of a wrong. Florrie says that mother used to say every living person *must* in some way, but I never really believed it. I wish I had thought more of what Florrie told me of a great many things—about studying, at least. She studies all the time she can get; she has, ever since a lady, a Miss Neville, who boarded all one summer at Smith's, down there, talked with her about it. She told her that there was not any reason why she should not be learned like our grandfather, if she really wanted to be. She used to come up here every day all summer,

and she writes to Florrie now and tells her how to study. But don't tell of it. I guess I shouldn't have told; I think it's all a secret with Florrie. I can't study by myself as Florrie does; but I've made up my mind, really made it up, to get an education! It's only when I can't see exactly how I'm going to earn the money to pay for it that I get blue. I didn't sleep much last night thinking of it. Florrie says some way will turn up."

While Tom had been talking Roland and Jamie had been thinking and wondering how things could be managed for him.

That night Florrie showed them her grandfather's books and a package of papers, which she explained he had meant should be another book.

"It is his own writing," she said, as she looked at it with loving eyes. "I think he hoped some one would have it published. Miss Neville has seen it, and she says that what it speaks of should not be shut away from the world. Miss Neville feels that way about all best things, and she says we all have them;" and here her eyes brightened for a minute, and then a sad expression came into them.

The next morning Tom went out to the wood-pile and worked with a will for an hour. He gave such vigorous strokes with the axe that Mr. Norfolk said with surprise, "Well, really, Tom seems to be work-

ing for wages!" When he had finished Roland tried his hand at it, and next Jamie. Then they went down to "Juno's Lake," and came back at noon to eat with a relish the dinner Florrie had been getting for them.

Jamie saw Florrie alone for a few minutes and said, "I believe Tom will do as much as your grandfather did, if he lives."

"I believe he'll try," answered the girl.

Tom went down to "Southcott Home" with the boys.

When they had been joined by the others in the school-yard Roland slipped away to find Mr. Morrell.

He told him how much Tom wanted an education, and that he was willing to work for it, but did not know how he should work. "I don't see how he can work and study too," added he.

"No, perhaps you do not," replied Mr. Morrell.

"I wish," said Roland, "I could help Tom; I have more than I want for myself."

"Are you sure Tom would want you to help him?" asked the gentleman.

Roland blushed—hesitated. He was thinking that Tom had not been afraid at one time to ask him for money. "I don't know," he said at last. "I think he would be willing."

But Roland did not understand how certain experiences, acting upon particular people, can change

their whole purpose. He did not know how Tom had been changed.

Mr. Morrell called Tom into his library that afternoon and told him of Roland's wish with regard to helping him.

Tom straightened himself; then a blush of shame covered his face for a minute, when he remembered his past beggings for help; then it disappeared, and a manly resolution was in his voice as he answered, "No! I'm going to try to help myself!"

Mr. Morrell said to his wife, "He'll get an education! I'm sure of it, Prissy!"

CHAPTER X.

JAMIE'S LAST YEAR.

WHEN Ned and Harry came back at the beginning of another year they were surprised to see Tom come too, to commence his studies at the "Southcott Home." Tom had found a way to help himself.

He had engaged to work all his time out of school for enough money to pay for his board, clothes, and tuition; he was a happy boy, because he was a faithful, willing one. I think he quite astonished even Florrie with the strength of his new purpose.

As a scholar he was not brilliant; he never could be; but even Mr. Sizer pronounced him an earnest student.

"How thin Jamie is," Ned said, one day in November, when he and Harry were out in the woods together. "The last time I rowed up to Sandy's, when he went with me, the old lady—Sandy's wife—said, 'He's not long for this world!' She says things in such a strange way, as if she knew just what was going to happen. I've been troubled ever since about it. And then, when we were coming down he

looked at the lake and at the trees along its edge as —if—well, as if he shouldn't see them again. I'm afraid that he isn't going to get well."

Ned did not tell all to Harry; he did not say that when they were opposite the spot where the *Undine* had been so rudely overturned the year before he rested his oars and cried, "O, Jamie! Say you forgive me! Say it right here! I must hear you say it here!" Nor did he tell how Jamie left his seat and, crossing over, said, "I was waiting to tell you right here; I longed to tell you; Ned, how kind you have been to me since—since then—and how I cared for you. I wanted to tell you because I was thinking it may be the last chance here."

No; all this and what followed he would never tell any one; he held all sacred.

The winter set in with an unusual vigor. The cold and the storms prevented many of the out-door sports, and yet the most venturesome boys, with Ned as leader, braved even a storm for fun.

One week in February, when the air seemed to carry a hint of spring, Harry came rushing in to his room, where Jamie sat, saying, "O, Jamie, we've made our wigwam, and we've trimmed it with evergreens; and we are going to have a kind of pow-pow; and there's to be a conjurer who'll use magic to make you strong like the rest of us. Ned got it up. Ned

cares for you so much now—and we all do; every one, I think!"

The tears came to Harry's eyes as he said this; he tried to force them back, but could not; he laid his head upon the table and gave himself up to his grief, for the shadow of a coming loss had flitted across his young soul.

"What makes you cry, Harry?" asked Jamie, after a short silence. "I'm so happy, now that you all care for me. I used to cry alone to myself, when I thought you didn't; but every thing seems changed now, so changed, and I'm so happy. I should like to see the wigwam and smell the ground-pine again; perhaps Mrs. Morrell will let me go," he added, cheerfully.

Harry lifted his head and wiped away the tears and said, "That's just what Ned wanted; he's gone to ask Mrs. Morrell himself; he says we can take you on the sled; he's got it all dressed up too."

It would have been hard for Mrs. Morrell to refuse the earnest asking of the handsome boy who stood before her, cap in hand, every muscle seeming to tell of the bounding pulse of youth.

"I don't know," the lady answered; "he's very feeble, very!" and she sighed.

"But I thought it might help him; and we've got it all up for him, and we can take him there on the

sled; we have it all fixed, and there's a buffalo robe."

When she had given her "yes," and Ned had gone up stairs to tell the news, she sat down to think about it. Her husband coming in saw her thus and asked, "What new hope or fear for the boys now, Prissy?" She told him her fears for Jamie. "Yes" he answered, after a little silence, "I have been watching; but, Prissy, it's a glorious ripening for heaven that's going on!"

The sun shone out cheerily as the gay procession started for the woods. Ned and Harry drew the sled—a large one, made soft and warm with cushions and robes.

When they reached the wigwam Ned took him from the sled and carried him, laughingly, into it and placed him upon a cushioned seat.

Then they had a feast, at which Roland Morton presided.

Then the conjurer, Harry, was called upon to use strange arts to bring health to their chief. He stood up and all watched him; he had his pine sticks and he made curious signs and his lips moved, but he did not speak; and all who saw him, with raised eyes and an imploring expression upon his face, thought, "It is a prayer," and I believe that each boy, even to the very smallest, joined, within them-

selves, to ask earnestly that Jamie might get strong and well.

Then one proposed that they should tell dreams of their own.

It came Jamie's turn, and in a low voice he said, "Last week one night I had a dream that I have thought of ever since. It seemed that we four—Ned and Harry and Roland and myself—were down at the lake.

"The lake did not seem as it ever has really seemed, for its waters were foaming and dashing and roaring in a very strange way.

"We were all afraid and stood without speaking, when a voice called louder than the roar, 'Jamie, come over!' It sounded like my mother's voice. I listened to hear it again.

"Again it came across the water, 'Jamie, come over!'

"I looked toward the others, but they had not heard the voice.

"It sounded again, and then I cried, 'May the others come too?' And it answered, 'You must come alone.'

"Then I told Ned and Harry and Roland, and they said, 'We did not hear it; it could not have been really a voice.'

"But it came again, and it was surely my mother's voice.

"The *Undine* and the *Bobbie Burns* were lying at the water's edge. I unfastened the *Undine* and got into it, and the waters seemed higher and the waves louder, I thought. I cried again, 'Let Roland come, at least, for I cannot manage the boat alone.' But the word seemed to come back—'Alone!'

"I took up the oars and you called me to come back, and Roland waded in to try and bring the boat to land again, and then some one that seemed an angel came to me and was guiding me over, when I awoke."

A stillness reigned in the wigwam, and the slight figure of the boy in the chair, as he finished speaking, seemed to speak to them of something supernatural.

* * * * *

It is an April day, only a week before the spring vacation. Out of doors a great change is going on. The buds are swelling, the grass is springing, the earth is about to break into beauty.

In doors, up in one of the little bed-rooms, the few who are gathered there—Mr. and Mrs. Morrell, Roland, Ned, and Harry—are witnessing a greater transformation. Jamie lies on this side the stream ready to go over the waters of death, for a voice has called from the other side.

"It is mother's voice," he has whispered. "I wish we could go together," as he turns toward the weep-

ing boys. Roland cries passionately, "You shall not go! You must not!"

Later, as Mrs. Morrell bends to catch his last words, she hears, "It seems to be Christ I see now, and O how great and beautiful he looks! And he says, 'I will give you strength.' I can't stay. I must go." And so the gentle spirit passed over through the strength of the strong One.

Many new boys have trod the old places since these days of which I write, and they have had their joys and their sorrows, their loves and their hates, for human nature is the same from year to year; but these old boys can never forget Southcott and their experience there.

Ten years after Jamie's death three young men stood by the lake looking silently across it. It was to be a last visit for them for many years, for they were going out to meet life's work.

They talk of the old days, of the boys, of Sandy and his wife, who lie side by side at rest under the old tree up at the cottage; of Tom, who is a lawyer on the Pacific coast; of themselves separately, and of their hopes. Harry is a physician, after all; Ned is to be a merchant, and Roland is studying science and is about to sail for Europe.

"What a set of barbarians we were toward you," said Harry to Roland, "that first term."

"Don't speak of it!" cried Roland, "for I was a barbarian myself."

And then at the last, as they linger, they speak of Jamie in tones that they have not used before.

"I have thought so many times," said Roland, "and I believe it to be true, that I owe all that is best in me to Jamie, under God. That boy helped me when I despised help. He made me care for him, and through him I cared for others."

"It was the same with me," answered Harry, "and Florrie says she shall never forget his sympathy." Harry should have known better than the others what Florrie thought, for he had just come from a visit to her and was quite happy with what she had promised him.

Ned said nothing; his thoughts had gone back to the day when he and Jamie rowed down the lake and Jamie gave him the assurance of his forgiveness and love.

THE END.

TACTICS OF INFIDELS

By REV. L. A. LAMBERT,

Author of "Notes on Ingersoll," "Handbook of Scripture Reference," etc.

In Paper Covers, 357 pp., at 30 Cents, and Cloth, 60 Cents.

REV. DR. J. A. WILLIAMS says of this book:—"A book for the times—that deserves, and will secure wide circulation. Logical, healthy, acute and discriminating. It puts the matter in so clear and full a light that no one need be befogged about it. Every young man should read it, and ministers would do well to have a copy for the purpose of lending."

"We have been led on from page to page by the charm of the argument."—*Rochester Post Express.*

"The whole is arranged in a dialogue form, which gives to the debate a close range effectiveness. Rev. Mr. Lambert is a cool judge and a hard fighter."—*Syracuse Christian Advocate.*

"The work is racily written, clear, logical and convincing."—*Canadian Presbyterian.*

"It is trenchant and incisive."—*Christian Guardian.*

CHEAP EDITION.

NOTES ON INGERSOLL

(THE AMERICAN ATHEIST).

By FATHER LAMBERT,

Author of "*Tactics of Infidels*," etc.

SOME OPINIONS OF THE PRESS AND OTHERS.

"There is neither Truth, nor Life, nor Argument left in Ingersoll when Father Lambert has done with him."

"It is a masterly refutation of Ingersoll. It should be widely circulated."

"Father Lambert's book is as acceptable to any good Methodist or Baptist as it is to any good Catholic. Successful beyond any of the efforts in that direction heretofore made."

"Father Lambert is an earnest and keen reasonor, and his books should have many readers."

Paper Covers, Price Reduced to Only 15 Cents.

Mailed post-free on receipt of price.

WILLIAM BRIGGS, 78 & 80 KING ST. EAST, TORONTO.

C. W. COATES, Montreal, Que. S. F. HUESTIS, Halifax, N.S.