

FICTION

Susan Warner

Daisy

A PUBLIC DOMAIN BOOK

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FICTION



"'And you love Jesus, Darry,' I said."

Daisy

Page 59

D A I S Y

BY
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D A I S Y



CHAPTER I.

MISS PINSHON.

I WANT an excuse to myself for writing my own life; an excuse for the indulgence of going it all over again, as I have so often gone over bits. It has not been more remarkable than thousands of others. Yet every life has in it a thread of present truth and possible glory. Let me follow out the truth to the glory.

The first bright years of my childhood I will pass. They were childishly bright. They lasted till my eleventh summer. Then the light of heavenly truth was woven in with the web of my mortal existence; and whatever the rest of the web has been, those golden threads have always run through it all the rest of the way. Just as I reached my birthday that summer and was ten years old, I became a Christian.

For the rest of that summer I was a glad child. The brightness of those days is a treasure safe locked up in a chamber of my memory. I have known other glad times too in my life; other times of even higher enjoyment. But among all the dried flowers of my memory, there is not one that keeps a fresher perfume or a stronger scent of its life than this one. Those were the days without cloud; before life shadows had begun to cast their blackness over the landscape. And even though such shadows do go as well as come, and leave the intervals as sunlit as ever; yet after that change of the first life shadow is once seen, it is impossible to forget that it may come again and darken the sun. I do not mean that the days of that summer were absolutely without things to trouble me; I had changes of light and shade; but, on the whole, nothing that did not heighten the light. They were pleasant days that I had in Juanita's cottage at the time when my ankle was broken; there were hours of sweetness with crippled Molly; and it was simply delight I had all alone with my pony Loupe, driving over the sunny and shady roads, free to do as I liked and go where I liked. And how I enjoyed studying English history with my cousin Preston. It is all stowed away in my heart, as fresh and sweet as at first. I will not pull it out now. The change, and my first real life shadow came, when my father was thrown from his horse and injured his head. Then the doctors decided he must go abroad and travel, and mamma decided that it was best that I should go to Magnolia with Aunt Gary and have a governess.

There is no pleasure in thinking of those weeks. They went very slowly, and yet very fast; while I counted every minute and noted every step in the preparations. They were all over at last; my little world was gone from me; and I was left alone with Aunt Gary.

Her preparations had been made too; and the day after the steamer sailed we set off on our journey to the south. I do not know much about that journey. The things by the way were like objects in a mist to me and no more clearly discerned. Now and then there came a rift in the mist; something woke me up out of my sorrow-dream; and of those points and of what struck my eyes at those minutes I have a most intense and vivid recollection. I can feel yet the still air of one early morning's start, and hear the talk between my aunt and the hotel people about the luggage. My aunt was a great traveller and wanted no one to help her or manage for her. I remember acutely a beggar who spoke to us on the sidewalk at Washington. We stayed over a few days in Washington, and then hurried on; for when she was on the road my Aunt Gary lost not a minute. We went, I presume, as fast as we could without travelling all night; and our last day's journey added that too.

By that time my head was getting steadied, perhaps, from the grief which had bewildered it; or grief was settling down and taking its proper place at the bottom of my heart, leaving the surface as usual. For twelve hours that day we went by a slow railway train through a country of weary monotony. Endless forests of pine seemed all that was to be seen; scarce ever a village; here and there a miserable clearing and forlorn-looking house; here and there stoppages of a few minutes to let somebody out or take somebody in; once, to my great surprise, a stop of rather more than a few minutes to accommodate a lady who wanted some flowers gathered for her. I was surprised to see flowers wild in the woods at that time of year, and much struck with the politeness of the railway train that was willing to delay for such a reason. We got out of the car for dinner, or for a short rest at dinner-time. My aunt had brought her lunch in a basket. Then the forests and the rumble of the cars began again. At one time the pine forests were exchanged for oak, I remember; after that, nothing but pine.

It was late in the day, when we left the cars at one of those solitary wayside station-houses. I shall never forget the look and feeling of the place. We had been for some miles going through a region of swamp or swampy woods, where sometimes the rails were laid on piles in the water. This little station-house was in the midst of such a region. The woods were thick and tangled with vines everywhere beyond the edge of the clearing; the ground was wet beneath them, and in places showed standing water. There was scarcely a clearing; the forest was all round the house; with only the two breaks in it where on one side and on the other the iron rail track ran off into the distance. It was a lonely place; almost nobody was there waiting for the train; one or two forlorn coloured people and a long lank-looking

countryman, were all. Except what at first prevented my seeing anything else--my cousin Preston. He met me just as I was going to get down from the car; lifted me to the platform, and then with his looks and words almost broke up the composure which for several days had been growing upon me. It was not hardened yet to bear attacks. I was like a poor shell-fish, which, having lost one coat of armour and defence, craves a place of hiding and shelter for itself until its new coat be grown. While he was begging me to come into the station-house and rest, I stood still looking up the long line of railway by which we had come, feeling as if my life lay at the other end of it, out of sight and quite beyond reach. Yet I asked him not to call me "poor" Daisy. I was very tired, and I suppose my nerves not very steady. Preston said we must wait at that place for another train; there was a fork in the road beyond, and this train would not go the right way. It would not take us to Baytown. So he had me into the station-house.

It wearied me and so did all that my eyes lighted upon, strange though it was. The bare room, not clean; the board partition, with swinging doors, behind which, Preston said, were the cook and the baker! the untidy waiting girls that came and went, with scant gowns and coarse shoes, and no thread of white collar to relieve the dusky throat and head rising out of the dark gown, and no apron at all. Preston did what he could. He sent away the girls with their trays of eatables; he had a table pulled out from the wall and wiped off, and then he ordered a supper of eggs, and johnny cake, and all sorts of things. But I could not eat. As soon as supper was over I went out on the platform to watch the long lines of railway running off through the forest, and wait for the coming train. The evening fell while we looked; the train was late; and at last when it came I could only know it in the distance by the red spark of its locomotive gleaming like a firefly.

It was a freight train, there was but one passenger car, and that was full. We got seats with difficulty, and apart from each other. I hardly know whether that, or anything, could have made me more forlorn. I was already stiff and weary with the twelve hours of travelling we had gone through that day; inexpressibly weary in heart. It seemed to me that I could not long endure the rumble and the jar and the closeness of this last car. The passengers, too, had habits which made me draw my clothes as tight around me as I could, and shrink away mentally into the smallest compass possible. I had noticed the like, to be sure, ever since we left Washington; but to-night, in my weary, faint, and tired-out state of mind and body every unseemly sight or sound struck my nerves with a sense of pain that was hardly endurable. I wondered if the train would go on all night; it went very slowly. And I noticed that nobody seemed impatient or had the air of expecting that it would soon find its journey's end. I felt as if I could not bear it many half hours. My next neighbour was a fat, good-natured, old lady, who rather made matters worse by putting her arm round me and hugging me up, and begging me to make a pillow of her and go to sleep. My nerves were twitching with impatience and the desire for relief; when suddenly the thought came to me that I might please the Lord by being patient. I remember what a lull the thought of Him brought; and yet how difficult it was not to be impatient, till I fixed my mind on some Bible words--they were the words of the twenty-third Psalm--and began to think and pray them over. So good they were, that by and by they rested me. I dropped asleep and forgot my aches and weariness until the train arrived at Baytown.

They took me to a hotel, then, and put me to bed, and I did not get up for several days. I must have been feverish, for my fancies wandered incessantly in unknown places with papa, in regions of the old world; and sometimes, I think, took both him and myself to rest and home where wanderings are over. After a few days this passed away. I was able to come downstairs, and both Preston and his mother did their best to take good care of me. Especially Preston. He brought me books, and fruit, and birds to tempt me to eat, and was my kind and constant companion when his mother was out, and indeed when she was in, too. So I got better by the help of oranges and rice-birds. I could have got better faster, but for my dread of a governess which was hanging over me. I heard nothing about her and could not bear to ask. One day Preston brought the matter up and asked if Daisy was going to have a school-mistress?

"Certainly," my Aunt Gary said. "She must be educated, you know."

"I don't know," said Preston; "but if they say so, I suppose she must. Who is it to be, mamma?"

"You do not know anything about it," said Aunt Gary. "If my son was going to marry the greatest heiress in the State; and she is very nearly that--goodness! I did not see you were there, Daisy, my dear; but it makes no difference;--I should think it proper that she should be educated."

"I can't see what her being an heiress should have to do with it," said Preston, "except rather to make it unnecessary as well as a bore. Who is it, mamma?"

"I have recommended Miss Pinshon."

"Oh, then, it is not fixed yet."

"Yes, it is fixed. Miss Pinshon is coming as soon as we get to Magnolia."

"I'll be off before that," said Preston. "Who is Miss Pinshon?"

"How should *you* know? She has lived at Jessamine Bank,--educated the Dalzell girls."

"What sort of a person, mamma!"

"What sort of a person?" said my Aunt Gary; "why a governess sort of a person. What sort should she be."

"Any other sort in the world," said Preston, "for my money. That is just the sort to worry poor little Daisy out of her life."

"You are a foolish boy!" said Aunt Gary. "Of course if you fill Daisy's head with notions, she will not get them out again. If you have anything of that sort to say, you had better say it where she will not hear."

"Daisy has eyes--and a head," said Preston.

As soon as I was able for it Preston took me out for short walks; and as I grew stronger he made the walks longer. The city was a strange place to me; very unlike New York; there was much to see and many a story to hear; and Preston and I enjoyed ourselves. Aunt Gary was busy making visits, I think. There was a beautiful walk by the sea which I liked best of all; and when it was not too cold my greatest pleasure was to sit there looking over the dark waters and sending my whole soul across them to that unknown spot where my father and mother were. "Home," that spot was to me. Preston did not know what I liked the Esplanade for; he sometimes laughed at me for being poetic and meditative; when I was only sending my heart over the water. But he was glad to please me in all that he could; and whenever it was not too cold, our walks always took me there.

One day, sitting there, I remember we had a great argument about studying. Preston began with saying that I must not mind this governess that was coming, nor do anything she bade me unless I liked it. As I gave him no answer, he repeated what he had said.

"You know, Daisy, you are not obliged to care what she thinks."

I said I thought I was.

"What for?" said Preston.

"I have a great deal to learn you know," I said, feeling it very gravely indeed in my little heart.

"What do you want to know so much?" said Preston.

I said, everything. I was very ignorant.

"You are no such thing," said Preston. "Your head is full this minute. I think you have about as much knowledge as is good for you. I mean to take care that you do not get too much."

"O Preston," said I, "that is very wrong. I have not any knowledge scarcely."

"There is no occasion," said Preston stoutly. "I hate learned women."

"Don't you like to learn things?"

"That's another matter," said he. "A man must know things, or he can't get along. Women are different."

"But I think it is nice to know things too," said I. "I don't see how it is different."

"Why, a woman need not be a lawyer, or a doctor, or a professor," said Preston; "all she need do, is to have good sense and dress herself nicely."

"Is dressing so important?" said I, with a new light breaking over me.

"Certainly. Ribbons of the wrong colour will half kill a woman. And I have heard Aunt Randolph say that a particular lady was ruined by her gloves."

"Ruined by her gloves!" said I. "Did she buy so many?"

Preston went into such a laugh at that, I had to wait some time before I could go on. I saw I had made some mistake, and I would not renew that subject.

"Do *you* mean to be anything of that sort?" I said, with some want of connection.

"What sort? Ruined by my gloves? Not if I know it."

"No, no! I mean, a lawyer or a doctor or a professor?"

"I should think not!" said Preston, with a more emphatic denial.

"Then, what are you studying for?"

"Because, as I told you, Daisy, a man must know things, or he cannot get on in the world."

I pondered the matter, and then I said, I should think good sense would make a woman study too. I did not see the difference. "Besides, Preston," I said, "if she didn't, they would not be equal."

"Equal!" cried Preston. "Equal! O Daisy, you ought to have lived in some old times. You are two hundred years old, at least. Now don't go to studying that, but come home. You have sat here long enough."

It was my last hour of freedom. Perhaps for that reason I remember every minute so distinctly. On our way home we met a negro funeral. I stopped to look at it. Something, I do not know what, in the long line of dark figures, orderly and even stately in their demeanour, the white dresses of the women, the peculiar faces of men and women both, fascinated my eyes. Preston exclaimed at me again. It was the commonest sight in the world, he said. It was their pride to have a grand funeral. I asked if *this* was a grand funeral. Preston said "pretty well; there must be several hundred of them and they were well dressed." And then he grew impatient and hurried me on. But I was thinking; and before we got to the hotel where we lodged, I asked Preston if there were many coloured people at Magnolia.

"Lots of them," he said. "There isn't anything else."

"Preston," I said presently, "I want to buy some candy somewhere."

Preston was very much pleased, I believe, thinking that my thoughts had quite left the current of sober things. He took me to a famous confectioner's; and there I bought sweet things till my little stock of money was all gone.

"No more funds?" said Preston. "Never mind--go on, and I'll help you. Why I never knew you liked sugarplums so much. What next? burnt almonds? *this* is good, Daisy--this confection of roses. But you must take all this sugar in small doses, or I am afraid it wouldn't be just beneficial."

"O Preston!" I said--"I do not mean to eat all this myself."

"Are you going to propitiate Miss Pinshon with it? I have a presentiment that sweets won't sweeten her, Daisy."

"I don't know what 'propitiate' means," I said, sighing. "I will not take the almonds, Preston."

But he was determined I should; and to the almonds he added a quantity of the delicate confection he spoke of, which I had thought too delicate and costly for the uses I had purposed; and after the rose he ordered candied fruits; till a great packet of varieties was made up. Preston paid for them--I could not help it--and desired them sent home; but I was bent on taking the package myself. Preston would not let me do that, so he carried it; which was a much more serious token of kindness, in him, than footing the bill. It was but a little way, however, to the hotel. We were in the hall, and I was just taking my sugars from Preston to carry them upstairs, when I heard Aunt Gary call my name from the parlour. Instinctively, I cannot tell how, I knew from her tone what she wanted me for. I put back the package in Preston's hands, and walked in; my play over.

How well I knew my play was over, when I saw my governess. She was sitting by my aunt on the sofa. Quite different from what I had expected, so different that I walked up to her in a maze, and yet seemed to recognize in that first view all that was coming after. Probably that is fancy; but it seems to me now that all I ever knew or felt about Miss Pinshon in the years that followed, was duly begun and betokened in those first five minutes. She was a young-looking lady, younger looking than she was. She had a dark, rich complexion, and a face that I suppose would have been called handsome; it was never handsome to me. Long black curls on each side of her face, and large black eyes, were the features that first struck one; but I immediately decided that Miss Pinshon was not born a lady. I do not mean that I think blood and breeding are unseverable; or that half a dozen lady ancestors in a direct line secure the character to the seventh in descent; though they *do* often secure the look of it; nevertheless, ladies are born who never know all their lives how to make a curtsy, and curtseys are made with infinite grace by those who have nothing of a lady beyond the trappings. I never saw Miss Pinshon do a rude or an awkward thing, that I remember; nor one which changed my first mind about her. She was handsomely dressed; but there again I felt the same want. Miss Pinshon's dresses made me think always of the mercer's counter and the dressmaker's shop. My mother's robes always seemed part of her own self; and so, in a certain true sense, they were.

My aunt introduced me. Miss Pinshon studied me. Her first remark was that I looked very young. My aunt excused that, on the ground of my having been always a delicate child. Miss Pinshon observed further that the way I wore my

hair produced part of the effect. My aunt explained *that* to my father's and mother's fancy; and agreed that she thought cropped heads were always ungraceful. If my hair were allowed to fall in ringlets on my neck I would look very different. Miss Pinshon next inquired how much I knew? turning her great black eyes from me to Aunt Gary. My aunt declared she could not tell; delicate health had also here interfered; and she appealed to me to say what knowledge I was possessed of. I could not answer. I could not say. It seemed to me I had not learned anything. Then Preston spoke for me.

"Modesty is apt to be silent on its own merits," he said. "My cousin has learned the usual rudiments; and in addition to those the art of driving."

"Of *what*? What did you say?" inquired my governess.

"Of driving, ma'am. Daisy is an excellent whip for her years and strength."

Miss Pinshon turned to Preston's mother. My aunt confirmed and enlarged the statement, again throwing the blame on my father and mother. For herself, she always thought it very dangerous for a little girl like me to go about in the country in a pony-chaise all alone. Miss Pinshon's eyes could not be said to express anything, but to my fancy they concealed a good deal. She remarked that the roads were easy.

"Oh, it was not here," said my aunt; "it was at the North, where the roads are not like our pine forest. However the roads were not dangerous there, that I know of; not for anybody but a child. But horses and carriages are always dangerous."

Miss Pinshon next applied herself to me. What did I know? "beside this whip accomplishment," as she said. I was tongue-tied. It did not seem to me that I knew anything. At last I said so. Preston exclaimed. I looked at him to beg him to be still; and I remember how he smiled at me.

"You can read, I suppose?" my governess went on.

"Yes, ma'am."

"And write, I suppose?"

"I do not think you would say I know how to write," I answered. "I cannot do it at all well; and it takes me a long time."

"Come back to the driving, Daisy," said Preston. "That is one thing you do know. And English history, I will bear witness."

"What have you got there, Preston?" my aunt asked.

"Some horehound drops, mamma."

"You haven't a sore throat?" she asked, eagerly.

"No, ma'am--not just now, but I had yesterday; and I thought I would be provided."

"You seem provided for a long time," Miss Pinshon remarked.

"Can't get anything up at Magnolia, except rice," said Preston, after making the lady a bow which did not promise good fellowship. "You must take with you what you are likely to want there."

"You will not want all that," said his mother.

"No ma'am, I hope not," said Preston, looking at his package demurely. "Old Uncle Lot, you know, always has a cough; and I purpose delighting him with some of my purchases. I will go and put them away."

"Old Uncle Lot!" my aunt repeated. "What Uncle Lot? I did not know you had been enough at Magnolia to get the servants' names. But *I* don't remember any Uncle Lot."

Preston turned to leave the room with his candy, and in turning gave me a look of such supreme fun and mischief that at another time I could hardly have helped laughing. But Miss Pinshon was asking me if I understood arithmetic?

"I think--I know very little about it," I said hesitating. "I can do a sum."

"In what?"

"On the slate, ma'am."

"Yes, but in what?"

"I don't know, ma'am--it is adding up the columns."

"Oh, in *addition*, then. Do you know the multiplication and division tables?"

"No, ma'am."

"Go and get off your things, and then come back to me; and I will have some more talk with you."

I remember to this day how heavily my feet went up the stairs. I was not very strong yet in body, and now the strength seemed to have gone out of my heart.

"I declare," said Preston, who waited for me on the landing, "she falls into position easy! Does she think she is going to take *that* tone with you?"

I made no answer. Preston followed me into my room.

"I won't have it, little Daisy. Nobody shall be mistress at Magnolia but you. This woman shall not. See, Daisy--I am going to put these things in my trunk for you, until we get where you want them. That will be safe."

I thanked him.

"What are you going to do now?"

"I am going downstairs, as soon as I am ready."

"Do you expect to be under all the commands this High Mightiness may think proper to lay upon you?"

I begged him to be still and leave me.

"She will turn you into stone!" he exclaimed. "She is a regular Gorgon, with those heavy eyes of hers. I never saw such eyes. I believe she would petrify me if I had to bear them. Don't you give Medusa one of those sweet almonds, Daisy--not one, do you hear?"

I heard too well. I faced round upon him and begged him to remember that it was my *mother* I must obey in Miss Pinshon's orders: and said that he must not talk to me. Whereupon Preston threw down his candies, and pulled my cloak out of my unsteady hands, and locked his arms about me; kissing me and lamenting over me that it was "too bad." I tried to keep my self-command; but the end was a great burst of tears; and I went down to Miss Pinshon with red eyes and at a disadvantage. I think Preston was pleased.

I had need of all my quiet and self-command. My governess stretched out her hand, drew me to her side and kissed me; then with the other hand went on to arrange the ruffle round my neck, stroking it and pulling it into order, and even taking out a little bit of a pin I wore, and putting it in again to suit herself. It annoyed me excessively. I knew all was right about my ruffle and pin; I never left them carelessly arranged; no fingers but mamma's had ever dared to meddle with them before. But Miss Pinshon arranged the ruffle and the pin, and still holding me, looked in my face with those eyes of hers. I began to feel that they were "heavy." They did not waver. They did not seem to wink, like other eyes. They bore down upon my face with a steady power, that was not bright but ponderous. Her first question was, whether I was a good girl.

I could not tell how to answer. My aunt answered for me, that she believed Daisy meant to be a good girl, though she liked to have her own way.

Miss Pinshon ordered me to bring up a chair and sit down; and then asked if I knew anything about mathematics; told me it was the science of quantity; remarked to my aunt that it was the very best study for teaching children to think, and that she always gave them a great deal of it in the first year of their pupilage. "It puts the mind in order," the black-eyed lady went on; "and other things come so easily after it. Daisy, do you know what I mean by 'quantity?'"

I knew what *I* meant by quantity; but whether the English language had anything in common for Miss Pinshon and me, I had great doubts. I hesitated.

"I always teach my little girls to answer promptly when they are asked anything. I notice that you do not answer promptly. You can always tell whether you know a thing or whether you do not."

I was not so sure of that. Miss Pinshon desired me now to repeat the multiplication table. Here at least there was certainty. I had never learned it.

"It appears to me," said my governess, "you have done very little with the first ten years of your life. It gives you a great deal to do for the next ten."

"Health has prevented her applying to her studies," said my aunt.

"The want of health. Yes, I suppose so. I hope Daisy will be very well now, for we must make up for lost time."

"I do not suppose so much time need have been lost," said my aunt; "but parents are easily alarmed, you know; they think of nothing but one thing."

So now there was nobody about me who would be easily alarmed. I took the full force of that.

"Of course," said Miss Pinshon, "I shall have a careful regard to her health. Nothing can be done without that. I shall take her out regularly to walk with me, and see that she does not expose herself in any way. Study is no hindrance to health; learning has no malevolent effect upon the body. I think people often get sick for want of something to think of."

How sure I felt, as I went up to bed that night, that no such easy cause of sickness would be mine for long years to come!



CHAPTER II.

MY HOME.

THE next day we were to go to Magnolia. It was a better day than I expected. Preston kept me with him, away from Aunt Gary and my governess; who seemed to have a very comfortable time together. Magnolia lay some miles inland, up a small stream or inlet called the Sands River; the banks of which were studded with gentlemen's houses. The houses were at large distances from one another, miles of plantation often lying between. We went by a small steamer which plied up and down the river; it paddled along slowly, made a good many landings, and kept us on board thus a great part of the day.

At last Preston pointed out to me a little wooden pier or jetty ahead, which he said was my landing; and the steamer soon drew up to it. I could see only a broken bank, fifteen feet high, stretching all along the shore. However a few steps brought us to a receding level bit of ground, where there was a break in the bank; the shore fell in a little, and a wooded dell sloped back from the river. A carriage and servants were waiting here.

Preston and I had arranged that we would walk up and let the ladies ride. But as soon as they had taken their places I heard myself called. We declared our purpose, Preston and I; but Miss Pinshon said the ground was damp and she preferred I should ride; and ordered me in. I obeyed, bitterly disappointed; so much disappointed that I had the utmost trouble not to let it be seen. For a little while I did not know what we were passing. Then curiosity recovered itself. The carriage was slowly making its way up a rough road. On each side the wooded banks of the dell shut us in; and these banks seemed to slope upward as well as the road, for though we mounted and mounted, the sides of the dell grew no lower. After a little, then, the hollow of the dell began to grow wider, and its sides softly shelving down; and through the trees on our left we could see a house, standing high above us, but on ground which sloped towards the dell, which rose and widened and spread out to meet it. This sloping ground was studded with magnificent live oaks; each holding its place in independent majesty, making no interference with the growth of the rest. Some of these trees had a girth that half a dozen men with their arms outstretched in a circle could not span; they were green in spite of the winter; branching low, and spreading into stately, beautiful heads of verdure, while grey wreaths of moss hung drooping from some of them. The house was seen not very distinctly among these trees; it showed low, and in a long extent of building. I have never seen a prettier approach to a house than that at Magnolia. My heart was full of the beauty this first time.

"This is Magnolia, Daisy," said my aunt. "This is your house."

"It appears a fine place," said Miss Pinshon.

"It is one of the finest on the river. This is your property, Daisy."

"It is papa's," I answered.

"Well, it belongs to your mother, and so you may say it belongs to your father; but it is yours for all that. The arrangement was, as I know," my aunt went on, addressing Miss Pinshon--"the arrangement in the marriage settlements was, that the sons should have the father's property, and the daughters the mother's. There is one son and one daughter; so they will each have enough."

"But it is mamma's and papa's," I pleaded.

"Oh, well--it will be yours. That is what I mean. Ransom will have Melbourne and the Virginia estates; and Magnolia is yours. You ought to have a pretty good education."

I was so astonished at this way of looking at things, that again I lost part of what was before me. The carriage went gently along, passing the house, and coming up gradually to the same level; then making a turn we drove at a better pace back under some of those great evergreen oaks, till we drew up at the house door. This was at a corner of the building, which stretched in a long, low line towards the river. A verandah skirted all that long front. As soon as I was out of the carriage I ran to the farthest end. I found the verandah turned the corner; the lawn too. All along the front it sloped to the dell; at the end of the house it sloped more gently and to greater distance down to the banks of the river. I could not see the river itself. The view of the dell at my left hand was lovely. A little stream which ran in the bottom had been coaxed to form a clear pool in an open spot, where the sunlight fell upon it, surrounded by a soft wilderness of trees and climbers. Sweet branches of jessamine waved there in their season; and a beautiful magnolia had been planted or cherished there, and carefully kept in view of the house windows. But the wide lawns, on one side and on the other, grew nothing but the oaks; the gentle slope was a play-ground for sunshine and shadow, as I first saw it; for

then the shadows of the oaks were lengthening over the grass, and the waving grey wreaths of moss served sometimes as a foil, sometimes as an usher to the sunbeams. I stood in a trance of joy and sorrow; they were fighting so hard for the mastery; till I knew that my aunt and Miss Pinshon had come up behind me.

"This is a proud place!" my governess remarked.

I believe I looked at her. My aunt laughed; said she must not teach me that; and led the way back to the entrance of the house. All along the verandah I noticed that the green-blinded long windows made other entrances for whoever chose them.

The door was open for us already, and within was a row of dark faces of men and women, and a show of white teeth that looked like a welcome. I wondered Aunt Gary did not say more to answer the welcome; she only dropped a few careless words as she went in, and asked if dinner was ready. I looked from one to another of the strange faces and gleaming rows of teeth. These were my mother's servants; that was something that came near to my heart. I heard inquiries after "Mis' Felissy" and "Mass' Randolph," and then the question, "Mis' 'Lizy, is this little missis?" It was asked by an old, respectable-looking, grey-haired negress. I did not hear my aunt's answer; but I stopped and turned to the woman and laid my little hand in her withered palm. I don't know what there was in that minute; only I know that whereas I touched one hand, I touched a great many hearts. Then and there began my good understanding with all the coloured people on my mother's estate of Magnolia. There was a general outburst of satisfaction and welcome. Some of the voices blessed me; more than one remarked that I was "like Mass' Randolph;" and I went into the parlour with a warm spot in my heart, which had been very cold.

I was oddly at home at once. The room indeed was a room I had never seen before; yet according to the mystery of such things, the inanimate surroundings bore the mark of the tastes and habits I had grown up among all my life. A great splendid fire was blazing in the chimney; a rich carpet was on the floor; the furniture was luxurious though not showy, and there was plenty of it. So there was plenty of works of art, in home and foreign manufacture. Comfort, elegance, prettiness, all around; and through the clear glass of the long windows the evergreen oaks on the lawn showed like guardians of the place. I stood at one of them, with the pressure of that joy and sorrow filling my childish heart.

My aunt presently called me from the window, and bade me let Margaret take off my things. I got leave to go upstairs with Margaret and take them off there. So I ran up the low easy flight of stairs--they were wooden and uncarpeted--to a matted gallery lit from the roof, with here and there a window in a recess looking upon the lawn. Many rooms opened into this gallery. I went from one to another. Here were great wood fires burning too; here were snowy white beds, with light muslin hangings; and dark cabinets and wardrobes; and mats on the floors, with thick carpets and rugs laid down here and there. And on one side and on the other side the windows looked out upon the wide lawn, with its giant oaks hung with grey wreaths of moss. My heart grew sore straitened. It was a hard evening, that first evening at Magnolia; with the loveliness and the brightness, the warm attraction, and the bitter cold sense of loneliness. I longed to throw myself down and cry. What I did, was to stand by one of the windows and fight myself not to let the tears come. If *they* were here, it would be so happy! If they were here--oh, if they were here!

I believe the girl spoke to me without my hearing her. But then came somebody whom I was obliged to hear, shouting "Daisy" along the gallery. I faced him with a great effort. He wanted to know what I was doing, and how I liked it, and where my room was.

"Not found it yet?" said Preston. "Is this it? Whose room is this, hey?--you somebody?"

"Maggie, massa," said the girl, dropping a curtsy.

"Maggie, where is your mistress's room?"

"This is Mis' 'Liza's room, sir."

"Nonsense! Miss 'Liza is only here on a visit--*this* is your mistress. Where is her room, hey?"

"Oh stop, Preston!" I begged him. "I am not mistress."

"Yes, you are. I'll roast anybody who says you ain't. Come along, and you shall choose which room you will have; and if it isn't ready they will get it ready. Come!"

I made him understand my choice might depend on where other people's rooms were; and sent him off. Then I sent the girl away--she was a pleasant-faced mulatto, very eager to help me--and left to myself I hurriedly turned the key in the lock. I *must* have some minutes to myself if I was to bear the burden of that afternoon; and I knelt down with as heavy a heart, almost, as I ever knew. In all my life I had never felt so castaway and desolate. When my father and mother first

went from me, I was at least among the places where they had been; June was with me still, and I knew not Miss Pinshon. The journey had had its excitements and its interest. Now I was alone; for June had decided, with tears and woeful looks, that she would not come to Magnolia; and Preston would be soon on his way back to college. I knew of only one comfort in the world; that wonderful, "Lo, I am with you." Does anybody know what that means, who has not made it the single plank bridge over an abyss?

No one found out that anything was the matter with me, except Preston. His caresses were dangerous to my composure. I kept him off; and he ate his dinner with a thundercloud face which foretold war with all governesses. For me, it was hard work enough to maintain my quiet; everything made it hard. Each new room, every arrangement of furniture, every table appointment, though certainly not what I had seen before, yet seemed so like home that I was constantly missing what would have made it home indeed. It was the shell without the kernel. The soup ladle seemed to be by mistake in the wrong hands; Preston seemed to have no business with my father's carving knife and fork; the sense of desolation pressed upon me everywhere.

After dinner the ladies went upstairs to choose their rooms, and Miss Pinshon avowed that she wished to have mine within hers; it would be proper and convenient, she said. Aunt Gary made no objection; but there was some difficulty, because all the rooms had independent openings into the gallery. Miss Pinshon hesitated a moment between one of two that opened into each other, and another that was pleasanter and larger but would give her less facility for overlooking my affairs. For one moment I drew a breath of hope; and then my hope was quashed. Miss Pinshon chose one of the two that opened into each other; and my only comfort was the fact that my own room had two doors and I was not obliged to go through Miss Pinshon's to get to it. Just as this business was settled, Preston called me out into the gallery and asked me to go for a walk. I questioned with myself a second whether I should ask leave; but I had an inward assurance that to ask leave would be not to go. I felt I must go. I ran back to the room where my things lay, and in two minutes I was out of the house.

My first introduction to Magnolia! How well I remember every minute and every foot of the way. It was delicious, the instant I stepped out among the oaks and into the sunshine. Freedom was there, at all events.

"Now, Daisy, we'll go to the stables," Preston said, "and see if there is anything fit for you. I am afraid there isn't; though Edwards told me he thought there was."

"Who is Edwards?" I asked, as we sped joyfully away through the oaks, across shade and sunshine.

"Oh, he is the overseer."

"What is an overseer?"

"What is an overseer?--why, he is the man that looks after things."

"What things?" I asked.

"All the things--everything, Daisy; all the affairs of the plantation; the rice fields and the cotton fields and the people, and everything."

"Where are the stables? and where are we going?"

"Here--just here--a little way off. They are just in a dell over here--the other side of the house, where the quarters are."

"Quarters?" I repeated.

"Yes. Oh, you don't know anything down here, but you'll learn. The stables and quarters are in this dell we are coming to; nicely out of sight. Magnolia is one of the prettiest places on the river."

We had passed through the grove of oaks on the further side of the house, and then found the beginning of a dell which, like the one by which we had come up a few hours before, sloped gently down to the river. In its course it widened out to a little low sheltered open ground, where a number of buildings stood.

"So the house is between two dells," I said.

"Yes; and on that height up there, beyond the quarters, is the cemetery; and from there you can see a great many fields and the river, and have a beautiful view. And there are capital rides all about the place, Daisy."

When we came to the stables, Preston sent a boy in search of "Darius." Darius, he told me, was the coachman, and chief in charge of the stable department. Darius came presently. He was a grey-headed, fine-looking, most respectable black man. He had driven my mother and my mother's mother; and being a trusted and important man on the place, and for other reasons, he had a manner and bearing that were a model of dignified propriety. Very grave "Uncle Darry" was;

stately and almost courtly in his respectful courtesy; but he gave me a pleasant smile when Preston presented him.

"We's happy to see Miss Daisy at her own home. Hope de Lord bress her."

My heart warmed at these words like the ice-bound earth in a spring day. They were not carelessly spoken, nor was the welcome. My feet trod the greensward more firmly. Then all other thoughts were for the moment put to flight by Preston's calling for the pony and asking Darius what he thought of him, and Darry's answer.

"Very far, massa; very far. Him no good for not'ing."

While I pondered what this judgment might amount to, the pony was brought out. He was larger than Loupe, and had not Loupe's peculiar symmetry of mane and tail: he was a fat dumpy little fellow, sleek and short, dapple grey, with a good long tail and a mild eye. Preston declared he had no shape at all and was a poor concern of a pony; but to my eyes he was beautiful. He took one or two sugarplums from my hand with as much amenity as if we had been old acquaintances. Then a boy was put on him, who rode him up and down with a halter.

"He'll do, Darius," said Preston.

"For little missis? Just big enough, massa. Got no tricks at all, only he no like work. Not much spring in him."

"Daisy must take the whip, then. Come and let us go look at some of the country where you will ride. Are you tired, Daisy?"

"Oh no," I said. "But wait a minute, Preston. Who lives in all those houses?"

"The people. The hands. They are away in the fields at work now."

"Does Darius live there?"

"Of course. They all live here."

"I should like to go nearer, and see the houses."

"Daisy, it is nothing on earth to see. They are all just alike, and you see them from here."

"I want to look in," I said, moving down the slope.

"Daisy," said Preston, "you are just as fond of having your way as----"

"As what? I do not think I am, Preston."

"I suppose nobody thinks he is," grumbled Preston, following me, "except the fellows who can't get it."

I had by this time almost forgotten Miss Pinshon. I had almost come to think that Magnolia might be a pleasant place. In the intervals when the pony was out of sight, I had improved my knowledge of the old coachman; and every look added to my liking. There was something I could not read that more and more drew me to him. A simplicity in his good manners, a placid expression in his gravity, a staid reserve in his humility, were all there; and more yet. Also the scene in the dell was charming to me. The ground about the negro cottages was kept neat; they were neatly built of stone and stood round the sides of a quadrangle; while on each side and below the wooded slopes of ground closed in the picture. Sunlight was streaming through and brightening up the cottages, and resting on Uncle Darry's swart face. Down through the sunlight I went to the cottages. The first door stood open, and I looked in. At the next I was about to knock, but Preston pushed open the door for me; and so he did for a third and a fourth. Nobody was in them. I was a good deal disappointed. They were empty, bare, dirty, and seemed to be very forlorn. What a set of people my mother's hands must be, I thought. Presently I came upon a ring of girls, a little larger than I was, huddled together behind one of the cottages. There was no manners about them. They were giggling and grinning, hopping on one foot, and going into other awkward antics; not the less that most of them had their arms filled with little black babies. I had got enough for that day, and turning about, left the dell with Preston.

At the head of the dell, Preston led off in a new direction, along a wide avenue that ran through the woods. Perfectly level and smooth, with the woods closing in on both sides and making long vistas through their boles and under their boughs. By and by we took another path that led off from this one, wide enough for two horses to go abreast. The pine trees were sweet overhead and on each hand, making the light soft and the air fragrant. Preston and I wandered on in delightful roaming; leaving the house and all that it contained at an unremembered distance. Suddenly we came out upon a cleared field. It was many acres large; in the distance a number of people were at work. We turned back again.

"Preston," I said, after a silence of a few minutes,--"there seemed to be no women in those cottages. I did not see any."

"I suppose not," said Preston; "because there were not any to see."

"But had all those little babies no mothers?"

"Yes, of course, Daisy; but they were in the field."

"The mothers of those little babies?"

"Yes. What about it? Look here--are you getting tired?"

I said no; and he put his arm round me fondly, so as to hold me up a little; and we wandered gently on, back to the avenue, then down its smooth course further yet from the house, then off by another wood path through the pines on the other side. This was a narrower path, amidst sweeping pine branches and hanging creepers, some of them prickly, which threw themselves all across the way. It was not easy getting along. I remarked that nobody seemed to come there much.

"I never came here myself," said Preston, "but I know it must lead out upon the river somewhere, and that's what I am after. Hollo! we are coming to something. There is something white through the trees. I declare, I believe----"

Preston had been out in his reckoning, and a second time had brought me where he did not wish to bring me. We came presently to an open place, or rather a place where the pines stood a little apart; and there in the midst was a small enclosure. A low brick wall surrounded a square bit of ground, with an iron gate on one side of the square; within, the grassy plot was spotted with the white marble of tombstones. There were large and small. Overhead, the great pine trees stood and waved their long branches gently in the wind. The place was lonely and lovely. We had come, as Preston guessed, to the river, and the shore was here high; so that we looked down upon the dark little stream far below us. The sunlight, getting low by this time, hardly touched it; but streamed through the pine trees and over the grass, and gilded the white marble with gold.

"I did not mean to bring you here," said Preston, "I did not know I was bringing you here. Come, Daisy--we'll go and try again."

"Oh stop!" I said--"I like it. I want to look at it."

"It is the cemetery," said Preston. "That tall column is the monument of our great--no, of our great-great-grandfather; and this brown one is for mamma's father. Come, Daisy!----"

"Wait a little," I said. "Whose is that with the vase on top?"

"Vase?" said Preston--"it's an urn. It is an urn, Daisy. People do not put vases on tombstones."

I asked what the difference was.

"The difference? O Daisy, Daisy! Why vases are to put flowers in; and urns--I'll tell you, Daisy--I believe it is because the Romans used to burn the bodies of their friends and gather up the ashes and keep them in a funeral urn. So an urn comes to be appropriate to a tombstone."

"I do not see how," I said.

"Why because an urn comes to be an emblem of mortality and all that. Come, Daisy; let us go."

"I think a vase of flowers would be a great deal nicer," I said. "We do not keep the ashes of our friends."

"We don't put signs of joy over their graves either," said Preston.

"I should think we might," I said meditatively. "When people have gone to Jesus--they must be very glad!"

Preston burst out with an expression of hope that Miss Pinshon would "do something" for me; and again would have led me away; but I was not ready to go. My eye, roving beyond the white marble and the low brick wall, had caught what seemed to be a number of meaner monuments, scattered among the pine trees and spreading down the slope of the ground on the further side, where it fell off towards another dell. In one place a bit of board was set up; further on a cross; then I saw a great many bits of board and crosses; some more and some less carefully made; and still as my eye roved about over the ground they seemed to start up to view in every direction; too low and too humble and too near the colour of the fallen pine leaves to make much show unless they were looked for. I asked what they all were.

"Those? Oh, those are for the people, you know."

"The people?" I repeated.

"Yes, the people--the hands."

"There are a great many of them," I remarked.

"Of course," said Preston. "You see, Daisy, there have been I don't know how many hundreds of hands here for a great many years, ever since mother's grandfather's time."

"I should think," said I, looking at the little board slips and crosses among the pine cones on the ground,--"I should think they would like to have something nicer to put up over their graves."

"Nicer? those are good enough," said Preston. "Good enough for them."

"I should think they would like to have something better," I said. "Poor people at the North have nicer monuments, I know. I never saw such monuments in my life."

"Poor people!" cried Preston. "Why these are the *hands*, Daisy,--the coloured people. What do they want of monuments?"

"Don't they care?" said I, wondering.

"Who cares if they care? I don't know whether they care," said Preston, quite out of patience with me, I thought.

"Only, if they cared, I should think they would have something nicer," I said. "Where do they all go to church, Preston?"

"Who?" said Preston.

"These people?"

"What people? The families along the river do you mean?"

"No, no," said I; "I mean *our* people--these people; the hands. You say there are hundreds of them. Where do they go to church?"

I faced Preston now in my eagerness; for the little board crosses and the forlorn look of the whole burying-ground on the side of the hill had given me a strange feeling. "Where do they go to church, Preston!"

"Nowhere, I reckon."

I was shocked, and Preston was impatient. How should he know, he said; he did not live at Magnolia. And he carried me off. We went back to the avenue and slowly bent our steps again towards the house; slowly, for I was tired, and we both, I think, were busy with our thoughts. Presently I saw a man, a negro, come into the avenue a little before us with a bundle of tools on his back. He went as slowly as we, with an indescribable, purposeless gait. His figure had the same look too, from his lop-sided old white hat to every fold of his clothing, which seemed to hang about him just as it would as lieve be off as on. I begged Preston to hail him and ask him the question about church going, which sorely troubled me. Preston was unwilling and resisted.

"What do you want me to do that for, Daisy?"

"Because Aunt Gary told Miss Pinshon that we have to drive six miles to go to church. Do ask him where they go!"

"They don't go *anywhere*, Daisy," said Preston, impatiently; "they don't care a straw about it, either. All the church they care about is when they get together in somebody's house and make a great muss."

"Make a muss!" said I.

"Yes; a regular muss; shouting and crying and having what they call a good time. That's what some of them do; but I'll wager if I were to ask him about going to church, this fellow here would not know what I mean."

This did by no means quiet me. I insisted that Preston should stop the man; and at last he did. The fellow turned and came back towards us, ducking his old white hat. His face was just like the rest of him; there was no expression in it but an expression of limp submissiveness.

"Sambo, your mistress wants to speak to you."

"Yes, massa. It's George, massa."

"George," said I, "I want to know where you go to church?"

"Yes, missis. What missis want to know?"

"Where do you and all the rest go to church?"

"Reckon don't go nowhar, missis."

"Don't you ever go to church?"

"Church for white folks, missis; bery far; long ways to ride."

"But you and the rest of the people--don't you go anywhere to church? to hear preaching?"

"Reckon not, missis. De preachin's don't come dis way, likely."

"Can you read the Bible, George?"

"Dunno read, missis. Never had no lamin'."

"Then don't you know anything about what is in the Bible? don't you know about Jesus?"

"Reckon don't know not'ing, missis."

"About Jesus?" said I again.

"Clar, missis, dis nigger don't know not'ing, but de rice and de corn. Missis talk to Darry; he most knowin' nigger on plantation; knows a heap."

"There!" exclaimed Preston, "that will do. You go off to your supper, George--and Daisy, you had better come on if you want anything pleasant at home. What on earth have you got now by that? What is the use? Of course they do not know anything; and why should they? They have no time and no use for it."

"They have no time on Sundays?" I said.

"Time to sleep. That is what they do. That is the only thing a negro cares about, to go to sleep in the sun. It's all nonsense, Daisy."

"They would care about something else, I dare say," I answered, "if they could get it."

"Well, they can't get it. Now, Daisy, I want you to let these fellows alone. You have nothing to do with them, and you did not come to Magnolia for such work. You have nothing on earth to do with them."

I had my own thoughts on the subject, but Preston was not a sympathising hearer. I said no more. The evergreen oaks about the house came presently in sight; then the low verandah that ran round three sides of it; then we came to the door, and my walk was over.



CHAPTER III.

THE MULTIPLICATION TABLE.

My life at Magnolia might be said to begin when I came downstairs that evening. My aunt and Miss Pinshon were sitting in the parlour, in the light of a glorious fire of light wood and oak sticks. Miss Pinshon called me to her at once; inquired where I had been; informed me I must not for the future take such diversion without her leave first asked and obtained; and then put me to reading aloud, that she might see how well I could do it. She gave me a philosophical article in a magazine for my proof piece; it was full of long words that I did not know and about matters that I did not understand. I read mechanically, of course; trying with all my might to speak the long words right, that there might be no room for correction; but Miss Pinshon's voice interrupted me again and again. I felt cast away in a foreign land; further and further from the home feeling every minute; and it seemed besides as if the climate had some power of petrification. I could not keep Medusa out of my head. It was a relief at last when the tea was brought in. Miss Pinshon took the magazine out of my hand.

"She has a good voice, but she wants expression," was her remark.

"I could not understand what she was reading," said my Aunt Gary.

"Nor anybody else," said Preston. "How are you going to give expression, when there is nothing to express?"

"That is where you feel the difference between a good reader and one who is not trained," said my governess. "I presume Daisy has never been trained."

"No, not in anything," said my aunt. "I dare say she wants a good deal of it."

"We will try," said Miss Pinshon.

It all comes back to me as I write, that beginning of my Magnolia life. I remember how dazed and disheartened I sat at the tea-table, yet letting nobody see it; how Preston made violent efforts to change the character of the evening; and did keep up a stir that at another time would have amused me. And when I was dismissed to bed, Preston came after me to the upper gallery and almost broke up my power of keeping quiet. He gathered me in his arms, kissed me and lamented me, and denounced ferocious threats against "Medusa;" while I in vain tried to stop him. He would not be sent away, till he had come into my room and seen that the fire was burning and the room warm, and Margaret ready for me.

With Margaret there was also an old coloured woman, dark and wrinkled, my faithful old friend Mammy Theresa! but indeed I could scarcely see her just then, for my eyes were full of big tears when Preston left me; and I had to stand still before the fire for some minutes before I could fight down the fresh tears that were welling up and let those which veiled my eyesight scatter away. I was conscious how silently the two women waited upon me. I had a sense even then of the sympathy they were giving. I knew they served me with a respect which would have done for an Eastern princess; but I said nothing hardly, nor they, that night.

If the tears came when I was alone, so did sleep too at last; and I waked up the next morning a little revived. It was a cool morning, and my eyes opened to see Margaret on her knees making my fire. Two good oak sticks were on the fire dogs, and a heap of light wood on the floor. I watched her piling and preparing, and then kindling the wood with a splinter of light wood which she lit in the candle. It was all very strange to me. The bare painted and varnished floor; the rugs laid down here and there; the old cupboards in the wall; the unwonted furniture. It did not feel like home. I lay still, until the fire blazed up and Margaret rose to her feet, and seeing my eyes open dropped her curtsey.

"Please, missis, may I be Miss Daisy's girl?"

"I will ask Aunt Gary," I answered, a good deal surprised.

"Miss Daisy is the mistress. We all belong to Miss Daisy. It will be as she say."

I thought to myself that very little was going to be "as I said." I got out of bed, feeling terribly slim-hearted, and stood in my nightgown before the fire, trying to let the blaze warm me. Margaret did her duties with a zeal of devotion that reminded me of my old June.

"I will ask Aunt Gary," I said; "and I think she will let you build my fire, Margaret."

"Thank'e, ma'am. First-rate fires. I'll make, Miss Daisy. We'se all so glad Miss Daisy come to Magnoly."

Were they? I thought, and what did she mean by their all "belonging to me?" I was not accustomed to quite so much deference. However, I improved my opportunity by asking Margaret my question of the day before about church. The girl half laughed.

"Ain't any church big enough to hold all de people," she said. "Guess we coloured folks has to go widout."

"But where *is* the church?" I said.

"Ain't none, Miss Daisy. People enough to make a church full all himselves."

"And don't you want to go?"

"Reckon it's o' no consequence, missis. It's a right smart chance of a way to Bo'mbroke, where de white folks' church is. Guess they don't have none for poor folks nor niggers in dese parts."

"But Jesus died for poor people," I said, turning round upon my attendant. She met me with a gaze I did not understand, and said nothing. Margaret was not like my old June. She was a clear mulatto, with a fresh colour and rather a handsome face; and her eyes, unlike June's little anxious, restless, almond-shaped eyes, were liquid and full. She went on carefully with the toilet duties which busied her; and I was puzzled.

"Did you never hear of Jesus?" I said presently. "Don't you know that He loves poor people?"

"Reckon He loves rich people de best, Miss Daisy," the girl said, in a dry tone.

I faced about to deny this, and to explain how the Lord had a special love and care for the poor. I saw that my hearer did not believe me. "She had heerd so," she said.

The dressing-bell sounded long and loud, and I was obliged to let Margaret go on with my dressing; but in the midst of my puzzled state of mind, I felt childishly sure of the power of that truth, of the Lord's love, to break down any hardness and overcome any coldness. Yet, "how shall they hear without a preacher?" and I had so little chance to speak.

"Then, Margaret," said I at last, "is there no place where you can go to hear about the things in the Bible?"

"No, missis; I never goes."

"And does not anybody, except Darry when he goes with the carriage?"

"Can't, Miss Daisy; it's miles and miles; and no place for niggers neither."

"Can you read the Bible, Margaret?"

"Guess not, missis; we's too stupid; ain't good for coloured folks to read."

"Does *nobody*, among all the people, read the Bible?" said I, once more stopping Margaret in my dismay.

"Uncle Darry--he does," said the girl; "and he do 'spoun some; but I don't make no count of his 'spoundations."

I did not know quite what she meant; but I had no time for anything more. I let her go, locked my door and kneeled down; with the burden on my heart of this new revelation; that there were hundreds of people under the care of my father and mother who were living without church and without Bible, in desperate ignorance of everything worth knowing. If papa had only been at Magnolia with me! I thought I could have persuaded him to build a church and let somebody come and teach the people. But now--what could I do? And I asked the Lord, what could I do? but I did not see the answer.

Feeling the question on my two shoulders, I went downstairs. To my astonishment, I found the family all gathered in solemn order; the house servants at one end of the room, my aunt, Miss Pinshon and Preston at the other, and before my aunt a little table with books. I got a seat as soon as I could, for it was plain that something was waiting for me. Then my aunt opened the Bible and read a chapter, and followed it with prayer read out of another book. I was greatly amazed at the whole proceeding. No such ceremony was ever gone through at Melbourne; and certainly nothing had ever given me the notion that my Aunt Gary was any more fond of sacred things than the rest of the family.

"An excellent plan," said Miss Pinshon, when we had risen from our knees and the servants had filed off.

"Yes," my aunt said, somewhat as if it needed an apology;--"it was the custom in my father's and grandfather's time; and we always keep it up. I think old customs always should be kept up."

"And do you have the same sort of thing on Sundays, for the out-of-door hands?"

"What?" said my aunt. It was somewhat more abrupt than polite; but she probably felt that Miss Pinshon was a governess.

"There were only the house servants gathered this morning."

"Of course; part of them."

"Have you any similar system of teaching for those who are outside? I think you told me they have no church to go to."

"I should like to know what 'system' you would adopt," said my aunt, "to reach seven hundred people."

"A church and a minister would not be a bad thing."

"Or we might all turn missionaries," said Preston; "and go among them with bags of Bibles round our necks. We might all turn missionaries."

"Colporteurs," said Miss Pinshon.

Then I said in my heart, "I will be one." But I went on eating my breakfast and did not look at anybody; only I listened with all my might.

"I don't know about that," said my aunt. "I doubt whether a church and a minister would be beneficial."

"Then you have a nation of heathen at your doors," said Miss Pinshon.

"I don't know but they are just as well off," said my aunt. "I doubt if more light would do them any good. They would not understand it."

"They must be very dark if they could not understand light," said my governess.

"Just as people that are very light cannot understand darkness," said Preston.

"I think so," my aunt went on. "Our neighbour Colonel Joram, down below here at Crofts, will not allow such a thing as preaching or teaching on his plantation. He says it is bad for them. We always allowed it; but I don't know."

"Colonel Joram is a heathen himself, you know, mother," said Preston. "Don't hold *him* up."

"I will hold him up for a gentleman, and a very successful planter," said Mrs. Gary. "No place is better worked or managed than Crofts. If the estate of Magnolia were worked and kept as well, it would be worth half as much again as it ever has been. But there is the difference of the master's eye. My brother-in-law never could be induced to settle at Magnolia, nor at his own estates either. He likes it better in the cold North."

Miss Pinshon made no remark whatever in answer to this statement; and the rest of the talk at the breakfast-table was about rice.

After breakfast my school life at Magnolia began. It seemed as if all the threads of my life there were in a hurry to get into my hand. Ah! I had a handful soon! But this was the fashion of my first day with my governess. All the days were not quite so bad; however, it gave the key of them all.

Miss Pinshon bade me come with her to the room she and my aunt had agreed should be the schoolroom. It was the back room of the house, though it had hardly books enough to be called a library. It had been the study or private room of my grandfather; there was a leather-covered table with an old bronze standish; some plain bookcases; a large escritoire; a terrestrial globe; a thermometer and a barometer; and the rest of the furniture was an abundance of chintz-covered chairs and lounges. These were very easy and pleasant for use; and long windows opening on the verandah looked off among the evergreen oaks and their floating grey drapery; the light in the room and the whole aspect of it was agreeable. If Miss Pinshon had not been there! But she was there, with a terrible air of business; setting one or two chairs in certain positions by a window, and handing one or two books on the table. I stood meek and helpless, expectant.

"Have you read any history, Daisy?"

I said no; then I said yes, I had; a little.

"What?"

"A little of the history of England last summer."

"Not of your own country?"

"No, ma'am."

"And no ancient history?"

"No, ma'am."

"You know nothing of the division of the nations, of course?"

I answered, nothing. I had no idea what she meant; except that England, and America, and France, were different, and of course divided. Of Peleg the son of Eber and the brother of Joktan, I then knew nothing.

"And arithmetic is something you do not understand," pursued Miss Pinshon. "Come here, and let me see how you can write."

With trembling, stiff little fingers--I feel them yet--I wrote some lines under my governess's eye.

"Very unformed," was her comment. "And now, Daisy, you may sit down there in the window and study the multiplication table. See how much of it you can get this morning."

Was it to be a morning's work? My heart was heavy as lead. At this hour, at Melbourne, my task would have been to get my flat hat and rush out among the beds of flowers; and a little later, to have up Loupe and go driving whither I would, among the meadows and cornfields. Ah, yes; and there was Molly who might be taught, and Juanita who might be visited; and Dr. Sandford who might come like a pleasant gale of wind into the midst of whatever I was about. I did not stop to think of them now, though a waft of the sunny air through the open window brought a violent rush of such images. I tried to shut them out of my head and gave myself wistfully to "three times one is three; three times two is six" Miss Pinshon helped me by closing the window. I thought she might have let so much sweetness as that come into the multiplication table. However I studied its threes and fours steadily for some time; then my attention flagged. It was very uninteresting. I had never in all my life till then been obliged to study what gave me no pleasure. My mind wandered, and then my eyes wandered, to where the sunlight lay so golden under the live oaks. The wreaths of grey moss stirred gently with the wind. I longed to be out there. Miss Pinshon's voice startled me.

"Daisy, where are your thoughts?"

I hastily brought my eyes and wits home and answered, "Out upon the lawn, ma'am."

"Do you find the multiplication table there?"

It was so needless to answer! I was mute. I would have come to the rash conclusion that nature and mathematics had nothing to do with each other.

"You must learn to command your attention," my governess went on. "You must not let it wander. That is the first lesson you have to learn. I shall give you mathematics till you have learnt it. You can do nothing without attention."

I bent myself to the threes and fours again. But I was soon weary; my mind escaped; and without turning my eyes off my book, it swept over the distance between Magnolia and Melbourne, and sat down by Molly Skelton to help her in getting her letters. It was done and I was there. I could hear the hesitating utterances; I could see the dull finger tracing its way along the lines. And then would come the reading *to* Molly, and the interested look of waiting attention, and once in a while the strange softening of the poor hard face. From there my mind went off to the people around me at Magnolia; were there some to be taught here perhaps? and could I get at them? and was there no other way--could it be there was no other way but by my weak little voice--through which some of them were ever to learn about my dear Saviour? I had got very far from mathematics, and my book fell. I heard Miss Pinshon's voice.

"Daisy, come here."

I obeyed and came to the table, where my governess was installed in the leather chair of my grandfather. She always used it.

"I should like to know what you are doing."

"I was thinking," I said.

"Did I give you thinking to do?"

"No, ma'am; not of that kind."

"What kind was it?"

"I was thinking, and remembering----"

"Pray what were you remembering?"

"Things at home--and other things."

"Things and things," said Miss Pinshon. "That is not a very elegant way of speaking. Let me hear how much you have learned."

I began. About all of the "threes" was on my tongue; the rest had got mixed up hopelessly with Molly Skelton and teaching Bible reading. Miss Pinshon was not pleased.

"You must learn attention," she said. "I can do nothing with you until you have succeeded in that. You *must* attend. Now I shall give you a motive for minding what you are about. Go and sit down again and study this table till you know the threes and the fours and the fives and the sixes, perfectly. Go and sit down."

I sat down, and the life was all out of me. Tears in the first place had a great mind to come, and would put themselves between me and the figures in the multiplication table. I governed them back after a while. But I could not study to purpose. I was tired and down-spirited; I had not energy left to spring to my task and accomplish it. Over and over again I tried to put the changes of the numbers in my head; it seemed like writing them in sand. My memory would not take hold of them; could not keep them; with all my trying I grew only more and more stupefied and fagged, and less capable of doing what I had to do. So dinner came, and Miss Pinshon said I might get myself ready for dinner and after dinner come back again to my lesson. The lesson must be finished before anything else was done.

I had no appetite. Preston was in a fume of vexation, partly aroused by my looks, partly by hearing that I was not yet free. He was enraged beyond prudent speaking, but Miss Pinshon never troubled herself about his words; and when the first and second courses were removed, told me I might go to my work. Preston called me to stay and have some fruit; but I went on to the study, not caring for fruit or for anything else. I felt very dull and miserable. Then I remembered that my governess probably did care for some fruit and would be delayed a little while; and then I tried what is the best preparation for study or anything else. I got down on my knees, to ask that help which is as willingly given to a child in her troubles as to the general of an army. I prayed that I might be patient and obedient and take disagreeable things pleasantly and do my duty in the multiplication table. And a breath of rest came over my heart, and a sort of perfume of remembered things which I had forgotten; and it quite changed the multiplication table to think that God had given it to me to learn, and so that some good would certainly come of learning it; at least the good of pleasing Him. As long as I dared I stayed on my knees; then I was strong for the fives and sixes.

But it was not quick work; and though my patience did not flag again nor my attention fail, the afternoon was well on the way before I was dismissed. I had then permission to do what I liked. Miss Pinshon said she would not go to walk that day; I might follow my own pleasure.

I must have been very tired; for it seemed to me there was hardly any pleasure left to follow. I got my flat and went out. The sun was westing; the shadows stretched among the evergreen oaks; the outer air was sweet. I had tried to find Preston first, in the house; but he was not to be found; and all alone I went out into the sunshine. It wooed me on. Sunshine and I were always at home together. Without knowing that I wanted to go anywhere, some secret attraction drew my steps towards the dell where I had seen Darry. I followed one of several well-beaten paths that led towards the quarters through the trees, and presently came out upon the stables again. All along the dell the sunshine poured. The ground was kept like a pleasure ground, it was so neat; the grass was as clean as the grass of a park; the little stone houses scattered away down towards the river, with shade trees among them, and oaks lining the sides of the dell. I thought surely Magnolia was a lovely place! if only my father and mother had been there. But then, seeing the many cottages, my trouble of the morning pressed upon me afresh. So many people, so many homes, and the light of the Bible not on them, nor in them? And, child as I was, and little as I knew, I knew the name of Christ too unspeakably precious, for me to think without a sore heart, and all these people were without what was the jewel of my life. And they my mother's servants! my father's dependants! What could I do?

The dell was alone in the yellow sunlight which poured over the slope from the west: and I went musing on till getting to the corner of the stables I saw Darry just round the corner grooming a black horse. He was working energetically, and humming to himself as he worked a refrain which I learned afterwards to know well. All I could make out was, "I'm going home"--several times repeated. I came near before he saw me, and he started; then bid me good evening and "hoped I found Magnolia a pleasant place."

Since I have grown older I have read that wonderful story of Mrs. Stowe's Uncle Tom; he reminded me of Darry then,

and now I never think of the one without thinking of the other. But Darry, having served a different class of people from Uncle Tom's first owners, had a more polished style of manners, which I should almost call courtly; and he was besides a man of higher natural parts, and somewhat more education. But much commerce in the Court which is above all earthly dignities, no doubt had more to do with his peculiarities than any other cause.

I asked him what he was singing about home? and where his home was? He turned his face full upon me, letting me see how grave and gentle his eye was, and at the same time there was a wistful expression in it that I felt.

"Home ain't nowheres here, missie," he said. "I'm 'spectin' to go by and by."

"Do you mean home up *there*?" said I, lifting my finger towards the sky. Darry fairly laughed.

"Spect don't want no other home, missie. Heaven good enough."

I stood watching him as he rubbed down the black horse, feeling surely that he and I would be friends.

"Where is your home here, Darry?"

"I got a place down there, little missie--not fur."

"When you have done that horse, will you show me your place? I want to see where you live."

"Missie want to see Darry's house?" said he, showing his white teeth. "Missie shall see what she mind to. I allus keeps Sadler till the last, 'cause he's ontractable."

The black horse was put in the stable, and I followed my black groom down among the lines of stone huts to which the working parties had not yet returned. Darry's house was one of the lowest in the dell, out of the quadrangle, and had a glimpse of the river. It stood alone in a pretty place, but something about it did not satisfy me. It looked square and bare. The stone walls within were rough as the stone-layer had left them; one little four-paned window, or rather casement, stood open; and the air was sweet; for Darry kept his place scrupulously neat and clean. But there was not much to be kept. A low bedstead; a wooden chest; an odd table made of a piece of board on three legs; a shelf with some kitchen ware; that was all the furniture. On the odd table there lay a Bible, that had, I saw, been turned over many a time.

"Then you can read, Uncle Darry?" I said, pitching on the only thing that pleased me.

"De good Lord, He give me dat happiness," the man answered gravely.

"And you love Jesus, Darry," I said, feeling that we had better come to an understanding as soon as possible. His answer was an energetic--

"Bress de Lord! Do Miss Daisy love Him, den?"

I would have said yes; I did say yes, I believe; but I did not know how or why, at this question there seemed a coming together of gladness and pain which took away my breath. My head dropped on Darry's little window-sill, and my tears rushed forth, like the head of water behind a broken mill-dam. Darry was startled and greatly concerned. He wanted to know if I was not well--if I would send him for "su'thing"--I could only shake my head and weep. I think Darry was the only creature at Magnolia before whom I would have so broken down. But somehow I felt safe with Darry. The tears cleared away from my voice after a little; and I went on with my inquiries again. It was a good chance.

"Uncle Darry, does no one else but you read the Bible?"

He looked dark and troubled. "Missie sees--de folks for most part got no learning. Dey no read, sure."

"Do you read the Bible to them, Darry?"

"Miss Daisy knows, dere ain't no great time. Dey's in the field all day, most days, and dey hab no time for to hear."

"But Sundays?" I said.

"Do try," he said, looking graver yet. "Me do 'tempt su'thing. But missie knows, de Sabbat' be de only day de people hab, and dey tink mostly of oder tings."

"And there is no church for you all to go to?"

"No, missis; no church."

There was a sad tone in his answer. I did not know how to go on. I turned to something else.

"Uncle Darry, I don't think your home looks very comfortable."

Darry almost laughed at that. He said it was good enough; would last very well a little while longer. I insisted that it was not *comfortable*. It was cold.

"Sun warm, Miss Daisy. De good Lord, He make His sun warm. And dere be fires enough."

"But it is very empty," I said. "You want something more in it, to make it look nice."

"It never empty, Miss Daisy, when de Lord Hissself be here. And He not leave His chil'n alone. Miss Daisy know dat?"

I stretched forth my little hand and laid it in Darry's great black palm. There was an absolute confidence established between us.

"Uncle Darry," I said, "I *do* love Him--but sometimes, I want to see papa!----"

And therewith my self-command was almost gone. I stood with full eyes and quivering lips, my hand still in Darry's, who on his part was speechless with sympathy.

"De time pass quick, and Miss Daisy see her pa'," he said at last.

I did not think the time passed quick. I said so.

"Do little missie ask de Lord for help?" Darry said, his eyes by this time as watery as mine. "Do Miss Daisy know, it nebber lonesome where de Lord be? He so good."

I could not stand any more. I pulled away my hand and stood still, looking out of the window and seeing nothing, till I could make myself quiet. Then I changed the subject and told Darry I should like to go and see some of the other houses again. I know now, I can see, looking back, how my childish self-control and reserve made some of those impulsive natures around me regard me with something like worshipful reverence. I felt it then, without thinking of it or reasoning about it. From Darry, and from Margaret, and from Mammy Theresa, and from several others, I had a loving, tender reverence, which not only felt for me as a sorrowful child, but bowed before me as something of higher and stronger nature than themselves. Darry silently attended me now from house to house of the quarters; introducing and explaining and doing all he could to make my progress interesting and amusing. Interested I was; but most certainly not amused. I did not like the look of things any better than I had done at first. The places were not "nice;" there was a coarse, uncared-for air of everything within, although the outside was in such well-dressed condition. No litter on the grass, no untidiness of walls or chimneys; and no seeming of comfortable homes when the door was opened. The village, for it amounted to that, was almost deserted at that hour; only a few crooning old women on the sunny side of a wall, and a few half-grown girls, and a quantity of little children, depending for all the care they got upon one or the other of these.

"Haven't all these little babies got mothers!" I asked.

"For sure, Miss Daisy--dey's got modders."

"Where *are* the mothers of all these babies, Darry?" I asked.

"Dey's in de field, Miss Daisy. Home d'rectly."

"Are they working like *men* in the fields!" I asked.

"Dey's all at work," said Darry.

"Do they do the same work as the men?"

"All alike, Miss Daisy." Darry's answers were not hearty.

"But don't their little babies want them?" said I, looking at a group of girls in whose hands were some very little babies indeed. I think Darry made me no answer.

"But if the men and women both work out," I went on, "papa must give them a great deal of money; I should think they would have things more comfortable, Darry. Why don't they have little carpets, and tables and chairs, and cups and saucers? Hardly anybody has teacups and saucers. Have *you* got any, Uncle Darry?"

"'Spect I'se no good woman to brew de tea for her ole man," said Darry; but I thought he looked at me very oddly.

"Couldn't you make it for yourself, Uncle Darry?"

"Poor folks don't live just like de rich folks," he answered, quietly, after a minute's pause. "And I don't count fur to want no good t'ing, missie."

I went on with my observations; my questions I thought I would not push any further at that time. I grew more and more dissatisfied, that my father's work-people should live in no better style and in no better comfort. Even Molly Skelton had a furnished and appointed house, compared with these little bare stone huts; and mothers that would leave their babies for the sake of more wages, must, I thought, be very barbarous mothers. This was all because, no doubt, of having no church and no Bible. I grew weary. As we were going up the dell towards the stables, I suddenly remembered my pony; and I asked to see him.

Darry was much relieved, I fancy, to have me come back to a child's sphere of action. He had out the fat little grey pony, and talked it over to me with great zeal. It came into my head to ask for a saddle.

"Dere be a saddle," Darry said, doubtfully. "Massa Preston he done got a saddle dis very day. Dunno where Massa Preston can be."

I did not heed this. I begged to have the saddle and be allowed to try the pony. Now Preston had laid a plan that nobody but himself should have the pleasure of first mounting me; but I did not know of this plan. Darry hesitated, I saw, but he had not the power to refuse me. The saddle was brought out, put on, and carefully arranged.

"Uncle Darry, I want to get on him--may I?"

"O' course--Miss Daisy do what she mind to. Him bery good, only some lazy."

So I was mounted. Preston, Miss Pinshon, the servants' quarters, the multiplication table, all were forgotten and lost in a misty distance. I was in the saddle for the first time, and delight held me by both hands. My first moment on horseback! If Darry had guessed it he would have been terribly concerned; but as it happened, I knew how to take my seat; I had watched my mother so often mounting her horse that every detail was familiar to me; and Darry naturally supposed I knew what I was about after I was in my seat. The reins were a little confusing; however, the pony walked off lazily with me to the head of the glen, and I thought he was an improvement upon the old pony chaise. Finding myself coming out upon the avenue, which I did not wish, it became necessary to get at the practical use of the bridle. I was at some pains to do it; finally I managed to turn the pony's head round, and we walked back in the same sober style we had come up. Darry stood by the stables, smiling and watching me; down among the quarters the children and old people turned out to look after me; I walked down as far as Darry's house, turned and came back again. Darry stood ready to help me to dismount; but it was too pleasant. I went on to the avenue. Just as I turned there, I caught, as it seemed to me, a glimpse of two ladies, coming towards me from the house. Involuntarily I gave a sharper pull at the bridle, and I suppose touched the pony's shoulder with the switch Darry had put into my hand. The touch so woke him up, that he shook off his laziness and broke into a short galloping canter to go back to the stables. This was a new experience. I thought for the first minute that I certainly should be thrown off; I seemed to have no hold of anything, and I was tossed up and down on my saddle in the way that boded a landing on the ground every next time.

I was not timid with animals, whatever might be true of me in other relations. My first comfort was finding that I did *not* fall off; then I took heart and settled myself in the saddle more securely, gave myself to the motion, and began to think I should like it by and by. Nevertheless, for this time I was willing to stop at the stables; but the pony had only just found how good it was to be moving, and he went by at full canter. Down the dell, through the quarters, past the cottages, till I saw Darry's house ahead of me, and began to think how I *should* get round again. At that pace I could not. Could I stop the fellow? I tried, but there was not much strength in my arms; one or two pulls did no good, and one or two pulls more did no good; pony cantered on, and I saw we were making straight for the river. I knew that I *must* stop him; I threw so much good-will into the handling of my reins that, to my joy, the pony paused, let himself be turned about placidly, and took up his leisurely walk again. But now I was in a hurry, wanting to be dismounted before anybody should come; and I was a little triumphant, having kept my seat and turned my horse. Moreover, the walk was not good after that stirring canter. I would try it again. But it took a little earnestness now and more than one touch of my whip before the pony would mind me. Then he obeyed in good style and we cantered quietly up to where Darry was waiting. The thing was done. The pony and I had come to an understanding. I was a rider from that time, without fear or uncertainty. The first gentle pull on the bridle was obeyed and I came to a stop in front of Darry and my cousin Preston.

I have spent a great deal of time to tell of my ride. Yet not more than its place in my life then deserved. It was my last half hour of pleasure for I think many a day. I had cantered up the slope, all fresh in mind and body, excited and glad with my achievement and with the pleasure of brisk motion; I had forgotten everybody and everything disagreeable, or what I did not forget I disregarded; but just before I stopped I saw what sent another thrill than that of pleasure tingling through all my veins. I saw Preston, who had but a moment before reached the stables, I saw him lift his hand

with a light riding switch he carried, and drew the switch across Darry's mouth. I shall never forget the coloured man's face, as he stepped back a pace or two. I understood it afterwards; I *felt* it then. There was no resentment; there was no fire of anger, which I should have expected; there was no manly and no stolid disregard of what had been done. There was instead a slight smile, which to this day I cannot bear to recall; it spoke so much of patient and helpless humiliation; as of one wincing at the galling of a sore and trying not to show he winced. Preston took me off my horse, and began to speak. I turned away from him to Darry, who now held two horses, Preston having just dismounted; and I thanked him for my pleasure, throwing into my manner all the studied courtesy I could. Then I walked up the dell beside Preston, without looking at him.

Preston scolded. He had prepared a surprise for me, and was excited by his disappointment at my mounting without him. Of course I had not known that; and Darry, who was in the secret, had not known how to refuse. I gave Preston no answer to his charges and reproaches. At last I said I was tired and I wished he would not talk.

"Tired! you are something besides tired," he said.

"I suppose I am," I answered with great deliberation.

He was eager to know what it was; but then we came out upon the avenue and were met flush by my aunt and Miss Pinshon. My aunt inquired, and Preston, who was by no means cool yet, accused me about the doings of the afternoon. I scarcely heeded one or the other; but I did feel Miss Pinshon's taking my hand and leading me home all the rest of the way. It was not that I wanted to talk to Preston, for I was not ready to talk to him; but this holding me like a little child was excessively distasteful to my habit of freedom. My governess would not loose her clasp when we got to the house; but kept fast hold and led me upstairs to my own room.



CHAPTER IV.

SEVEN HUNDRED PEOPLE.

"Do you think that was a proper thing to do, Daisy?" my governess asked when she released me.
"What thing, ma'am?" I asked.

"To tear about on that great grey pony."

"Yes, ma'am," I said.

"You think it *was* proper?" said Miss Pinshon, coolly. "Whom had you with you?"

"Nobody was riding with me."

"Your cousin was there?"

"No, ma'am."

"Who then?"

"I had Uncle Darry. I was only riding up and down the dell."

"The coachman! And were you riding up and through the quarters all the afternoon?"

"No, ma'am."

"What were you doing the rest of the time?"

"I was going about----" I hesitated.

"About where?"

"Through the place there."

"The quarters? Well, you think it proper amusement for your mother's daughter? You are not to make companions of the servants, Daisy. You are not to go to the quarters without my permission, and I shall not give it frequently. Now get yourself ready for tea."

I did feel as if Preston's prophecy were coming true and I in a way to be gradually petrified; some slow, chill work of that kind seemed already to be going on. But a little thing soon stirred all the life there was in me. Miss Pinshon stepped to the door which led from her room into mine, unlocked it, took out the key, and put it on her own side of the door. I sprang forward at that, with a word, I do not know what; and my governess turned her lustrous, unmoved eyes calmly upon me. I remember now how deadening their look was, in their very lustre and moveless calm. I begged however for a reversal of her last proceeding; I wanted my door locked sometimes, I said.

"You can lock the other door."

"But I want both locked."

"I do not. This door remains open, Daisy. I must come in here when I please. Now make haste and get ready."

I had no time for anything but to obey. I went downstairs, I think, like a machine; my body obeying certain laws, while my mind and spirit were scarcely present. I suppose I behaved myself as usual; save that I would have nothing to do with Preston, nor would I receive anything whatever at the table from his hand. This, however, was known only to him and me. I said nothing; not the less every word that others said fastened itself in my memory. I was like a person dreaming.

"You have just tired yourself with mounting that wild thing, Daisy," said my Aunt Gary.

"Wild!" said Preston. "About as wild as a tame sloth."

"I always heard that was very wild indeed," said Miss Pinshon. "The sloth cannot be tamed, can it?"

"Being stupid already, I suppose not," said Preston.

"Daisy looks pale at any rate," said my aunt.

"A little overdone," said Miss Pinshon. "She wants regular exercise; but irregular exercise is very trying to any but a strong person. I think Daisy will be stronger in a few weeks."

"What sort of exercise do you think will be good for her, ma'am?" Preston said, with an expression out of all keeping with his words, it was so fierce.

"I shall try different sorts," my governess answered, composedly. "Exercise of patience is a very good thing, Master Gary. I think gymnastics will be useful for Daisy too. I shall try them."

"That is what I have often said to my sister," said Aunt Gary. "I have no doubt that sort of training would establish Daisy's strength more than anything in the world. She just wants that to develop her and bring out the muscles."

Preston almost groaned; pushed his chair from the table, and I knew sat watching me. I would give him no opportunity, for *my* opportunity I could not have then. I kept quiet till the ladies moved; I moved with them; and sat all the evening abstracted in my own meditations, without paying Preston any attention; feeling indeed very old and grey, as no doubt I looked. When I was ordered to bed Miss Pinshon desired I would hold no conversation with anybody. Whereupon Preston took my candle and boldly marched out of the room with me. When we were upstairs he tried to make me disobey my orders. He declared I was turning to stone already; he said a great many hard words against my governess; threatened he would write to my father; and when he could not prevail to make me talk, dashed off passionately and left me. I went trembling into my room. But my refuge there was gone. I had fallen upon evil times. My door must not be locked, and Miss Pinshon might come in any minute. I could not pray. I undressed and went to bed; and lay there, waiting, all things in order, till my governess looked in. Then the door was closed, and I heard her steps moving about in her room. I lay and listened. At last the door was softly set open again; and then after a few minutes the sound of regular slow breathing proclaimed that those wide-open black eyes were really closed for the night. I got up, went to my governess's door and listened. She was sleeping profoundly. I laid hold of the handle of the door and drew it towards me; pulled out the key softly, put it in my own side of the lock and shut the door. And after all I was afraid to turn the key. The wicked sound of the lock might enter those sleeping ears. But the door was closed; and I went to my old place, the open window. It was not my window at Melbourne, with balmy summer air, and the dewy scent of the honeysuckle coming up, and the moonlight flooding all the world beneath me. But neither was it in the regions of the North. The night was still and mild, if not balmy; and the stars were brilliant; and the evergreen oaks were masses of dark shadow all over the lawn. I do not think I saw them at first; for my look was up to the sky, where the stars shone down to greet me, and where it was furthest from all the troubles on the surface of the earth; and with one thought of the Friend up there, who does not forget the troubles of even His little children, the barrier in my heart gave way, my tears gushed forth; my head lay on the window-sill at Magnolia, more hopelessly than in my childish sorrow it had ever lain at Melbourne. I kept my sobs quiet; I must; but they were deep, heartbreaking sobs, for a long time.

Prayer got its chance after a while. I had a great deal to pray for; it seemed to my child's heart now and then as if it could hardly bear its troubles. And very much I felt I wanted patience and wisdom. I thought there was a great deal to do, even for my little hands; and promise of great hindrance and opposition. And the only one pleasant thing I could think of in my new life at Magnolia, was that I might tell of the truth to those poor people who lived in the negro quarters.

Why I did not make myself immediately ill, with my night's vigils and sorrow, I cannot tell; unless it were that great excitement kept off the effects of chill air and damp. However, the excitement had its own effects, and my eyes were sadly heavy when they opened the next morning to look at Margaret lighting my fire.

"Margaret," I said, "shut Miss Pinshon's door, will you?"

She obeyed, and then turning to look at me, exclaimed that I was not well.

"Did you say you could not read, Margaret?" was my answer.

"Read! no, missis. Guess readin' ain't no good for servants. Seems like Miss Daisy ain't lookin' peart this mornin'!"

"Would you *like* to read?"

"Reckon don't care about it, Miss Daisy. Where'd us get books, most likely?"

I said I would get the books; but Margaret turned to the fire and made me no answer. I heard her mutter some ejaculation.

"Because, Margaret, don't you know," I said, raising myself on my elbow, "God would like to have you learn to read, so that you might know the Bible and come to heaven."

"Reckon folks ain't a heap better that knows the Bible," said the girl. "'Pears as if it don't make no difference. Ain't

nobody good in *this* place, 'cept Uncle Darry."

"In another minute I was out of bed and standing before the fire, my hand on her shoulder. I told her I wanted *her* to be good too, and that Jesus would make her good, if she would let Him. Margaret gave me a hasty look and then finished her fire making; but to my great astonishment, a few minutes after, I saw that the tears were running down the girl's face. It astonished me so much that I said no more; and Margaret was as silent, only dressed me with the greatest attention and tenderness.

"Ye want your breakfast bad, Miss Daisy," she remarked then in a subdued tone; and I suppose my looks justified her words. They created some excitement when I went downstairs. My aunt exclaimed; Miss Pinshon inquired; Preston inveighed, at things in general. He wanted to get me by myself, I knew, but he had no chance. Immediately after breakfast Miss Pinshon took possession of me.

The day was less weary than the day before, only I think because I was tired beyond impatience or nervous excitement. Not much was done; for though I was very willing I had very little power. But the multiplication table, Miss Pinshon said, was easy work; and at that and reading and writing, the morning crept away. My hand was trembling, my voice was faint, my memory grasped nothing so clearly as Margaret's tears that morning, and Preston's behaviour the preceding day. My cheeks were pale, of course. Miss Pinshon said we would begin to set that right with a walk after dinner.

The walk was had; but with my hand clasped in Miss Pinshon's I only wished myself at home all the way. At home again, after a while of lying down to rest, I was tried with a beginning of calisthenics. A trial it was to me. The exercises, directed and overseen by Miss Pinshon, seemed to me simply intolerable, a weariness beyond all other weariness. Even the multiplication table I liked better. Miss Pinshon was tired perhaps herself at last. She let me go.

It was towards the end of the day. With no life left in me for anything, I strolled out into the sunshine: aimlessly at first; then led by a secret inclination I hardly knew or questioned, my steps slowly made their way round by the avenue to the stables. Darry was busy there as I had found him yesterday. He looked hard at me as I came up; and asked me earnestly how I felt that afternoon? I told him I was tired; and then I sat down on a huge log which lay there and watched him at his work. By turns I watched the sunlight streaming along the turf and lighting the foliage of the trees on the other side of the dell; looking in a kind of dream, as if I were not Daisy nor this Magnolia in any reality. I suddenly started and awoke to realities as Darry began to sing,--

"My Father's house is built on high,
Far, far above the starry sky;
And though like Lazarus sick and poor,
My heavenly mansion is secure.
I'm going home,--
I'm going home,--
I'm going home
To die no more!
To die no more--
To die no more--
I'm going home
To die no more!"

The word "home" at the end of each line was dwelt upon in a prolonged sonorous note. It filled my ear with its melodious, plaintive breath of repose; it rested and soothed me. I was listening in a sort of trance, when another sound at my side both stopped the song and quite broke up the effect. It was Preston's voice. Now for it. He was all ready for a fight, and I felt miserably battered and shaken and unfit to fight anything.

"What are you doing here, Daisy?"

"I am doing nothing," I said.

"It is almost tea-time. Hadn't you better be walking home, before Medusa comes looking out for you?"

I rose up, and bade Uncle Darry good-night.

"Good-night, missis," he said heartily, "and de morning dat hab no night, for my dear little missis, by'm by."

I gave him my hand, and walked on.

"Stuff!" muttered Preston, by my side.

"You will not think it 'stuff' when the time comes," I said, no doubt very gravely. Then Preston burst out.

"I only wish Aunt Felicia was here! You will spoil these people, Daisy, that's one thing, or you would if you were older. As it is, you are spoiling yourself."

I made no answer. He went on with other angry and excited words, wishing to draw me out, perhaps; but I was in no mood to talk to Preston in any tone but one. I went steadily and slowly on, without even turning my head to look at him. I had hardly life enough to talk to him in *that* tone.

"Will you tell me what is the matter with you?" he said, at last, very impatiently.

"I am tired, I think."

"Think? Medusa is stiffening the life out of you. *Think* you are tired! You are tired to death; but that is not all. What ails you?"

"I do not think anything ails me."

"What ails *me*, then? What is the matter? What makes you act so? Speak, Daisy--you must speak!"

I turned about and faced him, and I know I did not speak then as a child, but with a gravity befitting fifty years.

"Preston, did you strike Uncle Darry yesterday?"

"Pooh!" said Preston. But I stood and waited for his answer.

"Nonsense, Daisy!" he said again.

"What is nonsense?"

"Why, *you*. What are you talking about?"

"I asked you a question."

"A ridiculous question. You are just absurd."

"Will you please to answer it?"

"I don't know whether I will. What have you to do with it?"

"In the first place, Preston, Darry is not your servant."

"Upon my word!" said Preston. "But yes, he is; for *mamma* is regent here now. He must do what I order him anyhow."

"And then, Preston, Darry is better than you, and will not defend himself; and somebody ought to defend him; and there is nobody but me."

"Defend himself!" echoed Preston.

"Yes. You insulted him yesterday."

"Insulted him!"

"You know you did. You know, Preston, some men would not have borne it. If Darry had been like some men, he would have knocked you down."

"Knocked me down!" cried Preston. "The sneaking old scoundrel! He knows that I would shoot him if he did."

"I am speaking seriously, Preston. It is no use to talk that way."

"I am speaking very seriously," said my cousin. "I would shoot him, upon my honour."

"Shoot him!"

"Certainly."

"What right have you to shoot a man for doing no worse than you do? I would *rather* somebody would knock me down, than do what you did yesterday." And my heart swelled within me.

"Come, Daisy, be a little sensible!" said Preston, who was in a fume of impatience. "Do you think there is no difference between me and an old nigger?"

"A great deal of difference," I said. "He is old and good; and you are young, and I wish you were as good as Darry. And then he can't help himself without perhaps losing his place, no matter how you insult him. I think it is cowardly."

"Insult!" said Preston. "Lose his place! Heavens and earth, Daisy! are you such a simpleton?"

"You insulted him badly yesterday. I wondered how he bore it of you; only Darry is a Christian."

"A fiddlestick!" said Preston impatiently. "He knows he must bear whatever I choose to give him; and therein he is wiser than you are."

"Because he is a Christian," said I.

"I don't know whether he is a Christian or not; and it is nothing to the purpose. I don't care what he is."

"Oh, Preston! he is a good man--he is a servant of God; he will wear a crown of gold in heaven; and you have dared to touch him."

"Why, hoity, toity!" said Preston, "what concern of mine is all that! All I know is, that he did not do what I ordered him."

"What did you order him?"

"I ordered him not to show you the saddle I had got for you, till I was here. I was going to surprise you. I am provoked at him!"

"I am surprised," I said. But feeling how little I prevailed with Preston, and being weak in body as well as mind, I could not keep back the tears. I began to walk on again, though they blinded me.

"Daisy, don't be foolish. If Darry is to wear two crowns in the other world, he is a servant in this, all the same; and he must do his duty."

"I asked for the saddle," I said.

"Why, Daisy, Daisy!" Preston exclaimed, "don't be such a child. You know nothing about it. I didn't touch Darry to hurt him."

"It was a sort of hurt that if he had not been a Christian he would have made you sorry for."

"He knows I would shoot him if he did," said Preston coolly.

"Preston, don't speak so!" I pleaded.

"It is the simple truth. Why shouldn't I speak it?"

"You do not mean that you would do it?" I said, scarce opening my eyes to the reality of what he said.

"I give you my word, I do. If one of these black fellows laid a hand on me I would put a bullet through him, as quick as a partridge."

"But then you would be a murderer," said I. The ground seemed taken away from under my feet. We were standing still now, and facing each other.

"No, I shouldn't," said Preston. "The law takes better care of us than that."

"The law would hang you," said I.

"I tell you, Daisy, it is no such thing! Gentlemen have a right to defend themselves against the insolence of these black fellows."

"And have not the black fellows a right to defend themselves against the insolence of gentlemen?" said I.

"Daisy, you are talking the most unspeakable nonsense," said Preston, quite put beyond himself now. "*Don't* you know any better than that? These people are our servants--they are our property--we are to do what we like with them; and of course the law must see that we are protected, or the blacks and the whites could not live together."

"A man may be your servant, but he cannot be your property," I said.

"Yes he can! They are our property, just as much as the land is; our goods to do as we like with. Didn't you know that?"

"Property is something that you can buy and sell," I answered.

"And we sell the people, and buy them too, as fast as we like."

"*Sell* them!" I echoed, thinking of Darry.

"Certainly."

"And who would buy them?"

"Why all the world; everybody. There has been nobody sold off the Magnolia estate, I believe, in a long time; but nothing is more common, Daisy; everybody is doing it everywhere, when he has got too many servants, or when he has got too few."

"And do you mean," said I, "that Darry and Margaret and Theresa and all the rest here, have been *bought*?"

"No; almost all of them have been born on the place."

"Then it is not true of these," I said.

"Yes, it is; for their mothers and fathers were bought. It is the same thing."

"Who bought them?" I asked, hastily.

"Why our mothers, and grandfather and great-grandfather."

"*Bought* the fathers and mothers of all these hundreds of people?" said I, a slow horror creeping into my veins, that yet held childish blood, and but half comprehended.

"Certainly--ages ago," said Preston. "Why, Daisy, I thought you knew all about it."

"But who sold them first?" said I, my mind in its utter rejection of what was told to me, seeking every refuge from accepting it. "Who sold them first?"

"Who first? Oh, the people that brought them over from Africa, I suppose; or the people in their own country that sold them to *them*."

"They had no right to sell them," I said.

"Can't tell about that," said Preston. "We bought them. I suppose we had a right to do that."

"But if the fathers and mothers were bought," I insisted, "that gave us no right to have their children."

"I would like you to ask Aunt Felicia or my Uncle Randolph such a question," said Preston. "Just see how they would like the idea of giving up all their property! Why, you would be as poor as Job, Daisy."

"That land would be here all the same."

"Much good the land would do you, without people to work it."

"But other people could be hired as well as these," I said, "if any of these wanted to go away."

"No, they couldn't. White people cannot bear the climate nor do the work. The crops cannot be raised without coloured labour."

"I do not understand," said I, feeling my child's head puzzled. "Maybe none of our people would like to go away?"

"I dare say they wouldn't," said Preston, carelessly. "They are better off here than on most plantations. Uncle Randolph never forbids his hands to have meat; and some planters do."

"Forbid them to have meat!" I said, in utter bewilderment.

"Yes."

"Why?"

"They think it makes them fractious, and not so easy to manage. Don't you know, it makes a dog savage to feed him on raw meat! I suppose cooked meat has the same effect on men."

"But don't they get what they choose to eat?"

"Well, I should think not!" said Preston. "Fancy their asking to be fed on chickens and pound cake. That is what they would like."

"But cannot they spend their wages for what they like?"

"Wages!" said Preston.

"Yes," said I.

"My dear Daisy," said Preston, "you are talking of what you just utterly don't understand; and I am a fool for bothering you with it. Come! let us make it up and be friends."

He stooped to kiss me, but I stepped back.

"Stop," I said. "Tell me--can't they do what they like with their wages?"

"I don't think they have wages enough to 'do what they like' exactly," said Preston. "Why, they would 'like' to do nothing. These black fellows are the laziest things living. They would 'like' to lie in the sun all day long."

"What wages does Darry have?" I asked.

"Now, Daisy, this is none of your business. Come, let us go into the house and let it alone."

"I want to know, first," said I.

"Daisy, I never asked. What have I to do with Darry's wages?"

"I will ask himself," I said; and I turned about to go to the stables.

"Stop, Daisy," cried Preston. "Daisy, Daisy! you are the most obstinate Daisy that ever was, when once you have taken a thing in your head. Daisy, what have you to do with all this? Look here--these people don't want wages."

"Don't want wages?" I repeated.

"No; they don't want them. What would they do with wages? they have everything they need given them already; their food and their clothing and their houses. They do not want anything more."

"You said they did not have the food they liked," I objected.

"Who does?" said Preston. "I am sure *I* don't--not more than one day in seven, on an average."

"But don't they have any wages at all?" I persisted. "Our coachman at Melbourne had thirty dollars a month; and Logan had forty dollars and his house and garden. Why shouldn't Darry have wages, too? Don't they have any wages at all, Preston?"

"Why, yes! they have plenty of corn, bread, and bacon, I tell you; and their clothes. Daisy, they *belong* to you, these people do."

Corn, bread, and bacon was not much like chickens and pound cake, I thought; and I remembered our servants at Melbourne were very, very differently dressed from the women I saw about me here, even in the house. I stood bewildered and pondering. Preston tried to get me to go on.

"Why shouldn't they have wages?" I asked at length, with lips which I believe were growing old with my thoughts.

"Daisy, they are your servants; they *belong* to you. They have no right to wages. Suppose you had to pay all these creatures--seven hundred of them--as you pay people at Melbourne: how much do you suppose you would have left to live upon yourselves? What nonsense it is to talk!"

"But they work for us," I said.

"Certainly. There would not be anything for any of us if they didn't. Here, at Magnolia, they raise rice crops and corn, as well as cotton; at our place we grow nothing but cotton and corn."

"Well, what pays them for working?"

"I told you! they have their living and clothing and no care; and they are the happiest creatures the sun shines on."

"Are they willing to work for only that!" I asked.

"Willing!" said Preston.

"Yes," said I, feeling myself grow sick at heart.

"I fancy nobody asks them that question. They have to work, I reckon, whether they like it or no."

"You said they *like* to lie in the sun. What makes them work?"

"Makes them!" said Preston, who was getting irritated as well as impatient. "They get a good flogging if they do not work--that is all. They know, if they don't do their part, the lash will come down: and it don't come down easy."

I suppose I must have looked as if it had come down on me. Preston stopped talking and began to take care of me, putting his arm round me to support my steps homeward. In the verandah my aunt met us. She immediately decided that I was ill, and ordered me to go to bed at once. It was the thing of all others I would have wished to do. It saved me from the exertion of trying to hold myself up and of speaking and moving and answering questions. I went to bed in dull misery, longing to go to sleep and forget all my troubles of mind and body together; but while the body rested, the mind would not. That kept the consciousness of its burden; and it was that, more than any physical ail, which took away my power of eating, and created instead a wretched sort of half nausea, which made even rest unrefreshing. As for rest in my mind and heart, it seemed at that time as if I should never know it again. Never again! I was a child--I had but vague ideas respecting even what troubled me; nevertheless I had been struck, where may few children be struck! in the very core and quick of my heart's reverence and affection. It had come home to me that papa was somehow doing wrong. My father was in my childish thought and belief, the ideal of chivalrous and high-bred excellence;--and *papa* was doing wrong. I could not turn my eyes from the truth; it was before me in too visible a form. It did not arrange itself in words, either; not at first; it only pressed upon my heart and brain that seven hundred people on my father's property were injured, and by his will, and for his interests. Dimly the consciousness came to me; slowly it found its way and spread out its details before me; bit by bit one point after another came into my mind to make the whole good; bit by bit one item after another came in to explain and be explained and to add its quota of testimony; all making clear and distinct and dazzling before me the truth which at first it was so hard to grasp. And this is not the less true because my childish thought at first took everything vaguely and received it slowly. I was a child and a simple child; but once getting hold of a clue of truth, my mind never let it go. Step by step, as a child could, I followed it out. And the balance of the golden rule, to which I was accustomed, is an easy one to weigh things in; and even little hands can manage it.

For an hour after they put me to bed my heart seemed to grow chill from minute to minute; and my body, in curious sympathy, shook as if I had an ague. My aunt and Miss Pinshon came and went and were busy about me; making me drink negus and putting hot bricks to my feet. Preston stole in to look at me; but I gathered that neither then nor afterwards did he reveal to any one the matter of our conversation the hour before. "Wearied"--"homesick"--"feeble"--"with no sort of strength to bear anything"--they said I was. All true, no doubt; and yet I was not without powers of endurance, even bodily, if my mind gave a little help. Now the trouble was, that all such help was wanting. The dark figures of the servants came and went too, with the others; came and stayed; Margaret and Mammy Theresa took post in my room, and when they could do nothing for me, crouched by the fire and spent their cares and energies in keeping that in full blast. I could hardly bear to see them; but I had no heart to speak even to ask that they might be sent away, or for anything else; and I had a sense besides that it was a gratification to them to be near me; and to gratify any one of the race I could have borne a good deal of pain.

It smites my heart now, to think of those hours. The image of them is sharp and fresh as if the time were but last night. I lay with shut eyes, taking in as it seemed to be, additional loads of trouble with each quarter of an hour; as I thought and thought, and put one and another thing together, of things past and present, to help my understanding. A child will carry on that process fast and to far-off results; give her but the key and set her off on the track of truth with a sufficient impetus. My happy childlike ignorance and childlike life was in a measure gone; I had come into the world of vexed questions, of the oppressor and the oppressed, the full and the empty, the rich and the poor. I could make nothing at all of Preston's arguments and reasonings. The logic of expediency and of consequences carried no weight with me, and as little the logic of self-interest. I sometimes think a child's vision is clearer, even in worldly matters, than the eyes of those can be who have lived among the fumes and vapours that rise in these low grounds, unless the eyes be washed day by day in the spring of truth, and anointed with unearthly ointment. The right and the wrong were the two things that presented themselves to my view; and oh, my sorrow and heartbreak was, that papa was in the wrong. I could not believe it, and yet I could not get rid of it. There were oppressors and oppressed in the world; and *he* was one of the oppressors. There is no sorrow that a child can bear, keener and more gnawingly bitter than this. It has a sting of its own, for which there is neither salve nor remedy; and it had the aggravation, in my case, of the sense of personal dishonour. The wrong done and the oppression inflicted were not the whole; there was besides the intolerable sense of living upon other's gains. It was more than my heart could bear.

I could not write as I do--I could not recall these thoughts and that time--if I had not another thought to bring to bear upon them; a thought which at that time I was not able to comprehend. It came to me later with its healing, and I have

seen and felt it more clearly as I grew older. I see it very clearly now. I had not been mistaken in my childish notions of the loftiness and generosity of my father's character. He was what I had thought him. Neither was I a whit wrong in my judgment of the things which it grieved me that he did and allowed. But I saw afterwards how he, and others, had grown up and been educated in a system and atmosphere of falsehood, till he failed to perceive that it was false. His eyes had lived in the darkness till it seemed quite comfortably light to him; while to a fresh vision, accustomed to the sun, it was pure and blank darkness, as thick as night. He followed what others did and his father had done before him, without any suspicion that it was an abnormal and morbid condition of things they were all living in; more especially without a tinge of misgiving that it might not be a noble, upright, dignified way of life. But I, his little unreasoning child, bringing the golden rule of the gospel only to judge of the doings of hell, shrank back and fell to the ground, in my heart, to find the one I loved best in the world concerned in them.

So when I opened my eyes that night, and looked into the blaze of the firelight, the dark figures that were there before it stung me with pain every time; and every soft word and tender look on their faces--and I had many a one, both words and looks--racked my heart in a way that was strange for a child. The negus put me to sleep at last, or exhaustion did; I think the latter, for it was very late; and the rest of that night wore away.

When I awoke, the two women were there still, just as I had left them when I went to sleep. I do not know if they sat there all night, or if they had slept on the floor by my side; but there they were, and talking softly to one another about something that caught my attention. I bounced out of bed--though I was so weak, I remember I reeled as I went from my bed to the fire, and steadied myself by laying my hand on Mammy Theresa's shoulder. I demanded of Margaret *what* she had been saying. The women both started, with expressions of surprise, alarm, and tender affection, raised by my ghostly looks, and begged me to get back into bed again. I stood fast, bearing on Theresa's shoulder.

"What was it?" I asked.

"'Twarn't nothin', Miss Daisy, dear!" said the girl.

"Hush! don't tell me that," I said. "Tell me what it was--tell me what it was. Nobody shall know; you need not be afraid; nobody shall know." For I saw a cloud of hesitation in Margaret's face.

"'Twarn't nothin', Miss Daisy--only about Darry."

"What about Darry?" I said, trembling.

"He done went and had a praise-meetin'," said Theresa; "and he knowed it war agin the rules; he knowed that. 'Course he did. Rules mus' be kep'."

"Whose rules?" I asked.

"Laws, honey, 'taint 'cording to rules for we coloured folks to hold meetin's no how. 'Course, we's ought to 'bey de rules; dat's clar."

"Who made the rules?"

"Who make 'em? Mass' Ed'ards--he made de rules on dis plantation. Reckon Mass' Randolph, he make 'em a heap different."

"Does Mr. Edwards make it a rule that you are not to hold prayer-meetings?"

"Can't spec' for to have everyt'ing jus like de white folks," said the old woman. "We's no right to spect it. But Uncle Darry, he sot a sight by his praise-meetin'. He's cur'ous, he is. S'pose Darry's cur'ous."

"And does anybody say that you shall not have prayer-meetings?"

"Laws, honey! what's we got to do wid praise-meetin's or any sort of meetin's? We'se got to work. Mass' Ed'ards, he say dat de meetin's dey makes coloured folks onsettled; and dey don't hoe de corn good if dey has too much prayin' to do."

"And does he forbid them then? doesn't he let you have prayer-meetings?"

"'Tain't Mr. Edwards alone, Miss Daisy," said Margaret, speaking low. "It's agin the law for us to have meetin's anyhow, 'cept we get leave, and say what house it shall be, and who's a comin', and what we'se comin' for. And it's no use asking Mr. Edwards, 'cause he don't see no reason why black folks should have meetin's."

"Did Darry have a prayer-meeting without leave?" I asked.

"'Twarn't no count of a meetin'!" said Theresa, a little touch of scorn, or indignation, coming into her voice; "and Darry,

he war in his own house prayin'. Dere warn't nobody dere, but Pete and ole 'Liza, and Maria, cook, and dem two Johns dat come from de lower plantation. Dey couldn't get a strong meetin' into Uncle Darry's house; 'tain't big enough to hold 'em."

"And what did the overseer do to Darry?" I asked.

"Laws, Miss Daisy," said Margaret, with a quick look at the other woman; "he didn't do nothing to hurt Darry; he only want to scare de folks."

"Dey's done scared," said Theresa, under her breath.

"What is it?" I said, steadying myself by my hold on Theresa's shoulder, and feeling that I must stand till I had finished my inquiry: "how did he know about the meeting? and what did he do to Darry? Tell me! I must know. I must know, Margaret."

"Spect he was goin' through the quarters, and he heard Darry at his prayin'," said Margaret. "Darry he don't mind to keep his prayers secret, he don't," she added, with a half laugh. "Spect nothin' but they'll bust the walls o' that little house some day."

"Dey's powerful!" added Theresa. "But he warn't prayin' no harm; he was just prayin', 'Dy will be done on de eart' as it be in de heaven'--Pete, he tell me. Darry warn't saying not'ing--he just pray 'Dy will be done.'"

"Well?" I said, for Margaret kept silent.

"And de oberseer, he say--leastways he swore, he did--dat *his* will should be done on dis plantation, and he wouldn't have no such work. He say, der's nobody to come togedder after it be dark, if it's two or t'ree, 'cept dey gets his leave, Mass' Ed'ards, he say; and dey won't get it."

"But what did he do to Darry?" I could scarcely hold myself on my feet by this time.

"He whipped him, I reckon," said Margaret, in a low tone, and with a dark shadow crossing her face, very different from its own brown duskiness.

"He don't have a light hand, Mass' Ed'ards," went on Theresa, "and he got a sharp, new whip. De second stripe--Pete, he tell me this evenin'--and it war wet; and it war wet enough before he got through. He war mad, I reckon; certain, Mass' Ed'ards, he war mad."

"*Wet?*" said I.

"Laws, Miss Daisy," said Margaret, "'tain't nothin'. Them whips, they draws the blood easy. Darry, he don't mind."

I have a recollection of the girl's terrified face, but I heard nothing more. Such a deadly sickness came over me that for a minute I must have been near fainting; happily it took another turn amid the various confused feelings which oppressed me, and I burst into tears. My eyes had not been wet through all the hours of the evening and night; my headache had been dry. I think I was never very easy to move to tears, even as a child. But now, well for me, perhaps, some element of the pain I was suffering found the unguarded point--or broke up the guard. I wept as I have done very few times in my life. I had thrown myself into Mammy Theresa's lap, in the weakness which could not support itself, and in an abandonment of grief which was careless of all the outside world; and there I lay, clasped in her arms and sobbing. Grief, horror, tender sympathy, and utter helplessness, striving together; there was nothing for me at that moment but the woman's refuge and the child's remedy of weeping. But the weeping was so bitter, so violent, and so uncontrollable, that the women were frightened. I believe they shut the doors, to keep the sound of my sobs from reaching other ears; for when I recovered the use of my senses I saw that they were closed.

The certain strange relief which tears do bring, they gave to me. I cannot tell why. My pain was not changed, my helplessness was not done away; yet at least I had washed my causes of sorrow in a flood of heart drops, and cleansed them so somehow from any personal stain. Rather I was perfectly exhausted. The women put me to bed, as soon as I would let them; and Margaret whispered an earnest "Do, don't, Miss Daisy, don't say nothin' about the prayer meetin'!" I shook my head; I knew better than to say anything about it.

All the better not to betray them, and myself, I shut my eyes, and tried to let my face grow quiet. I had succeeded, I believe, before my Aunt Gary and Miss Pinshon came in. The two stood looking at me; my aunt in some consternation, my governess reserving any expression of what she thought. I fancied she did not trust my honesty. Another time I might have made an effort to right myself in her opinion; but I was past that and everything now. It was decided by my aunt that I had better keep my bed as long as I felt like doing so.

So I lay there during the long hours of that day. I was glad to be still, to keep out of the way in a corner, to hear little and see nothing of what was going on; my own small world of thoughts was enough to keep me busy. I grew utterly weary at last of thinking, and gave it up, so far as I could; submitting passively, in a state of pain, sometimes dull and sometimes acute, to what I had no power to change or remedy. But my father *had*, I thought; and at those times my longing was unspeakable to see him. I was very quiet all that day, I believe, in spite of the rage of wishes and sorrows within me; but it was not to be expected I should gain strength. On the contrary, I think I grew feverish. If I could have laid down my troubles in prayer! but at first, these troubles, I could not. The core and root of them being my father's share in the rest. And I was not alone; and I had a certain consciousness that if I allowed myself to go to my little Bible for help, it would unbar my self-restraint, with its sweet and keen words, and I should give way again before Margaret and Theresa: and I did not wish that.

"What shall we do with her?" said my Aunt Gary when she came to me towards the evening. "She looks like a mere shadow. I never saw such a change in a child in four weeks--never!"

"Try a different regimen to-morrow, I think," said my governess, whose lustrous black eyes looked at me sick, exactly as they looked at me well.

"I shall send for the doctor, if she isn't better," said my aunt. "She's feverish now."

"Keeping her bed all day," said Miss Pinshon.

"Do you think so?" said my aunt.

"I have no doubt of it. It is very weakening."

"Then we will let her get up to-morrow, and see how that will do."

They had been gone half an hour, when Preston stole in and came to the side of my bed, between me and the firelight.

"Come, Daisy, let us be friends!" he said. And he was stooping to kiss me; but I put out my hand to keep him back.

"Not till you have told Darry you are sorry," I said.

Preston was angry instantly, and stood upright.

"Ask pardon of a servant!" he said. "You would have the world upside down directly."

I thought it was upside down already; but I was too weak and downhearted to say so.

"Daisy, Daisy!" said Preston--"And there you lie, looking like a poor little wood flower that has hardly strength to hold up its head; and with about as much colour in your cheeks. Come, Daisy, kiss me, and let us be friends."

"If you will do what is right," I said.

"I will--always," said Preston; "but this would be wrong, you know." And he stooped again to kiss me. And again I would not suffer him.

"Daisy, you are absurd," said Preston, vibrating between pity and anger, I think, as he looked at me. "Darry is a servant, and accustomed to a servant's place. What hurt you so much did not hurt him a bit. He knows where he belongs."

"You don't," said I.

"What?"

"Know anything about it." I remember I spoke very feebly. I had hardly energy left to speak at all. My words must have come with a curious contrast between the meaning and the manner.

"Know anything about what, Daisy? You are as oracular and as immovable as one of Egypt's monuments; only they are very hard, and you are very soft, my dear little Daisy!--and they are very brown, according to all I have heard, and you are as white as a wind-flower. One can almost see through you. What is it I don't know anything about?"

"I am so tired, Preston!"

"Yes; but what is it I don't know anything about?"

"Darry's place--and yours," I said.

"His place and mine! His place is a servant's, I take it, belonging to Rudolf Randolph, of Magnolia. I am the unworthy representative of an old Southern family, and a gentleman. What have you to say about that?"

"He is a servant of the Lord of lords," I said; "and his Master loves him. And He has a house of glory preparing for him, and a crown of gold, and a white robe, such as the King's children wear. And he will sit on a throne himself by and by. Preston, where will *you* be?"

These words were said without the least heat of manner--almost languidly; but they put Preston in a fume. I could not catch his excitement in the least; but I saw it. He stood up again, hesitated, opened his mouth to speak and shut it without speaking, turned and walked away and came back to me. I did not wait for him then.

"You have offended one of the King's children," I said; "and the King is offended."

"Daisy," said Preston, in a sort of suppressed fury, "one would think you had turned Abolitionist; only you never heard of such a thing."

"What is it?" said I, shutting my eyes.

"It is just the meanest and most impudent shape a Northerner can take; it is the lowest end of creation, an Abolitionist is; and a Yankee is pretty much the same thing!"

"Dr. Sandford is a Yankee," I remarked.

"Did you get it from *him*?" Preston asked, fiercely.

"What?" said I, opening my eyes.

"Your nonsense. Has he taught you to turn Abolitionist?"

"I have not *turned* at all," I said. "I wish you would. It is only the people who are in the wrong that ought to turn."

"Daisy," said Preston, "you ought never to be away from Aunt Felicia and my uncle. Nobody else can manage you. I don't know what you will become or what you will do, before they get back."

I was silent; and Preston, I suppose, cooled down. He waited awhile, and then again begged that I would kiss and be friends. "You see, I am going away to-morrow morning, little Daisy."

"I wish you had gone two days ago," I said.

And my mind did not change, even when the morning came.



CHAPTER V.

IN THE KITCHEN.

I WAS ill for days. It was not due to one thing, doubtless, nor one sorrow, but the whole together. My aunt sent to Baytown for the old family physician. He came up and looked at me, and decided that I ought to "play" as much as possible!

"She isn't a child that likes play," said my aunt.

"Find some play that she does like, then. Where are her father and mother?"

"Just sailed for Europe, a few weeks ago."

"The best thing would be for her to sail after them," said the old doctor. And he went.

"We shall have to let her do just as they did at Melbourne," said my aunt.

"How was that?" said Miss Pinshon.

"Let her have just her own way."

"And what was that?"

"Oh, queer," said my aunt. "She is not like other children. But anything is better than to have her mope to death."

"I shall try and not have her mope," said Miss Pinshon.

But she had little chance to adopt her reforming regimen for some time. It was plain I was not fit for anything but to be let alone, like a weak plant struggling for its existence. All you can do with it is to put it in the sun; and my aunt and governess tacitly agreed upon the same plan of treatment for me. Now, the only thing wanting was sunshine; and it was long before that could be had. After a day or two I left my bed, and crept about the house, and out of the house under the great oaks, where the material sunshine was warm and bright enough, and caught itself in the grey wreaths of moss that waved over my head, and seemed to come bodily to woo me to life and cheer. It lay in the carpet under my feet, it lingered in the leaves of the thick oaks, it wantoned in the wind, as the long draperies of moss swung and moved gently to and fro; but the very sunshine is cold where the ice meets it; I could get no comfort. The thoughts that had so troubled me the evening after my long talk with Preston were always present with me; they went out and came in with me; I slept with them, and they met me when I woke. The sight of the servants was wearying. I shunned Darry and the stables. I had no heart for my pony. I would have liked to get away from Magnolia. Yet, be I where I might, it would not alter my father's position towards these seven hundred people. And towards how many more? There were his estates in Virginia.

One of the first things I did, as soon as I could command my fingers to do it, was to write to him. Not a remonstrance. I knew better than to touch that. All I ventured, was to implore that the people who desired it might be allowed to hold prayer-meetings whenever they liked, and Mr. Edwards be forbidden to interfere. Also I complained that the inside of the cabins were not comfortable; that they were bare and empty. I pleaded for a little bettering of them. It was not a long letter that I wrote. My sorrow I could not tell, and my love and my longing were equally beyond the region of words. I fancy it would have been thought by Miss Pinshon a very cold little epistle, but Miss Pinshon did not see it. I wrote it with weak trembling fingers, and closed it and sealed it and sent it myself. Then I sank into a helpless, careless, listless state of body and mind, which was very bad for me; and there was no physician who could minister to me. I went wandering about, mostly out of doors, alone with myself and my sorrow. When I seemed a little stronger than usual, Miss Pinshon tried the multiplication table; and I tried, but the spring of my mind was for the time broken. All such trials came to an end in such weakness and weariness, that my governess herself was fain to take the book from my hands and send me out into the sunshine again.

It was Darry at last who found me one day, and, distressed at my looks, begged that I would let him bring up my pony. He was so earnest that I yielded. I got leave, and went to ride. Darry saddled another horse for himself and went with me. That first ride did not help me much; but the second time a little tide of life began to steal into my veins. Darry encouraged and instructed me; and when we came cantering up to the door of the house, my aunt, who was watching there, cried out that I had a bit of a tinge in my cheeks, and charged Darry to bring the horses up every day.

With a little bodily vigour a little strength of mind seemed to come; a little more power of bearing up against evils, or of quietly standing under them. After the third time I went to ride, having come home refreshed, I took my Bible and sat

down on the rug before the fire in my room to read. I had not been able to get comfort in my Bible all those days; often I had not liked to try. Right and wrong never met me in more brilliant colours or startling shadows than within the covers of that book. But to-day, soothed somehow, I went along with the familiar words as one listens to old music, with the soothing process going on all along. Right *was* right, and glorious, and would prevail some time; and nothing could hinder it. And then I came to words which I knew, yet which had never taken such hold of me before.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

"*That* is what I have to do!" I thought immediately. "That is my part. That is clear. What *I* have to do, is to let my light shine. And if the light shines, perhaps it will fall on something. But what *I* have to do, is to shine. God has given me nothing else."

It was a very simple child's thought; but it brought wonderful comfort with it. Doubtless, I would have liked another part to play. I would have liked--if I could--to have righted all the wrong in the world; to have broken every yoke; to have filled every empty house, and built up a fire on every cold hearth: but that was not what God had given me. All He had given me, that I could see at the minute, was to shine. What a little morsel of a light mine was, to be sure!

It was a good deal of a puzzle to me for days after that, *how* I was to shine. What could I do? I was a little child: my only duties some lessons to learn: not much of that, seeing I had not strength for it. Certainly, I had sorrows to bear; but bearing them well did not seem to me to come within the sphere of *shining*. Who would know that I bore them well? And shining is meant to be seen. I pondered the matter.

"When's Christmas, Miss Daisy?"

Margaret asked this question one morning as she was on her knees making my fire. Christmas had been so shadowed a point to me in the distance, I had not looked at it. I stopped to calculate the days.

"It will be two weeks from Friday, Margaret."

"And Friday's to-morrow?" she asked.

"The day after to-morrow. What do you do at Christmas, Margaret? all the people?"

"There ain't no great doings, Miss Daisy. The people gets four days, most of 'em."

"Four days--for what?"

"For what they like; they don't do no work, those days."

"And is that all?"

"No, Miss Daisy, 'tain't just all; the women comes up to the house--it's to the overseer's house now--and every one gets a bowl o' flour, more or less, 'cordin' to size of family--and a quart of molasses, and a piece o' pork."

"And what do they do to make the time pleasant?" I asked.

"Some on 'em's raised eggs and chickens; and they brings 'em to the house and sells 'em; and they has the best dinner. Most times they gets leave to have a meetin'."

"A prayer-meeting?" I said.

"Laws, no, Miss Daisy! not 'cept it were Uncle Darry and *his* set. The others don't make no count of a prayer-meetin'. They likes to have a white-folks' meetin' and 'joy theirselves."

I thought very much over these statements; and for the next two weeks bowls of flour and quarts of molasses, as Christmas doings, were mixed up in my mind with the question, how I was to shine? or rather, alternated with it; and plans began to turn themselves over and take shape in my thoughts.

"Margaret," said I, a day or two before Christmas, "can't the people have those meetings you spoke of without getting leave of Mr. Edwards?"

"Can't have meetin's, no how!" Margaret replied decidedly.

"But if *I* wanted to see them, couldn't they, some of them, come together to see me?"

"To see Miss Daisy! Reckon Miss Daisy do what she like. 'Spect Mass' Ed'ards let Miss Daisy 'lone!"

I was silent, pondering.

"Maria cook wants to see Miss Daisy bad. She bid me tell Miss Daisy won't she come down in de kitchen, and see all the works she's a-doin' for Christmas, and de glorifications?"

"I? I'll come if I can," I answered.

I asked my aunt and got easy leave; and on Christmas eve I went down to the kitchen. That was the chosen time when Maria wished to see me. There was an assembly of servants gathered in the room, some from out of the house. Darry was there; and one or two other fine-looking men who were his prayer-meeting friends. I supposed they were gathered to make merry for Christmas eve; but, at any rate, they were all eager to see me, and looked at me with smiles as gentle as have ever fallen to my share. I felt it and enjoyed it. The effect was of entering a warm, genial atmosphere, where grace and good-will were on every side; a change very noticeable from the cold and careless habit of things upstairs. And *grace* is not a misapplied epithet; for these children of a luxurious and beauty-loving race, even in their bondage, had not forgotten all traces of their origin. As I went in, I could not help giving my hand to Darry; and then, in my childish feeling towards them, and in the tenderness of the Christmas-tide, I could not help doing the same by all the others who were present. And I remember now the dignity of mien in some, the frank ease in others, both graceful and gracious, with which my civility was met. If a few were a little shy, the rest more than made it up by their welcome of me, and a sort of politeness which had almost something courtly in it. Darry and Maria together gave me a seat, in the very centre and glow of the kitchen light and warmth; and the rest made a half circle around, leaving Maria's end of the room free for her operations.

The kitchen was all aglow with the most splendid fire of pine knots it was ever my lot to see. The illumination was such as threw all gaslights into shade. We were in a great stone-flagged room, low-roofed, with dark cupboard door; not cheerful, I fancy, in the mere light of day; but nothing could resist the influence of those pine-knot flames. Maria herself was a portly fat woman, as far as possible from handsome; but she looked at me with a whole world of kindness in her dark face. Indeed, I saw the same kindness more or less shining out upon me in all the faces there. I cannot tell the mixed joy and pain that it, and they, gave me. I suppose I showed little of either, or of anything.

Maria entertained me with all she had. She brought out for my view her various rich and immense stores of cakes and pies and delicacies for the coming festival; told me what was good and what I must be sure and eat; and what would be good for me. And then, when that display was over, she began to be very busy with beating of eggs in a huge wooden bowl; and bade Darry see to the boiling of the kettle at the fire; and sent Jem, the waiter, for things he was to get upstairs; and all the while talked to me. She and Darry and one or two more talked, but especially she and Theresa and Jem; while all the rest listened and laughed and exclaimed, and seemed to find me as entertaining as a play. Maria was asking me about my own little life and experiences before I came to Magnolia; what sort of a place Melbourne was, and how things there differed from the things she and the rest knew and were accustomed to at the South; and about my old June, who had once been an acquaintance of hers. Smiling at me the while, between the thrusts of her curiosity, and over my answers, as if for sheer pleasure she could not keep grave. The other faces were as interested and as gracious. There was Pete, tall and very black, and very grave, as Darry was also. There was Jem, full of life and waggishness, and bright for any exercise of his wits; and grave shadows used to come over his changeable face often enough too. There was Margaret, with her sombre beauty; and old Theresa with her worn old face. I think there was a certain indescribable reserve of gravity upon them all, but there was not one whose lips did not part in a white line when looking at me, nor whose eyes and ears did not watch me with an interest as benign as it was intent. I had been little while seated before the kitchen fire of pine knots before I felt that I was in the midst of a circle of personal friends; and I feel it now, as I look back and remember them. They would have done much for me, every one.

Meanwhile Maria beat and mixed and stirred the things in her wooden bowl; and by and by ladled out a glassful of rich-looking, yellow, creamy froth--I did not know what it was, only it looked beautiful--and presented it to me.

"Miss Daisy mus' tell Mis' Felissy Maria hain't forgot how to make it--'spect she hain't, anyhow. Dat's for Miss Daisy's Christmas."

"It's very nice!" I said.

"Reckon it is," was the capable answer.

"Won't you give everybody some, Maria?" For Jem had gone upstairs with a tray and glasses, and Maria seemed to be resting upon her labours.

"Dere'll come down orders for mo', chile; and 'spose I gives it to de company, what'll Mis' Lisa do wid Maria? I have de 'sponsibility of Christmas."

"But you can make some more," I said, holding my glass in waiting. "Do, Maria."

"Spouse hain't got de 'terials, hey?"

"What do you want? Aunt Gary will give it to you." And I begged Jem to go up again and prefer my request to her for the new filling of Maria's bowl. Jem shrugged his shoulders, but he went; and I suppose he made a good story of it; for he came down with whatever was wanted--my Aunt Gary was in a mood to refuse me nothing then--and Maria went anew about the business of beating and mixing and compounding.

There was great enjoyment in the kitchen. It was a time of high festival, what with me and the egg supper. Merriment and jocularly, a little tide-wave of social excitement, swelled and broke on all sides of me; making a soft ripply play of fun and repartee, difficult to describe, and which touched me as much as it amused. It was very unlike the enjoyment of a set of white people holding the same social and intellectual grade. It was the manifestation of another race, less coarse and animal in their original nature, more sensitive and more demonstrative, with a strange touch of the luxurious and refined for a people whose life has had nothing to do with luxury, and whom refinement leaves on one side as quite beyond its sphere. But blood is a strange thing; and Ham's children will show luxurious and aesthetic tastes, take them where you will.

"Chillen, I hope you's enjoyed your supper," Maria said, when the last lingering drops had been secured, and mugs and glasses were coming back to the kitchen table.

Words and smiles answered her. "We's had a splendid time, Aunt Maria," said one young man as he set down his glass. He was a worker in the garden.

"Den I hope's we's all willin' to gib de Lord t'anks for His goodness. Dere ain't a night in de year when it's so proper to gib de Lord t'anks, as it be dis precious night."

"It's to-morrow night, Aunt Maria," said Pete. "To-morrow's Christmas night."

"I don't care! One night's jus' as good as another, you Pete. And now we's all together, you see, and comfortable together; and I feel like giving t'anks, I do, to de Lord, for all His mercies."

"What's Christmas, anyhow?" asked another.

"It's jus' de crown o' all the nights in de year. You Solomon, it's a night dat dey keeps up in heaven. You know nothin' about it, you poor critter. I done believe you never hearn no one tell about it. Maybe Miss Daisy wouldn't read us de story, and de angels, and de shepherds, and dat great light what come down, and make us feel good for Christmas; and Uncle Darry, he'll t'ank de Lord."

The last words were put in a half-questioning form to me, rather taking for granted that I would readily do what was requested. And hardly anything in the world, I suppose, could have given me such deep gratification at the moment. Margaret was sent upstairs to fetch my Bible; the circle closed in around the fire and me; a circle of listening, waiting, eager, interested faces, some few of them shone with pleasure, or grew grave with reverent love, while I read slowly the chapters that tell of the first Christmas night. I read them from all the gospels, picking the story out first in one, then in another; answered sometimes by low words of praise that echoed but did not interrupt me--words that were but some dropped notes of the song that began that night in heaven, and has been running along the ages since, and is swelling and will swell into a great chorus of earth and heaven by and by. And how glad I was in the words of the story myself, as I went along. How heart-glad that here, in this region of riches and hopes not earthly, those around me had as good welcome, and as open entrance, and as free right as I. "There is neither bond nor free." "And base things of this world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are."

I finished my reading at last, amid the hush of my listening audience. Then Maria called upon Darry to pray, and we all kneeled down.

It comes back to me now as I write--the hush and the breathing of the fire, and Darry's low voice and imperfect English. Yes, and the incoming tide of rest and peace and gladness which began to fill the dry places in my heart, and rose and swelled till my heart was full. I lost my troubles and forgot my difficulties. I forgot that my father and mother were away, for the sense of loneliness was gone. I forgot that those around me were in bonds, for I felt them free as I, and inheritors of the same kingdom. I have not often in my life listened to such a prayer, unless from the same lips. He was one of those that make you feel that the door is open to their knocking, and that they always find it so. His words were seconded--not interrupted, even to my feelings--by low-breathed echoes of praise and petition, too soft and deep to leave any doubt of the movement that called them forth.

There was a quiet gravity upon all when we rose to our feet again. I knew I must go; but the kitchen had been the pleasantest place to me in all Magnolia. I bade them good-night, answered with bows and curtsies and hearty wishes; and as I passed out of the circle, tall black Pete, looking down upon me with just a glimmer of white between his lips,

added, "Hope you'll come again."

A thought darted into my head which brought sunshine with it. I seemed to see my way begin to open.

The hope was warm in my heart as soon as I was awake the next morning. With more comfort than for many days I had known, I lay and watched Margaret making my fire. Then suddenly I remembered it was Christmas, and what thanksgivings had been in heaven about it, and what should be on earth; and a lingering of the notes of praise I had heard last night made a sort of still music in the air. But I did not expect at all that any of the ordinary Christmas festivities would come home to me, seeing that my father and mother were away. Where should Christmas festivities come from? So, when Margaret rose up and showed all her teeth at me, I only thought last night had given her pleasure, and I suspected nothing, even when she stepped into the next room and brought in a little table covered with a shawl, and set it close to my bedside. "Am I to have breakfast in bed?" I asked. "What is this for?"

"Dunno, Miss Daisy," said Margaret, with all her white teeth sparkling;--"s'pose Miss Daisy take just a look, and see what 'pears like."

I felt the colour come into my face. I raised myself on my elbow and lifted up cautiously one corner of the shawl. Packages--white paper and brown paper--long and short, large and small! "O Margaret, take off the shawl, will you!" I cried; "and let me see what is here."

There was a good deal. But "From Papa" caught my eye on a little parcel. I seized it and unfolded. From papa, and he so far away! But I guessed the riddle before I could get to the last of the folds of paper that wrapped and enwrapped a little morocco case. Papa and mamma, leaving me alone, had made provision beforehand, that when this time came I might miss nothing except themselves. They had thought and cared and arranged for me; and now they were thinking about it, perhaps, far away somewhere over the sea. I held the morocco case in my hand a minute or two before I could open it. Then I found a little watch; my dear little watch! which has gone with me ever since, and never failed nor played tricks with me. My mother had put in one of her own chains for me to wear with it.

I lay a long time looking and thinking, raised up on my elbow as I was, before I could leave the watch and go on to anything else. Margaret spread round my shoulders the shawl which had covered the Christmas table; and then she stood waiting, with a good deal more impatience and curiosity than I showed. But such a world of pleasure and pain gathered round that first "bit of Christmas"--so many, many thoughts of one and the other kind--that I for awhile had enough with that. At last I closed the case, and keeping it yet in one hand, used the other to make more discoveries. The package labelled "From Mamma," took my attention next; but I could make nothing of it. An elegant little box, that was all, which I could not open; only it felt so very heavy that I was persuaded there must be something extraordinary inside. I could make nothing of it: it was a beautiful box; that was all. Preston had brought me a little riding whip, both costly and elegant. I could not but be much pleased with it. A large, rather soft package, marked with Aunt Gary's name, unfolded a riding cap to match; at least, it was exceeding rich and stylish, with a black feather that waved away in curves that called forth Margaret's delighted admiration. Nevertheless, I wondered, while I admired, at my Aunt Gary's choice of a present. I had a straw hat which served all purposes, even of elegance, for my notions. I was amazed to find that Miss Pinshon had not forgotten me. There was a decorated pen, wreathed with a cord of crimson and gold twist, and supplemented with two dangling tassels. It was excessively pretty, as I thought of Aunt Gary's cap; and *not* equally convenient. I looked at all these things while Margaret was dressing me; but the case with the watch, for the most part, I remember I kept in my hand.

"Ain't you goin' to try it on and see some how pretty it looks, Miss Daisy?" said my unsatisfied attendant.

"The cap?" said I. "Oh, I dare say it fits. Aunt Gary knows how big my head is."

"Mass' Preston come last night," she went on; "so I reckon Miss Daisy'll want to wear it by and by."

"Preston come last night!" I said. "After I was in bed?"--and feeling that it was indeed Christmas, I finished getting ready and went downstairs. I made up my mind I might as well be friends with Preston, and not push any further my displeasure at his behaviour. So we had a comfortable breakfast. My aunt was pleased to see me, she said, look so much better. Miss Pinshon was not given to expressing what she felt; but she looked at me two or three times without saying anything, which I suppose meant satisfaction. Preston was in high feather, making all sorts of plans for my divertisement during the next few days. I, for my part, had my own secret cherished plan, which made my heart beat quicker whenever I thought of it. But I wanted somebody's counsel and help; and on the whole I thought my Aunt Gary's would be the safest. So after breakfast I consulted Preston only about my mysterious little box, which would not open. Was it a paper weight?

Preston smiled, took up the box and performed some conjuration upon it, and then--I cannot describe my entranced delight--as he set it down again on the table, the room seemed to grow musical. Softest, most liquid sweet notes came

pouring forth one after the other, binding my ears as if I had been in a state of enchantment; binding feet and hands and almost my breath, as I stood hushed and listening to the liquid warbling of delicious things, until the melody had run itself out. It was a melody unknown to me; wild and dainty; it came out of a famous opera, I was told afterward. When the fairy notes sunk into silence, I turned mutely towards Preston. Preston laughed.

"I declare!" he said,--"I declare! Hurra! you have got colour in your cheeks, Daisy; absolutely, my little Daisy! there is a real streak of pink there where it was so white before."

"*What* is it?" said I.

"Just a little good blood coming up under the skin."

"Oh no, Preston--*this*; what is it?"

"A musical box."

"But where does the music come from?"

"Out of the box. See, Daisy; when it has done a tune and is run out, you must wind it up, so,--like a watch."

He wound it up and set it on the table again. And again a melody came forth, and this time it was different; not plaintive and thoughtful, but jocund and glad; a little shout and ring of merriment, like the feet of dancers scattering the drops of dew in a bright morning; or like the chime of a thousand little silver bells rung for laughter. A sort of intoxication came into my heart. When Preston would have wound up the box again, I stopped him. I was full of the delight. I could not hear any more just then.

"Why, Daisy, there are ever so many more tunes."

"Yes. I am glad. I will have them another time," I answered. "How very kind of mamma!"

"Hit the right thing this time, didn't she? How's the riding cap, Daisy?"

"It is very nice," I said. "Aunt Gary is very good; and I like the whip *very* much, Preston."

"That fat little rascal will want it. Does the cap fit, Daisy?"

"I don't know," I said. "Oh yes, I suppose so."

Preston made an exclamation, and forthwith would have it tried on to see how it looked. It satisfied him; somehow it did not please me as well; but the ride did, which we had soon after; and I found that my black feather certainly suited everybody else. Darry smiled at me, and the house servants were exultant over my appearance.

Amid all these distracting pleasures, I kept on the watch for an opportunity to speak to Aunt Gary alone. Christmas day I could not. I could not get it till near the next day.

"Aunt Gary," I said, "I want to consult you about something."

"You have always something turning about in your head," was her answer.

"Do you think," said I slowly, "Mr. Edwards would have any objection to some of the people coming to the kitchen Sunday evenings to hear me read the Bible?"

"To hear *you* read the Bible!" said my aunt.

"Yes, Aunt Gary; I think they would like it. You know they cannot read it for themselves."

"*They* would like it. And you would be delighted, wouldn't you?"

"Yes, Aunt Gary. I should like it better than anything."

"You are a funny child! There is not a bit of your mother in you--except your obstinacy."

And my aunt seemed to ponder my difference.

"Would Mr. Edwards object to it, do you think? Would he let them come?"

"The question is whether *I* will let them come. Mr. Edwards has no business with what is done in the house."

"But, Aunt Gary, you would not have any objection."

"I don't know, I am sure. I wish your father and mother had never left you in my charge; for I don't know how to take care of you."

"Aunt Gary," I said, "please don't object! There is nobody to read the Bible to them--and I should like to do it very much."

"Yes, I see you would. There--don't get excited about it--every Sunday evening, did you say?"

"Yes, ma'am, if you please."

"Daisy, it will just tire you; that's what it will do. I know it, just as well as if I had seen it. You are not strong enough."

"I am sure it would refresh me, Aunt Gary. It did the other night."

"The other night?"

"Christmas eve, ma'am."

"Did you read to them then?"

"Yes, ma'am; they wanted to know what Christmas was about."

"And you read to them. You are the oddest child!"

"But Aunt Gary, never mind--it would be the greatest pleasure to me. Won't you give leave?"

"The servants hear the Bible read, child, every morning and every night."

"Yes, but that is only a very few of the house servants. I want some of the others to come--a good many--as many as can come."

"I wish your mother and father were here!" sighed my aunt.

"Do you think Mr. Edwards would make any objection?" I asked again, presuming on the main question being carried.

"Would he let them come?"

"Let them come!" echoed my aunt. "Mr. Edwards would be well employed to interfere with anything the family chose to do."

"But you know he does not let them meet together, the people, Aunt Gary; not unless they have his permission."

"No, I suppose so. That is his business."

"Then will you speak to him, ma'am, so that he may not be angry with the people when they come?"

"I? No," said my aunt. "I have nothing to do with your father's overseer. It would just make difficulty, maybe, Daisy; you had better let this scheme of yours alone."

I could not without bitter disappointment. Yet I did not know how further to press the matter. I sat still and said nothing.

"I declare, if she isn't growing pale about it!" exclaimed my aunt. "I know one thing, and that is, your father and mother ought to have taken you along with them. I have not the least idea how to manage you; not the least. What is it you want to do, Daisy?"

I explained over again.

"And now if you cannot have this trick of your fancy you will just fidget yourself sick! I see it. Just as you went driving all about Melbourne without company to take care of you. I am sure I don't know. It is not in my way to meddle with overseers--How many people do you want to read to at once, Daisy?"

"As many as I can, Aunt Gary. But Mr. Edwards will not let two or three meet together anywhere."

"Well, I dare say he is right. You can't believe anything in the world these people tell you, child. They will lie just as fast as they will speak."

"But if they came to see *me*, Aunt Gary?" I persisted, waiving the other question.

"That's another thing, of course. Well, don't worry. Call Preston. Why children cannot be children passes my comprehension."

Preston came, and there was a good deal of discussing of my plan; at which Preston frowned and whistled, but on the whole, though I knew against his will, took my part. The end was, my aunt sent for the overseer. She had some difficulty, I judge, in carrying the point; and made capital of my ill-health and delicacy and spoiled-child character. The overseer's unwilling consent was gained at last; the conditions being, that every one who came to hear the reading should have a ticket of leave, written and signed by myself, for each evening; and that I should be present with the assembly from the beginning to the close of it.

My delight was very great. And my aunt, grumbling at the whole matter, and especially at her share in it, found an additional cause of grumbling in that, she said, I had looked twenty per cent. better ever since this foolish thing got possession of my head. "I am wondering," she remarked to Miss Pinshon, "whatever Daisy will do when she grows up. I expect nothing but she will be--what do you call them?--one of those people who run wild over the human race."

"Pirates?" suggested Preston. "Or corsairs?"

"Her mother will be disappointed," went on my aunt. "That is what I confidently expect."

Miss Pinshon hinted something about the corrective qualities of mathematics; but I was too happy to heed her or care. I *was* stronger and better, I believe, from that day; though I had not much to boast of. A true tonic had been administered to me; my fainting energies took a new start.

I watched my opportunity, and went down to the kitchen one evening to make my preparations. I found Maria alone and sitting in state before the fire--which I believe was always in the kitchen a regal one. I hardly ever saw it anything else. She welcomed me with great suavity; drew up a chair for me; and finding I had something to say, sat then quite grave and still looking into the blaze, while I unfolded my plan.

"De Lord is bery good!" was her subdued comment, made when I had done. "He hab sent His angel, sure!"

"Now, Maria," I went on, "you must tell me who would like to come next Sunday, you think; and I must make tickets for them. Every one must have my ticket, with his name on it; and then there will be no fault found."

"I s'pose not," said Maria--"wid Miss Daisy's name on it."

"Who will come, Maria?"

"Laws, chile, dere's heaps. Dere's Darry, and Pete--Pete, he say de meetin' de oder night war 'bout de best meetin' he eber 'tended; he wouldn't miss it for not'ing in de world; he's sure; and dere's ole 'Lize; and de two Jems--no, dere's *tree* Jems dat is ser'ous; and Stark, and Carl, and Sharlim----

"*Sharlim*?" said I, not knowing that this was the Caffir for Charlemagne.

"Sharlim," Maria repeated. "He don' know much; but he has a leanin' for de good t'ings. And Darry, he can tell who'll come. I done forget all de folks' names."

"Why, Maria," I said, "I did not know there were so many people at Magnolia that cared about the Bible."

"What has 'um to care for, chile, I should like fur to know? Dere ain't much mo' in *dis* world."

"But I thought there were only very few," I said.

"'Spose um fifty," said Maria. "Fifty ain't much, I reckon, when dere's all de rest o' de folks what *don't* care. De Lord's people is a little people yet, for sure; and de world's a big place. When de Lord come Hissself, to look for 'em, 'spect He have to look mighty hard. De world's awful dark."

That brought to my mind my question. It was odd, no doubt, to choose an old coloured woman for my adviser, but indeed, I had not much choice; and something had given me a confidence in Maria's practical wisdom, which early as it had been formed, nothing ever happened to shake. So, after considering the fire and the matter a moment, I brought forth my doubt.

"Maria," said I, "what is the best way--I mean, how can one let one's light shine?"

"What Miss Daisy talkin' about?"

"I mean--you know what the Bible says--'Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.'"

"For sure, I knows dat. Ain't much shining in dese yere parts. De people is dark, Miss Daisy; dey don' know. 'Spect dey would try to shine, some on 'em, ef dey knowed. Feel sure dey would."

"But that is what I wanted to ask about, Maria. How ought one to let one's light shine?"

I remember now the kind of surveying look the woman gave me. I do not know what she was thinking of; but she looked at me, up and down, for a moment, with a wonderfully tender, soft expression. Then turned away.

"How let um light shine?" she repeated. "De bestest way, Miss Daisy, is fur to make him burn good."

I saw it all immediately; my question never puzzled me again. Take care that the lamp is trimmed; take care that it is full of oil; see that the flame mounts clear and steady towards heaven; and the Lord will set it where its light will fall on what pleases Him, and where it will reach, mayhap, to what you never dream of.



CHAPTER VI.

WINTER AND SUMMER.

FROM the Christmas holidays I think I began slowly to mend. My aunt watched me, and grumbled that kitchen amusements and rides with Darry should prove the medicines most healing and effectual; but she dared stop neither of them. I believe the overseer remonstrated on the danger of the night gatherings; but my Aunt Gary had her answer ready, and warned him not to do anything to hinder me, for I was the apple of my father's eye. Miss Pinshon, sharing to the full my aunt's discontent, would have got on horseback, I verily believe, to be with me in my rides; but she was no rider. The sound of a horse's four feet always, she confessed, stamped the courage out of her heart. I was let alone; and the Sunday evenings in the kitchen, and the bright morning hours in the pine avenues and oak groves, were my refreshment and my pleasure and my strength.

What there was of it; for I had not much strength to boast for many a day. Miss Pinshon tried her favourite recipe whenever she thought she saw a chance, and I did my best with it. But my education that winter was quite in another line. I could not bear much arithmetic. Bending over a desk did not agree with me. Reading aloud to Miss Pinshon never lasted for more than a little while at a time. So it comes, that my remembrance of that winter is not filled with school exercises, and that Miss Pinshon's figure plays but a subordinate part in its pictures. Instead of that, my memory brings back, first and chiefest of all, the circle of dark faces round the kitchen light wood fire, and the yellow blaze on the page from which I read; I, a little figure in white, sitting in the midst amongst them all. That picture--those evenings--come back to me, with a kind of hallowed perfume of truth and hope. Truth, it was in my lips and on my heart; I was giving it out to those who had it not. And hope--it was in more hearts than mine, no doubt; but in mine it beat with as steady a beat as the tickings of my little watch by my side, and breathed sweet as the flowers that start in spring from under the snow. I had often a large circle; and it was part of my plan, and well carried into execution, that these evenings of reading should supply also the place of the missing prayer-meeting. Gradually I drew it on to be so understood; and then my pieces of reading were scattered along between the prayers, or sometimes all came at first, followed by two or three earnest longer prayers from some of those that were present. And then, without any planning of mine, came in the singing. Not too much, lest, as Maria said, we should "make de folks upstairs t'ink dere war somethin' oncommon in de kitchen;" but one or two hymns we would have, so full of spirit and sweetness that often nowadays they come back to me, and I would give very much to hear the like again. So full of music, too. Voices untrained by art, but gifted by nature; melodious and powerful; that took different parts in the tune, and carried them through without the jar of a false note or a false quantity; and a love both of song and of the truth which made the music mighty. It was the greatest delight to me that singing, whether I joined them or only listened. One,--the thought of it comes over me now and brings the water to my eyes,--

"Am I a soldier of the cross--
Of the cross--
Of the cross--
A follower of the Lamb;
And shall I fear to own his cause,
Own his cause--
Own his cause--
Or blush to speak his name?"

The repetitions at the end of every other line were both plaintive and strong; there was no weakness, but some recognition of what it costs in certain circumstances to "own His cause." I loved that dearly. But that was only one of many.

Also, the Bible words were wonderful sweet to me, as I was giving them out to those who else had a "famine of the word." Bread to the hungry is quite another thing from bread on the tables of the full.

The winter had worn well on, before I received the answer to the letter I had written my father about the prayer-meetings and Mr. Edwards. It was a short answer, not in terms but in actual extent; showing that my father was not strong and well yet. It was very kind and tender, as well as short; I felt that in every word. In substance, however, it told me I had better let Mr. Edwards alone. He knew what he ought to do about the prayer-meetings and about other things; and they were what I could not judge about. So my letter said. It said, too, that things seemed strange to me because I was unused to them; and that when I had lived longer at the South they would cease to be strange, and I would understand them and look upon them as every one else did.

I studied and pondered this letter; not greatly disappointed, for I had had but slender hopes that my petition could work anything. Yet I had a disappointment to get over. The first practical use I made of my letter, I went where I could be alone with it--indeed, I was that when I read it,--but I went to a solitary lonely place, where I could not be interrupted; and there I knelt down and prayed, that however long I might live at the South, I might never get to look upon evil as anything but evil, nor ever become accustomed to the things I thought ought not to be, so as not to feel them. I shall never forget that half hour. It broke my heart that my father and I should look on such matters with so different eyes; and with my prayer for myself, which came from the very bottom of my heart, I poured out also a flood of love and tears over him, and of petition that he might have better eyesight one day. Ah yes! and before it should be too late to right the wrong he was unconsciously doing.

For now I began to see, in the light of this letter first, that my father's eyes were not clear but blind in regard to these matters. And what he said about me led me to think and believe that his blindness was the effect, not of any particular hardness or fault in him, but of long teaching and habit and custom. For I saw that everybody else around me seemed to take the present condition of things as the true and best one; not only convenient, but natural and proper. Everybody, that is, who did not suffer by it. I had more than suspicions that the seven hundred on the estate were of a different mind here from the half dozen who lived in the mansion; and that the same relative difference existed on the other plantations in the neighbourhood. We made visits occasionally, and the visits were returned. I was not shut out from them, and so had some chance to observe things within a circle of twenty miles. Our "neighbourhood" reached so far. And child as I was, I could not help seeing; and I could not help looking, half unconsciously, for signs of what lay so close on my heart.

My father's letter thus held some material of comfort for me, although it refused my request. Papa would not overset the overseer's decision about the prayer-meetings. It held something else. There was a little scrap of a note to Aunt Gary, saying, in the form of an order, that Daisy was to have ten dollars paid to her every quarter; that Mrs. Gary would see it done; and would further see that Daisy was not called upon, by anybody, at any time, to give any account whatever of her way of spending the same.

How I thanked papa for this! How I knew the tender affection and knowledge of me which had prompted it. How well I understood what it was meant to do. I had a little private enjoyment of Aunt Gary's disconsolate face and grudging hands as she bestowed upon me the first ten dollars. It was not that she loved money so well, but she thought this was another form of my father's unwise indulging and spoiling of me; and that I was spoiled already. But I--I saw in a vision a large harvest of joy, to be raised from this small seed crop.

At first I thought I must lay out a few shillings of my stock upon a nice purse to keep the whole in. I put the purse down at the head of the list of things I was making out, for purchase the first time I should go to Baytown, or have any good chance of sending. I had a good deal of consideration whether I would have a purse or a pocket-book. Then I had an odd secret pleasure in my diplomatic way of finding out from Darry and Maria and Margaret what were the wants most pressing of the sick and the old among the people; or of the industrious and the enterprising. Getting Darry to talk to me in my rides, by degrees I came to know the stories and characters of many of the hands; I picked up hints of a want or a desire here and there, which Darry thought there was no human means of meeting or gratifying. Then, the next time I had a chance, I brought up these persons and cases to Maria, and supplemented Darry's hints with her information. Or I attacked Margaret when she was making my fire, and drew from her what she knew about the parties in whom I was interested. So I learned--and put it down in my notebook accordingly--that Pete could spell out words a little bit, and would like mainly to read; if only he had a Testament in large type. He could not manage little print; it bothered him. Also I learned, that Aunt Sarah, a middle-aged woman who worked in the fields, "wanted terrible to come to de Sabbas meetin's, but she war 'shamed to come, 'cause her feet was mos' half out of her shoes; and Mr. Ed'ards wouldn't give her no more till de time come roun." Sarah had "been and gone and done stuck her feet in de fire for to warm 'em, one time when dey was mighty cold, and she burn her shoes. Learn her better next time."

"But does she work every day in the field with her feet only half covered?" I asked.

"Laws! she don't care," said Maria. "'Taint no use give dem darkies not'ng; dey not know how to keep um."

But this was not Maria's real opinion, I knew. There was often a strange sort of seeming hard edge of feeling put forth which I learned to know pointed a deep, deep, maybe only half-conscious irony, and was in reality a bitter comment upon facts. So a pair of new shoes for Sarah went down in my list with a large print Testament for Pete. Then I found that some of the people, some of the old ones, who in youth had been accustomed to it, like nothing so well as tea; it was ambrosia and Lethe mingled; and a packet of tea was put in my list next to the Testament. But the tea must have sugar; and I could not bear that they should drink it out of mugs, without any teaspoons; so to please myself I sent for a little delf ware and a few pewter spoons. Little by little my list grew. I found that Darry knew something about letters; could write a bit; and would prize the means of writing as a very rare treasure and pleasure. And with fingers that

almost trembled with delight, I wrote down paper and pens and a bottle of ink for Darry. Next, I heard of an old woman at the quarters, who was ailing and infirm, and I am afraid ill-treated, who at all events was in need of comfort, and had nothing but straw and the floor to rest her poor bones on at night. A soft pallet for her went down instantly on my list; my ink and tears mingled together as I wrote; and I soon found that my purse must be cut off from the head of my list for that time. I never ventured to put it at the head again; nor found a chance to put it anywhere else. I spent four winters at Magnolia after that; and never had a new purse all the time.

I had to wait awhile for an opportunity to make my purchases; then had the best in the world, for Darry was sent to Baytown on business. To him I confided my list and my money, with my mind on the matter; and I was served to a point and with absolute secrecy. For that I had insisted on. Darry and Maria were in my counsels, of course; but the rest of the poor people knew only by guess who their friend was. Old Sarah found her new shoes in her hut one evening, and in her noisy delight declared that "some big angel had come t'rough de quarters." The cups and saucers it was necessary to own, lest more talk should have been made about them than at all suited me; Darry let it be understood that nothing must be said and nobody must know of the matter; and nobody did; but I took the greatest enjoyment in hearing from Maria how the old women (and one or two men) gathered together and were comforted over their cups of tea. And over the *cups*, Maria said: the cups and spoons made the tea twice as good; but I doubt their relish of it was never half so exquisite as mine. I had to give Pete his Testament; he would not think it the same thing if he did not have it from my own hand, Maria said; and Darry's pens and ink likewise. The poor woman for whom I had got the bed was, I fear, beyond enjoying anything; but it was a comfort to me to know that she was lying on it. The people kept my secret perfectly; my aunt and governess never, I believe, heard anything of all these doings; I had my enjoyment to myself.

And the Sunday evening prayer-meeting grew, little by little. Old Sarah and her new shoes were there, of course, at once. Those who first came never failed. And week by week, as I went into the kitchen with my Bible, I saw a larger circle; found the room better lined with dark forms and sable faces. They come up before me now as I write, one and another. I loved them all. I love them still, for I look to meet many of them in glory; "where there is neither bond or free." Nay, that is *here* and at present, to all who are in Christ; we do not wait for heaven, to be all one.

And they loved me, those poor people. I think Pete had something the same sort of notion about me that those Ephesians had of their image of Diana, which they insisted had fallen from heaven. I used to feel it then, and be amused by it.

But I am too long about my story. No wonder I linger, when the remembrance is so sweet. With this new interest that had come into my life, my whole life brightened. I was no longer spiritless. My strength little by little returned. And with the relief of my heart about my father, my happiness sprung back almost to its former and usual state when I was at Melbourne. For I had by this time submitted to my father's and mother's absence as a thing of necessity, and submitted entirely. Yet my happiness was a subdued sort of thing; and my Aunt Gary still thought it necessary to be as careful of me, she said, "as if I were an egg-shell." As I grew stronger, Miss Pinshon made more and more demands upon my time with her arithmetic lessons and other things; but my rides with Darry were never interfered with, nor my Sunday evening readings; and, indeed, all the winter I continued too delicate and feeble for much school work. My dreaded governess did not have near so much to do with me as I thought she would.

The spring was not far advanced before it was necessary for us to quit Magnolia. The climate, after a certain day, or rather the air, was not thought safe for white people. We left Magnolia; and went first to Baytown and then to the North. There our time was spent between one and another of several watering-places. I longed for Melbourne; but the house was shut up; we could not go there. The summer was very wearisome to me. I did not like the houses in which our time was spent, or the way of life led in them. Neither did Miss Pinshon, I think, for she was out of her element, and had no chance to follow her peculiar vocation. Of course, in a public hotel, we could not have a schoolroom; and with the coming on of warm weather my strength failed again so sensibly, that all there was to do was to give me sea air and bathing, and let me alone. The bathing I enjoyed; those curling salt waves breaking over my head are the one image of anything fresh or refreshing which my memory has kept. I should have liked the beach; I did like it; only it was covered with bathers, or else with promenaders in carriages and on foot, at all times when I saw it; and though they were amusing, the beach was spoiled. The hotel rooms were close and hot; I missed all the dainty freedom and purity of my own home; the people I saw were, it seemed to me, entirely in keeping with the rooms; that is, they were stiff and fussy, not quiet and busy. They were busy after their own fashion, indeed; but it always seemed to me busy about nothing. The children I saw too did not attract me; and I fear I did not attract them. I was sober-hearted and low-toned in spirit and strength; while they were as gay as their elders. And I was dressed according to my mother's fancy, in childlike style, without hoops, and with my hair cropped short all over my head. They were stately with crinoline, and rich with embroidery, stiff with fine dresses and plumes; while a white frock and a flat straw were all my adornment, except a sash. I think they did not know what to make of me; and I am sure I had nothing in common with them; so we lived very much apart. There was a little variation in my way of life when Preston came; yet not much. He took me sometimes to drive, and did once go walking with me on the beach; but Preston found a great deal where I found nothing, and was all

the time taken up with people and pleasures; boating and yachting and fishing expeditions; and I believe with hops and balls too. But I was always fast asleep at those times.

It was a relief to me when the season came to an end, and we went to New York to make purchases before turning southward. I had once hoped, that this time, the year's end might see my father and mother come again. That hope had faded and died a natural death a long while ago. Letters spoke my father's health not restored: he was languid and spiritless and lacked vigour; he would try the air of Switzerland; he would spend the winter in the Pyrenees! If that did not work well, my mother hinted, perhaps he would have to try the effect of a long sea voyage. Hope shrunk into such small dimensions that it filled but a very little corner of my heart. Indeed, for the present I quite put it by and did not look at it. One winter more must pass, at any rate, and maybe a full year, before I could possibly see my father and mother at home. I locked the door for the present upon hope; and turned my thoughts to what things I had left with me. Chiefest of all these were my poor friends at Magnolia. My money had accumulated during the summer; I had a nice little sum to lay out for them, and in New York I had chance to do it well, and to do it myself, which was a great additional pleasure. As I could, bit by bit, when I was with Aunt Gary shopping, when I could get leave to go out alone with a careful servant to attend me, I searched the shops and catered and bought, for the comfort and pleasure of--seven hundred! I could do little. Nay, but it was for so many of those that I could reach with my weak hands; and I did not despise that good because I could not reach them all. A few more large-print Testaments I laid in; some copies of the Gospel of John, in soft covers and good type; a few hymn books. All these cost little. But for Christmas gifts, and for new things to give help and comfort to my poor pensioners, I both plagued and bewitched my brain. It was sweet work. My heart went out towards making *all* the people happy for once, at Christmas; but my purse would not stretch so far; I had to let that go, with a thought and a sigh.

One new thing came very happily into my head, and was worth a Peruvian mine to me, in the pleasure and business it gave. Going into a large greenhouse with my aunt, who wanted to order a bouquet, I went wandering round the place while she made her bargain. For my Aunt Gary made a bargain of everything. Wandering in thought as well, whither the sweet breath of the roses and geraniums led me, I went back to Molly in her cottage at Melbourne, and the Jewess geranium I had carried her, and the rose tree; and suddenly the thought started into my head, might not my dark friends at Magnolia, so quick to see and enjoy anything of beauty that came in their way--so fond of bright colour and grace and elegance--a luxurious race, even in their downtrodden condition; might not *they* also feel the sweetness of a rose, or delight in the petals of a tulip? It was a great idea; it grew into a full-formed purpose before I was called to follow Aunt Gary out of the greenhouse. The next day I went there on my own account. I was sure I knew what I wanted to do; but I studied a long time the best way of doing it. Roses? I could hardly transport pots and trees so far; they were too cumbersome. Geraniums were open to the same objection, besides being a little tender as to the cold. Flower seeds could not be sown, if the people had them; for no patch of garden belonged to their stone huts, and they had no time to cultivate such a patch if they had it. I must give what would call for no care, to speak of, and make no demands upon overtasked strength and time. Neither could I afford to take anything of such bulk as would draw attention or call on questions and comments. I knew, as well as I know now, what would be thought of any plan of action which supposed a *love of the beautiful* in creatures the only earthly use of whom was to raise rice and cotton; who in fact were not half so important as the harvests they grew. I knew what unbounded scorn would visit any attempts of mine to minister to an aesthetic taste in these creatures; and I was in no mind to call it out upon myself. All the while I knew better. I knew that Margaret and Stephanie could put on a turban like no white woman I ever saw. I knew that even Maria could take the full effect of my dress when I was decked--as I was sometimes--for a dinner party; and that no fall of lace or knot of ribbon missed its errand to her eye. I knew that a *picture* raised the liveliest interest in all my circle of Sunday hearers; and that they were quick to understand and keen to take its bearings, far more than Molly Skelton would have been, more than Logan, our Scotch gardener at Melbourne, or than my little old friend Hephzibah and her mother. But the question stood, In what form could I carry beauty to them out of a florist's shop? I was fain to take the florist into my partial confidence. It was well that I did. He at once suggested bulbs. Bulbs! would they require much care? Hardly any; no trouble at all. They could be easily transported: easily kept. All they wanted was a little pot of earth when I was ready to plant them; a little judicious watering; an unbounded supply of sunshine. And what sorts of bulbs were there? I asked diplomatically; not myself knowing, to tell truth, what bulbs were at all. Plenty of sorts, the florist said; there were hyacinths, all colours; and tulips, striped and plain, and very gay; and crocuses, those were of nearly all colours too; and ranunculus, and anemones, and snowdrops. Snowdrops were white; but of several of the other kinds I could have every tint in the rainbow, both alone and mixed. The florist stood waiting my pleasure, and nipped off a dead leaf or two as he spoke, as if there was no hurry and I could take my time. I went into happy calculation, as to how far my funds would reach; gave my orders, very slowly and very carefully; and went away the owner of a nice little stock of tulips, narcissus, crocuses, and above all, hyacinths. I chose gay tints, and at the same time inexpensive kinds; so that my stock was quite large enough for my purposes; it mattered nothing to me whether a sweet double hyacinth was of a new or an old kind, provided it was of first-rate quality; and I confess it matters almost as little to me now. At any rate, I went home a satisfied child; and figuratively speaking, dined and supped off tulips and hyacinths, instead of mutton and bread and butter.

That afternoon it fell out that my aunt took me with her to a milliner's on some business. In the course of it, some talk arose about feathers and the value of them; and my aunt made a remark which, like Wat Tyrrell's arrow, glanced from its aim and did execution in a quarter undreamed of.

"That feather you put in the little riding cap you sent me," she said to the milliner--"your black feather, Daisy, you know--you charged me but fifteen dollars for that; why is this so much more?"

I did not hear the milliner's answer. My whole thought went off upon a track entirely new to me, and never entered before. My feather cost fifteen dollars! Fifteen dollars! Supposing I had that to buy tulips with? or in case I had already tulips enough, suppose I had it to buy print gowns for Christmas presents to the women, which I had desired and could not afford? Or that I had it to lay out in tea and sugar, that my poor old friends might oftener have the one solace that was left to them, or that more might share it? Fifteen dollars! It was equal to one quarter and a half's allowance. My fund for more than a third of the year would be doubled, if I could turn that black feather into silver or gold again. And the feather was of no particular use that I could see. It made me look like the heiress of Magnolia, my aunt said; but neither could I see any use in *that*. Everybody knew, that is, all the servants and friends of the family knew, that I was that heiress; I needed no black feather to proclaim it. And now it seemed to me as if my riding cap was heavy with undeveloped bulbs, uncrystallized sugar, unweighed green tea. No transformation of the feather was possible; it must wave over my brow in its old fashion, whether it were a misguided feather or not; but my thoughts, once set a going in this train, found a great deal to do. Truth to tell, they have not done it all yet.

"Aunt Gary," I said that same evening, musing over the things in my boxes, "does lace cost much?"

"That is like the countryman who asked me once, if it took long to play a piece of music! Daisy, don't you know any more about lace than to ask such a question?"

"I don't know what it costs, Aunt Gary. I never bought any."

"Bought! No; hardly. You are hardly at the age to *buy* lace yet. But you have worn a good deal of it."

"I cannot tell what it cost by looking at it," I answered.

"Well, *I* can. And you will, one day, I hope; if you ever do anything like other people."

"Is it costly, ma'am?"

"Your lace is rather costly," my aunt said, with a tone which I felt implied satisfaction.

"How much?" I asked.

"How much does it cost? Why it is the countryman's question over again, Daisy. Lace is all sorts of prices. But the lace you wear is, I judge, somewhere about three and five, and one of your dresses ten, dollars a yard. That is pretty rich lace for a young lady of your years to wear."

I never wore it, I must explain, unless in small quantity, except on state occasions when my mother dressed me as part of herself.

"No, I am wrong," my aunt added, presently; "that dress I am thinking of is richer than that; the lace on that robe was never bought for ten dollars, or fifteen either. What do you want to know about it for, Daisy?"

I mused a great deal. Three and five, and ten, and fifteen dollars a yard, on lace trimmings for me--and no tea, no cups and saucers, no soft bed, no gardens and flowers, for many who were near me. I began to fill the meshes of my lace with responsibilities too heavy for the delicate fabric to bear. Nobody liked the looks of it better than I did. I always had a fancy for lace, though not for feathers; its rich, delicate, soft falls, to my notion, suited my mother's form and style better than anything else, and suited me. My taste found no fault. But now that so much good was wrought into its slight web, and so much silver lay hidden in every embroidered flower, the thing was changed. Graceful, and becoming, and elegant, more than any other adornment; what then? My mother and father had a great deal of money, too, to spare; enough, I thought, for lace and for the above tea and sugar, too; what then? And what if not enough? I pondered till my Aunt Gary broke out upon me, that I would grow a wizened old woman if I sat musing at that rate, and sent me to bed. It stopped my pondering for that night; but not for all the years since that night.

My preparations were quite made before my aunt got her feathers adjusted to her satisfaction; and in the bright days of autumn we went back again to Magnolia. This was a joyful journey and a glad arriving, compared to last year; and the welcome I got was something which puzzled my heart between joy and sorrow many times during the first few days.

And now Miss Pinshon's reign fairly began. I was stronger in health, accustomed to my circumstances; there was no

longer any reason that the multiplication table and I should be parted. My governess was determined to make up for lost time; and the days of that winter were spent by me between the study table and fire. That is, when I think of that winter my memory finds me there. Multiplication and its correlatives were the staple of existence; and the old book room of my grandfather was the place where my harvests of learning were sown and reaped.

Somehow, I do not think the crops were heavy. I tried my best, and Miss Pinshon certainly tried her best. I went through and over immense fields of figures; but I fancy the soil did not suit the growth. I know the fruits were not satisfactory to myself, and, indeed, were not fruits at all, to my sense of them; but rather dry husks and hard nut shells, with the most tasteless of small kernels inside. Yet Miss Pinshon did not seem unsatisfied; and, indeed, occasionally remarked that she believed I meant to be a good child. Perhaps that was something out of my governess's former experience; for it was the only style of commendation I ever knew her indulge in, and I always took it as a compliment.

It would not do to tell all my childish life that winter. I should never get through. For a child has as many experiences in her little world as people of fifty years old have in theirs; and to her they are not little experiences. It was not a small trial of mind and body to spend the long mornings in the study over the curious matters Miss Pinshon found for my attention; and after the long morning the shorter afternoon session was un-mixed weariness. Yet I suffered most in the morning; because then there was some life and energy within me which rebelled against confinement, and panted to be free and in the open air, looking after the very different work I could find or make for myself. My feet longed for the turf; my fingers wanted to throw down the slate pencil and gather up the reins. I had a good fire and a pleasant room; but I wanted to be abroad in the open sunshine, to feel the sweet breath of the air in my face, and see the grey moss wave in the wind. That was what I had been used to all my life; a sweet wild roaming about, to pick up whatever pleasure presented itself. I suppose Miss Pinshon herself had never been used to it nor known it; for she did not seem to guess at what was in my mind. But it made my mornings hard to get through. By the afternoon the spirit was so utterly gone out of me and everything, that I took it all in a mechanical stupid way; and only my back's aching made me impatient for the time to end.

I think I was fond of knowledge and fond of learning. I am sure of it, for I love it dearly still. But there was no joy about it at Magnolia. History, as I found it with my governess, was not in the least like the history I had planned on my tray of sand, and pointed out with red and black headed pins. There was life and stir in that, and progress. Now there was nothing but a string of names and dates to say to Miss Pinshon. And dates were hard to remember, and did not seem to mean anything. But Miss Pinshon's favourite idea was mathematics. It was not my favourite idea; so every day I wandered through a wilderness of figures and signs which were a weariness to my mind and furnished no food for it. Nothing was pleasant to me in my schoolroom, excepting my writing lessons. They were welcomed as a relief from other things.

When the studies for the day were done, the next thing was to prepare for a walk. A walk with Miss Pinshon alone, for my aunt never joined us. Indeed, this winter my aunt was not unfrequently away from Magnolia altogether; finding Baytown more diverting. It made a little difference to me; for when she was not at home, the whole day, morning, afternoon and evening, meal times and all times, seemed under a leaden grey sky. Miss Pinshon discussed natural history to me when we were walking--not the thing, but the science; she asked me questions in geography when we were eating breakfast, and talked over some puzzle in arithmetic when we were at dinner. I think it was refreshing to her; she liked it; but to me, the sky closed over me in lead colour, one unbroken vault, as I said, when my aunt was away. With her at home, all this could not be; and any changes of colour were refreshing.

All this was not very good for me. My rides with Darry would have been a great help; but now I only got a chance at them now and then. I grew spiritless and weary. Sundays I would have begged to be allowed to stay at home all day and rest; but I knew if I pleaded fatigue my evenings with the people in the kitchen would be immediately cut off; not my drives to church. Miss Pinshon always drove the six miles to Bolingbroke every Sunday morning, and took me with her. Oh how long the miles were! how weary I was, with my back aching and trying to find a comfortable corner in the carriage; how I wanted to lie down on the soft cushions in the pew and go to sleep during the service. And when the miles home were finished, it seemed to me that so was I. Then I used to pray to have strength in the evening to read with the people. And I always had it; or at least I always did it. I never failed; though the rest of the Sunday hours were often spent on the bed. But, indeed, that Sunday evening reading was the one thing that saved my life from growing, or settling, into a petrification. Those hours gave me cheer, and some spirit to begin again on Monday morning.

However, I was not thriving. I know I was losing colour, and sinking in strength, day by day; yet very gradually; so that my governess never noticed it. My aunt sometimes, on her return from an absence that had been longer than common, looked at me uneasily.

"Miss Pinshon, what ails that child?" she would ask.

My governess said, "Nothing." Miss Pinshon was the most immovable person, I think, I have ever known. At least, so

far as one could judge from the outside.

"She looks to me," my aunt went on, "exactly like a cabbage, or something else, that has been blanched under a barrel. A kind of unhealthy colour. She is not strong."

"She has more strength than she shows," my governess answered. "Daisy has a good deal of strength."

"Do you think so?" said my aunt, looking doubtfully at me. But she was comforted. And neither of them asked me about it.

One thing in the early half of the winter was a great help; and for a while stayed my flitting spirits and strength. My father wrote an order, that Daisy should make arrangements for giving all the people on the plantation a great entertainment at Christmas. I was to do what I liked and have whatever I chose to desire; no one altering or interfering with my word. I shall never forget the overflowing of largest joy, with which my heart swelled as I ran in to tell this news to Aunt Gary. But first I had to kneel down and give thanks for it.

I never saw my aunt more displeased about anything. Miss Pinshon only lifted up her black eyes and looked me over. They did not express curiosity or anything else; only observation. My aunt spoke out.

"I think there must be some mistake, Daisy."

"No, Aunt Gary; papa says just that."

"You mean the house servants, child."

"No, ma'am; papa says every one; all the people on the place."

"He means the white people, you foolish child; everybody's head is not full of the servants, as yours is."

"He says the coloured people, Aunt Gary; all of them. It is *only* the coloured people."

"Hear her!" said my aunt. "Now she would rather entertain them, I don't doubt, than the best company that could be gathered of her own sort."

I certainly would. Did I not think with joy at that very minute of the words, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of *these*, ye have done it unto me?" I knew what guest would be among my poor despised company. But I said not a word.

"Daisy," said my aunt, "you *must* be under a mistake; you must let me see what your father says. Why, to give all these hundreds an entertainment, it would cost--have you any idea what it would cost?"

I had not indeed. But my father's letter had mentioned a sum which was to be the limit of my expenditure; within which I was to be unlimited. It was a large sum, amounting to several hundreds, and amply sufficient for all I could wish to do. I told my aunt.

"Well!" she said, twisting herself round to the fire, "if your father has money to fling about like that, I have of course no more to say."

Miss Pinshon looked up again at me. Those black eyes were always the same; the eyelids never drooped over them. "What are you going to do, Daisy?" she asked.

Truly I did not know, yet. I gave my aunt a note to the overseer from my father, which I begged her to forward; and ran away to take sweet counsel with myself.

I had had some little experience of such an entertainment in the strawberry festival at Melbourne. I remembered that good things to eat and drink were sure to be enjoyed, and not these only, but also a pretty and festive air thrown about these things. And much more would this be true among the beauty-loving, and luxurious-natured children of the tropics, than with the comparatively barbarous Celtic blood. But between entertaining thirty and seven hundred there was a difference. And between the season of roses and fruits, and the time of mid-winter, even though in a southern clime, there was another wide difference. I had need of a great deal of counsel-taking with myself, and I took it; and it was very good for me. In every interval between mathematical or arithmetical problems, my mind ran off to this other one, with infinite refreshment.

Then I consulted Maria; she was a great help to me. I thought at first I should have to build a place to hold our gatherings in; the home kitchen was not a quarter large enough. But Darry told me of an empty barn not far off, that was roomy and clean. By virtue of my full powers I seized upon this barn. I had it well warmed with stoves; Darry saw to that for me, and that they were well and safely put up; I had it adorned and clothed and made gay with evergreens

and flowers, till it was beautiful. The carpenters on the place put up long tables, and fitted plenty of seats. Then I had some rough kitchens extemporised outside of it; and sent for loads of turkeys from Baytown; and for days before and after Christmas my band of cooks were busy, roasting and baking and cake-making. Coffee was brewed without measure, as if we had been a nation of Arabs. And then tickets were furnished to all the people on the place, tickets of admission; and for all the holidays, or for Christmas and three days after, I kept open house at the barn. Night and day I kept open house. I went and came myself, knowing that the sight of me hindered nobody's pleasure; but I let in no other white person, and I believe I gained the lasting ill-will of the overseer by refusing him. I stood responsible for everybody's good behaviour, and had no forfeits to pay. And enjoyment reigned, during those days, in the barn; a gay enjoyment, full of talk and of singing as well as of feasting; full of laughter and jokes, and full of utmost good-humour and kindness from one to another. Again, most unlike a party of Celtic origin. It was enjoyment to me too; very great; though dashed continually by the thought how rare and strange it was to those around me. Only for my sake and dependent on my little hand of power; having no guarantee or security else for its ever coming again. As the holiday drew near its end, my heart grew sore often at the thought of all my poor friends going back into their toil, hopeless and spiritless as it was, without one ray to brighten the whole year before them till Christmas should come round again. Ay, and this feeling was quickened every now and then by a word, or a look, or a tone, which told me that I was not the only one who remembered it. "Christmas is almos' gone, Tony," I heard one fine fellow say to another at the end of the third day; and under the words there was a thread of meaning which gave a twitch to my heartstrings. There were bursts of song mingled with all this, which I could not bear to hear. In the prayer-meetings I did not mind them; here, in the midst of festivities, they almost choked me. "I'm going home" sounded now so much as if it were in a strange land; and once when a chorus of them were singing, deep and slow, the refrain,

"In the morning--
Chil'len, in the morning--"

I had a great heartbreak, and sat down and cried behind my sugarplums.

I can bear to think of it all now. There were years when I could not.

After this entertainment was over, and much more stupid ones had been given among polished people at the house, and the New Year had swept in upon us with its fresh breeze of life and congratulations, the winter and Miss Pinshon settled down for unbroken sway.

I had little to help me during those months from abroad. That is, I had nothing. My father wrote seldom. My mother's letters had small comfort for me. They said that papa's health mended slowly--was very delicate--he could not bear much exertion--his head would not endure any excitement. They were trying constant changes of scene and air. They were at Spa, at Paris, at Florence, at Vevay, in the Pyrenees; not staying long anywhere. The physicians talked of a long sea voyage. From all which I gradually brought down my hopes into smaller and smaller compass; till finally I packed them up and stowed them away in the hidden furthest corner of my heart, only to be brought out and looked at when there should be occasion. Spring came without the least prospect that such occasion would be given me soon. My father and mother were making preparation to journey in Norway; and already there was talk of a third winter in Egypt! It was hoped that all these changes were not without some slow and certain effect in the way of improvement. I think on me they had another sort of effect.

Spring as usual drove us away from Magnolia. This summer was spent with my Aunt Gary at various pleasant and cool up-country places, where hills were, and brooks, and sweet air, and flowers, and where I might have found much to enjoy. But always Miss Pinshon was with me, and the quiet and freedom of these places, with the comparative cool climate, made it possible for her to carry on all her schemes for my improvement just as steadily as though we had been at Magnolia. And I had not Darry and my pony, which indeed, the latter had been of small use to me this year; and I had not my band of friends on the Sunday evening; and even my own maid Margaret Aunt Gary had chosen to leave behind. Miss Pinshon's reign was absolute. I think some of the Medusa properties Preston used to talk about must have had their effect upon me at this time. I remember little of all that summer, save the work for Miss Pinshon, and the walks with Miss Pinshon, and a general impression of those black eyes and inflexible voice, and mathematics and dates, and a dull round of lesson getting. Not knowledge getting--that would have been quite another affair. I seemed to be all the while putting up a scaffolding, and never coming to work on the actual Temple of Learning itself. I know we were in beautiful regions that summer, but my recollection is not of them but of rows of figures; and of a very grave, I think dull, and very quiet little personage, who went about like a mouse for silentness, and gave no trouble to anybody excepting only to herself.

The next winter passed as the winter before had done, only I had no Christmas entertainment. My father and mother were in Egypt--perhaps he did not think of it. Perhaps he did not feel that he could afford it. Perhaps my aunt and the overseer had severally made representations to which my father thought it best to listen. I had no festivities at any rate

for my poor coloured people; and it made my own holidays a very shaded thing.

I found, however, this winter one source of amusement, and in a measure, of comfort. In the bookcases which held my grandfather's library, there was a pretty large collection of books of travel. I wanted to know just then about Egypt, that I might the better in imagination follow my father and mother. I searched the shelves for Egypt, and was lucky enough to light upon several works of authority and then recent observation. I feasted on these. I began in the middle, then very soon went back to the beginning, and read delightedly, carefully, patiently, through every detail and discussion in which the various authors indulged. Then I turned all their pictures into living panorama; for I fancied my father and mother in every place, looking at every wonder they described; and I enjoyed not merely what they described, but my father's and mother's enjoyment of it. This was a rare delight to me. My favourite place was the corner of the study fire, at dusk, when lessons and tiresome walks for the day were done, and Miss Pinshon was taking her ease elsewhere in some other way. I had the fire made up to burn brightly, and pine knots at hand to throw on if wanted; and with the illumination dancing all over my page, I went off to regions of enchantment, pleasant to me beyond any fairy tale. I never cared much for things that were not true. No chambers of Arabian fancy could have had the fascination for me of those old Egyptian halls, nor all the marvels of magic entranced me like the wonder-working hand of time. Those books made my comfort and my diversion all the winter. For I was not a galloping reader; I went patiently through every page; and the volumes were many enough and interesting enough to last me long. I dreamed under the Sphynx; I wandered over the pyramids; no chamber nor nook escaped me; I could have guided a traveller--in imagination. I knew the prospect from the top, though I never wrote my name there. It seemed to me that *that* was barbarism. I sailed up the Nile--delightful journeys on board the Nile boats--forgetting Miss Pinshon and mathematics, except when I rather pitied the ancient Egyptians for being so devoted to the latter; forgetting Magnolia, and all the home things I could not do and would have liked to do; forgetting everything, and rapt in the enjoyment of tropical airs, and Eastern skies; hearing the splash of water from the everlasting *shadoof*, and watching the tints and colours on the ranges of hills bordering the Nile valley. All *my* hills were green; the hues of those others were enough of themselves to make an enchanted land. Still more, as I stopped at the various old temples along the way, my feeling of enchantment increased. I threaded the mazes of rubbish, and traced the plans of the ruins of Thebes, till I was at home in every part of them. I studied the hieroglyphics and the descriptions of the sculptures, till the names of Thothmes III., and Amunoph III., and Sethos and Rameses, Miamun and Rameses III., were as well known to me as the names of the friends whom I met every Sunday evening. I even studied out the old Egyptian mythology, the better to be able to understand the sculptures, as well as the character of those ancient people who wrought them, and to be able to fancy the sort of services that were celebrated by the priests in the splendid enclosures of the temples.

And then I went higher up the Nile, and watched at the uncovering of those wonderful colossal figures which stand, or sit, before the temple of Abou-Simbel. I tried to imagine what manner of things such large statues could be; I longed for one sight of the faces, said to be so superb, which showed what the great Rameses looked like. Mamma and papa could see them, that was a great joy. Belzoni was one of my prime favourites; and I liked particularly to travel with him, both there and at the Tombs of the Kings. There were some engravings scattered through the various volumes, and a good many plans, which helped me. I studied them faithfully, and got from them all they could give me.

In the Tombs of the Kings, my childish imagination found, I think, its highest point of revelling and delight. Those were something stranger, more wonderful, and more splendid, even than Abou-Simbel and Karnak. Many an evening, while the firelight from a Southern pine knot danced on my page, I was gone on the wings of fancy thousands of miles away; and went with discoverers or explorers up and down the passages and halls and staircases and chambers, to which the entrance is from *Biban el Malook*. I wandered over the empty sarcophagi; held my breath at the pit's sides; and was never tired of going over the scenes and sculptures done in such brilliant colours upon those white walls. Once in there, I quite forgot that mamma and papa could see them; I was so busy seeing them myself.

This amusement of mine was one which nobody interfered with, and it lasted, as I said, all winter. All the winter my father and mother were in Egypt. When spring came, I began to look with trembling eagerness for a letter that should say they would turn now homewards. I was disappointed. My father was so much better that his physicians were encouraged to continuing their travelling regimen; and the word came that it was thought best he should try a long sea voyage--he was going to China, my mother would go with him.

I think never in my life my spirits sank lower than they did when I heard this news. I was not strong nor very well, which might have been in part the reason. And I was dull-hearted to the last degree under the influence of Miss Pinshon's system of management. There was no power of reaction in me. It was plain that I was failing; and my aunt interrupted the lessons, and took me again to watering-places at the North, from one to another, giving me as much change as possible. It was good for me to be taken off study, which Miss Pinshon had pressed and crowded during the winter. Sea bathing did me good, too; and the change of scene and habits was useful. I did not rise to the level of enjoying anything much; only the sea waves when I was in them; at other times I sat on the bank and watched the distant smokestack of a steamer going out, with an inexpressible longing and soreness of heart. Going where I would

so like to go! But there was no word of that. And indeed it would not have been advisable to take me to China. I did think Egypt would not have been bad for me; but it was a thought which I kept shut up in the farthest stores of my heart.

The sea voyage however was delayed. My mother took sick, was very ill, and then unable to undertake the going to China. My father chose to wait for her; so the summer was spent by them in Switzerland and the autumn in Paris. With the first of the New Year they expected now to sail. It suddenly entered my Aunt Gary's head that it was a good time for *her* to see Paris; and she departed, taking Ransom with her, whom my father wished to place in a German university, and meantime in a French school. Preston had been placed at the Military Academy at West Point, my aunt thinking that it made a nice finishing of a gentleman's education, and would keep him out of mischief till he was grown to man's estate. I was left alone with Miss Pinshon to go back to Magnolia and take up my old life there.



CHAPTER VII.

SINGLEHANDED.

AS my aunt set sail for the shores of Europe, and Miss Pinshon and I turned our faces towards Magnolia, I seemed to see before me a weary winter. I was alone now; there was nobody to take my part in small or great things; my governess would have her way. I was so much stronger now that no doubt she thought I could bear it. So it was. The full tale of studies and tasks was laid on me; and it lay on me from morning till night.

I had expected that. I had looked also for the comfort and refreshment of ministering to my poor friends in the kitchen on the Sunday evenings. I began as usual with them. But as the Sundays came round, I found now and then a gap or two in the circle; and the gaps as time went on did not fill up; or if they did they were succeeded by other gaps. My hearers grew fewer, instead of more; the fact was undoubted. Darry was always on the spot; but the two Jems not always, and Pete was not sure, and Eliza failed sometimes, and others; and this grew worse. Moreover, a certain grave and sad air replaced the enjoying, almost jocund, spirit of gladness which used to welcome me and listen to the reading and join in the prayers and raise the song. The singing was not less good than it used to be; but it fell oftener into the minor key, and then poured along with a steady, powerful volume, deepening and steadying as it went, which somehow swept over my heart like a wind from the desert. I could not well tell why, yet I felt it trouble me; sometimes my heart trembled with the thrill of those sweet and solemn vibrations. I fancied that Darry's prayer had a somewhat different atmosphere from the old. Yet when I once or twice asked Margaret the next morning why such and such a one had not been at the reading, she gave me a careless answer, that she supposed Mr. Edwards had found something for them to do.

"But at night, Margaret?" I said. "Mr. Edwards cannot keep them at work at night."

To which she made no answer; and I was for some reason unwilling to press the matter. But things went on, not getting better but worse until I could not bear it. I watched my opportunity and got Maria alone.

"What is the matter," I asked, "that the people do not come on Sunday evening as they used? Are they tired of the reading, Maria?"

"I 'spect dey's as tired as a fish mus' be of de water," said Maria. She had a fine specimen under her hand at the moment, which I suppose suggested the figure.

"Then why do they not come as usual, Maria? there were only a few last night."

"Dere was so few, it was lonesome," said Maria.

"Then what is the reason?"

"Dere is more reasons for t'ings, den Maria can make out," she said thoughtfully. "Mebbe it's to make 'em love de priv'lege mo'."

"But what keeps them away, Maria? what hinders?"

"Chile, de Lord hab His angels, and de debil he hab his ministers; and dey takes all sorts o' shapes, de angels and de ministers too. I reckon dere's some work o' dat sort goin' on."

Maria spoke in a sort of sententious wisdom which did not satisfy me at all. I thought there was something behind.

"Who is doing the work, Maria?" I asked, after a minute.

"Miss Daisy," she said, "dere ain't no happenin' at all widout de Lord lets it happen. Dere is much contrary in dis world--fact, dere is; but I 'spect de Lord make it up to us by'm by."

And she turned her face full upon me with a smile of so much quiet resting in that truth, that for just a moment it silenced me.

"Miss Daisy ain't looking quite so peart as she use to look," Maria went on. But I slipped away from that diversion.

"Maria," I said, "you don't tell me what is the matter; and I wish to know. What keeps the people, Pete, and Eliza, and all, from coming? What hinders them, Maria? I wish to know."

Maria busied herself with her fish for a minute, turning and washing it; then, without looking up from her work, she

said, in a lowered tone,--

"Spect de overseer, he don't hab no favour to such ways and meetin's."

"But with *me*?" I said; "and with Aunt Gary's leave?"

"Spose he like to fix t'ings his own way," said Maria.

"Does he forbid them to come?" I asked.

"I reckon he do," she said, with a sigh.

Maria was very even-tempered, quiet, and wise, in her own way. Her sigh went through my heart. I stood thinking what plan I could take.

"De Lord is berry good, Miss Daisy," she said, cheerily, a moment after; "and dem dat love Him, dere can be no sort o' separation, no ways."

"Does Mr. Edwards forbid them *all* to come?" I asked. "For a good many do come."

"Spect he don't like de meetin's, nohow," said Maria.

"But does he tell all the people they must not come?"

"I reckon he make it oncomfor'ble for 'em," Maria answered gravely. "Dere is no end o' de mean ways o' sich folks. Know he ain't no gentleman, nohow!"

"What does he do, Maria?" I said, trembling, yet unable to keep back the question.

"He can do what he please, Miss Daisy," Maria said, in the same grave way. "'Cept de Lord above, dere no one can hinder--now massa so fur. Bes' pray de Lord, and mebbe He sen' His angel, some time."

Maria's fish was ready for the kettle; some of the other servants came in, and I went with a heavy heart up the stairs. "Massa so fur"--yes! I knew that; and Mr. Edwards knew it too. Once sailed for China, and it would be long, long, before my cry for help, in the shape of one of my little letters, could reach him and get back the answer. My heart felt heavy as if I could die, while I slowly mounted the stairs to my room. It was not only that trouble was brought upon my poor friends, nor even that their short enjoyment of the word of life was hindered and interrupted; above this and worse than this was the sense of *wrong* done to these helpless people, and done by my own father and mother. This sense was something too bitter for a child of my years to bear; it crushed me for a time. Our people had a right to the Bible as great as mine; a right to dispose of themselves as true as my father's right to dispose of himself. Christ, my Lord, had died for them as well as for me; and here was my father--*my father*--practically saying that they should not hear of it, nor know the message He had sent to them. And if anything could have made this more bitter to me, it was the consciousness that the *reason* of it all was that we might profit by it. Those unpaid hands wrought that our hands might be free to do nothing; those empty cabins were bare, in order that our houses might be full of every soft luxury; those unlettered minds were kept unlettered that the rarest of intellectual wealth might be poured into our treasury. I knew it. For I had written to my father once to beg his leave to establish schools, where the people on the plantation might be taught to read and write. He had sent a very kind answer, saying it was just like his little Daisy to wish such a thing, and that his wish was not against it, if it could be done; but that the laws of the State, and for wise reasons, forbade it. Greatly puzzled by this, I one day carried my puzzle to Preston. He laughed at me as usual, but at the same time explained that it would not be safe; for that if the slaves were allowed books and knowledge, they would soon not be content with their condition, and would be banding together to make themselves free. I knew all this, and I had been brooding over it; and now when the powerful hand of the overseer came in to hinder the little bit of good and comfort I was trying to give the people, my heart was set on fire with a sense of sorrow and wrong that, as I said, no child ought ever to know.

I think it made me ill. I could not eat. I studied like a machine, and went and came as Miss Pinshon bade me; all the while brooding by myself and turning over and over in my heart the furrows of thought which seemed at first to promise no harvest. Yet those furrows never break the soil for nothing. In due time the seed fell; and the fruit of a ripened purpose came to maturity.

I did not give up my Sunday readings, even although the number of my hearers grew scantier. As many as could, we met together to read and to pray, yes, and to sing. And I shall never in this world hear such singing again. One refrain comes back to me now--

"Oh, had I the wings of the morning--

Oh, had I the wings of the morning--
Oh, had I the wings of the morning--
I'd fly to my Jesus away!"

I used to feel so too, as I listened and sometimes sung with them.

Meantime, all that I could do with my quarterly ten dollars, I did. And there was many a little bit of pleasure I could give; what with a tulip here and a cup of tea there, and a bright handkerchief, or a pair of shoes. Few of the people had spirit and cultivation enough to care for the flowers. But Maria cherished some red and white tulips and a hyacinth in her kitchen window, as if they had been her children; and to Darry a white rose-tree I had given him seemed almost to take the place of a familiar spirit. Even grave Pete, whom I only saw now and then this winter at my readings, nursed and tended and watched a bed of crocuses with endless delight and care. All the while, my Sunday circle of friends grew constantly fewer; and the songs that were sung at our hindered meetings had a spirit in them, which seemed to me to speak of a deep-lying fire somewhere in the hearts of the singers, hidden, but always ready to burst into a blaze. Was it because the fire was burning in my own heart?

I met one of the two Jems in the pine-avenue one day. He greeted me with the pleasantest of broad smiles.

"Jem," said I, "why don't you come to the house Sunday evenings any more?"

"It don't 'pear practical, missie." Jem was given to large-sized words, when he could get hold of them.

"Mr. Edwards hinders you?"

"Mass' Ed'ards berry smart man, Miss Daisy. He want massa's work done up all jus' so."

"And he says that the prayer-meeting hinders the work, Jem?"

"Clar, missis, Mass' Ed'ards got long head; he see furder den me," Jem said, shaking his own head as if the whole thing were beyond him. I let him go. But a day or two after I attacked Margaret on the subject. She and Jem, I knew, were particular friends. Margaret was oracular and mysterious, and looked like a thundercloud. I got nothing from her, except an increase of uneasiness. I was afraid to go further in my inquiries; yet could not rest without. The house servants, I knew, would not be likely to tell me anything that would trouble me if they could help it. The only exception was mammy Theresa; who with all her love for me had either less tact, or had grown from long habit hardened to the state of things in which she had been brought up. From her, by a little cross questioning, I learned that Jem and others had been forbidden to come to the Sunday readings; and their disobeying had been visited with the lash, not once nor twice; till, as mammy Theresa said, "'peared like it warn't no use to try to be good agin de devil."

And papa was away on his voyage to China--away on the high seas, where no letter could reach him; and Mr. Edwards knew that. There was a fire in my heart now that burned with sharp pain. I felt as if it would burn my heart out. And now took shape and form one single aim and purpose, which became for years the foremost one of my life. It had been growing and gathering. I set it clear before me from this time.

Meanwhile, my mother's daughter was not willing to be entirely baffled by the overseer. I arranged with Darry that I would be at the cemetery-hill on all pleasant Sunday afternoons, and that all who wished to hear me read, or who wished to learn themselves, might meet me there. The Sunday afternoons were often pleasant that winter. I was constantly at my post; and many a one crept round to me from the quarters and made his way through the graves and the trees to where I sat by the iron railing. We were safe there. Nobody but me liked the place. Miss Pinshon and the overseer agreed in shunning it. And there was promise in the blue sky, and hope in the soft sunshine, and sympathy in the sweet rustle of the pine-leaves. Why not? Are they not all God's voices? And the words of the Book were very precious there, to me and many another. I was rather more left to myself of late. My governess gave me my lessons quite as assiduously as ever; but after lesson-time she seemed to have something else to take her attention. She did not walk often with me as the spring drew near; and my Sunday afternoons were absolutely unquestioned.

One day in March I had gone to my favourite place to get out a lesson. It was not Sunday afternoon, of course. I was tired with my day's work, or I was not very strong; for though I had work to do, the witcheries of nature prevailed with me to put down my book. The scent of pine-buds and flowers made the air sweet to smell, and the spring sun made it delicious to feel. The light won its way tenderly among the trees, touching the white marble tombstones behind me, but resting with a more gentle ray upon the moss and turf where only little bits of rough board marked the sleeping-places of our dependants. Just out of sight, through the still air I could hear the river, in its rippling, flow past the bank at the top of which I sat. My book hung in my hand, and the course of Universal History was forgotten, while I mused and mused over the two sorts of graves that lay around me, the two races, the diverse fate that attended them, while one blue sky was over, and one sunlight fell down. And "while I was musing the fire burned" more fiercely than ever

David's had occasion when he wrote those words, "Then spake I with my tongue." I would have liked to do that. But I could do nothing; only pray.

I was very much startled while I sat in my muse to hear a footstep coming. A steady, regular footstep; no light trip of children; and the hands were in the field, and this was not a step like any of them. My first thought was, the overseer's come to spy me out. The next minute I saw through the trees and the iron railings behind me that it was not the overseer. I knew *his* wideawake; and this head was crowned with some sort of a cap. I turned my head again and sat quiet; willing to be overlooked, if that might be. The steps never slackened. I heard them coming round the railing--then just at the corner--I looked up to see the cap lifted, and a smile coming upon features that I knew; but my own thoughts were so very far away that my visitor had almost reached my side before I could recollect who it was. I remember I got up then in a little hurry.

"It is Doctor Sandford!" I exclaimed, as his hand took mine.

"Is it, Daisy?" answered the doctor.

"I think so," I said.

"And I *think* so," he said, looking at me after the old fashion. "Sit down, and let me make sure."

"You must sit on the grass, then," I said.

"Not a bad thing, in such a pleasant place," he rejoined, sending his blue eye all round my prospect. "But it is not so pleasant a place as White Lake, Daisy."

Such a flood of memories and happy associations came rushing into my mind at these words--he had not given them time to come in slowly. I suppose my face showed it, for the doctor looked at me and smiled as he said, "I see it *is* Daisy; I think it is certainly Daisy. So you do not like Magnolia?"

"Yes, I do," I said, wondering where he got that conclusion. "I like the *place* very much, if----"

"I should like to have the finishing of that 'if--if you have no objection."

"I like the *place*," I repeated. "There are some things about it I do not like."

"Climate, perhaps?"

"I did not mean the climate. I do not think I meant anything that belonged to the place itself."

"How do you do?" was the doctor's next question.

"I am very well, sir."

"How do you know it?"

"I suppose I am," I said. "I am not sick. I always say I am well."

"For instance, you are so well that you never get tired?"

"Oh I get tired very often. I always did."

"What sort of things make you tired? Do you take too long drives in your pony-chaise?"

"I have no pony-chaise now, Dr. Sandford. Loupe was left at Melbourne. I don't know what became of him."

"Why didn't you bring him along? But any other pony would do, Daisy."

"I don't drive at all, Dr. Sandford. My aunt and governess do not like to have me drive as I used to do. I wish I could!"

"You would like to use your pony and chaise again?"

"Very much. I know it would rest me."

"And you have a governess, Daisy? That is something you had not at Melbourne."

"No," I said.

"A governess is a very nice thing," said the doctor, taking off his hat and leaning back against the iron railing, "if she knows properly how to set people to play."

"To play!" I echoed. "I don't know whether Miss Pinshon approves of play."

"Oh! She approves of work then, does she?"

"She likes work," I answered.

"Keeps you busy?"

"Most of the day, sir."

"The evenings you have to yourself?"

"Sometimes. Not always. Sometimes I cannot get through with my lessons, and they stretch on into the evening."

"How many lessons does this lady think a person of your age and capacity can manage in the twenty-four hours?" said the doctor, taking out his knife as he spoke and beginning to trim the thorns off a bit of sweetbriar he had cut. I stopped to make the reckoning.

"Give me the course of your day, Daisy. And by-the-by when does your day begin?"

"It begins at half past seven, Dr. Sandford."

"With breakfast?"

"No, sir. I have a recitation before breakfast."

"Please of what?"

"Miss Pinshon always begins with mathematics."

"As a bitters. Do you find that it gives you an appetite?"

By this time I was very near bursting into tears. The familiar voice and way, the old time they brought back, the contrasts they forced together, the different days of Melbourne and of my Southern home, the forms and voices of mamma and papa, they all came crowding and flitting before me. I was obliged to delay my answer. I knew that Dr. Sandford looked at me; then he went on in a very gentle way--

"Sweetbriar is sweet, Daisy,"--putting it to my nose. "I should like to know how long does mathematics last, before you are allowed to have coffee?"

"Mathematics only lasts half an hour. But then I have an hour of study in mental philosophy before breakfast. We breakfast at nine."

"It must take a great deal of coffee to wash down all that," said the doctor, lazily trimming his sweetbriar. "Don't you find that you are very hungry when you come to breakfast?"

"No, not generally," I said.

"How is that? where there is so much sharpening of the wits, people ought to be sharp otherwise."

"My wits do not get sharpened," I said, half laughing. "I think they get dull; and I am often dull altogether by breakfast time."

"What time in the day do you walk?"

"In the afternoon, when we have done with the schoolroom. But lately Miss Pinshon does not walk much."

"So you take the best of the day for philosophy?"

"No, sir, for mathematics."

"Oh! Well, Daisy, *after* philosophy and mathematics have both had their turn, what then?--when breakfast is over."

"Oh, they have two or three more turns in the course of the day," I said. "Astronomy comes after breakfast; then Smith's 'Wealth of Nations;' then chemistry. Then I have a long history lesson to recite; then French. After dinner we have natural philosophy, and physical geography and mathematics; and then we have generally done."

"And then what is left of you goes to walk," said the doctor.

"No, not very often now," I said. "I don't know why--Miss Pinshon has very much given up walking of late."

"Then what becomes of you?"

"I do not often want to do much of anything," I said. "To-day I came here."

"With a book," said the doctor. "Is it work or play?"

"My history lesson," I said, showing the book. "I had not quite time enough at home."

"How much of a lesson, for instance?" said the doctor, taking the book and turning over the leaves.

"I had to make a synopsis of the state of Europe from the third century to the tenth--synchronising the events and the names."

"In writing?"

"I might write it if I chose, I often do, but I had to give the synopsis from memory."

"Does it take long to prepare, Daisy?" said the doctor, still turning over the leaves.

"Pretty long," I said, "when I am stupid. Sometimes I *cannot* do the synchronising, my head gets so thick; and I have to take two or three days for it."

"Don't you get punished for letting your head get thick?"

"Sometimes I do."

"And what is the system of punishment at Magnolia for such deeds?"

"I am kept in the house for the rest of the afternoon sometimes," I said; "or I have an extra problem in mathematics to get out for the next morning."

"And *that* keeps you in, if the governess don't."

"Oh no," I said; "I never can work at it then. I get up earlier the next morning."

"Do you do nothing for exercise but those walks, which you do not take?"

"I used to ride last year," I said; "and this year I was stronger, and Miss Pinshon gave me more studies; and somehow I have not cared to ride so much. I have felt more like being still."

"You must have grown tremendously wise, Daisy," said the doctor, looking round at me now with his old pleasant smile. I cannot tell the pleasure and comfort it was to me to see him; but I think I said nothing.

"It is near the time now when you always leave Magnolia, is it not?"

"Very near now."

"Would it trouble you to have the time a little anticipated?"

I looked at him, in much doubt what this might mean. The doctor fumbled in his breast pocket and fetched out a letter.

"Just before your father sailed for China, he sent me this. It was some time before it reached me; and it was some time longer before I could act upon it."

He put a letter in my hand, which I, wondering, read. It said, the letter did, that papa was not at ease about me; that he was not satisfied with my aunt's report of me, nor with the style of my late letters; and begged Dr. Sandford would run down to Magnolia at his earliest convenience and see me, and make inquiry as to my well-being; and if he found things not satisfactory, as my father feared he might, and judge that the rule of Miss Pinshon had not been good for me on the whole, my father desired that Dr. Sandford would take measures to have me removed to the North and placed in one of the best schools there to be found; such a one as Mrs. Sandford might recommend. The letter further desired that Dr. Sandford would keep a regular watch over my health, and suffer no school training nor anything else to interfere with it; expressing the writer's confidence that Dr. Sandford knew better than any one what was good for me.

"So you see, Daisy," the doctor said, when I handed him back the letter, "your father has constituted me in some sort your guardian until such time as he comes back."

"I am very glad," I said, smiling.

"Are you? That is kind. I am going to act upon my authority immediately, and take you away."

"From Magnolia?" I said breathlessly.

"Yes. Wouldn't you like to go and see Melbourne again for a little while?"

"Melbourne!" said I; and I remember how my cheeks grew warm. "But--will Miss Pinshon go to Melbourne?"

"No; she will not. Nor anywhere else, Daisy, with my will and permission, where you go. Will that distress you very much?"

I could not say yes, and I believe I made no answer, my thoughts were in such a whirl.

"Is Mrs. Sandford in Melbourne--I mean, near Melbourne--now?" I asked at length.

"No, she is in Washington. But she will be going to the old place before long. Would you like to go, Daisy?"

I could hardly tell him. I could hardly think. It began to rush over me, that this parting from Magnolia was likely to be for a longer time than usual. The river murmured by--the sunlight shone on the groves on the hillside. Who would look after my poor people?

"You like Magnolia after all?" said the doctor. "I do not wonder, so far as Magnolia goes, you are sorry to leave it."

"No," I said, "I am not sorry at all to leave Magnolia; I am very glad. I am only sorry to leave--some friends."

"Friends?" said the doctor.

"Yes."

"How many friends?"

"I don't know," said I. "I think there are a hundred or more."

"Seriously?"

"Oh yes," I said. "They are all on the place here."

"How long will you want, Daisy, to take proper leave of these friends?"

I had no idea he was in such practical haste; but I found it was so.



CHAPTER VIII.

EGYPTIAN GLASS.

IT became necessary for me to think how soon I could be ready, and arrange to get my leave-takings over by a certain time. Dr. Sandford could not wait for me. He was an army surgeon now, I found, and stationed at Washington. He had to return to his post and leave Miss Pinshon to bring me up to Washington. I fancy matters were easily arranged with Miss Pinshon. She was as meek as a lamb. But it never was her way to fight against circumstances. The doctor ordered that I should come up to Washington in a week or two.

I did not know till he was gone what a hard week it was going to be.

As soon as he had turned his back upon Magnolia, my leave-takings began. I may say they began sooner; for in the morning after his arrival, when Margaret was in my room, she fell to questioning me about the truth of the rumour that had reached the kitchen. Jem said I was going away, not to come back. I do not know how he had got hold of the notion. And when I told her it was true, she dropped the pine splinters out of her hands, and rising to her feet, besought me that I would take her with me. So eagerly she besought me, that I had much difficulty to answer.

"I shall be in a school, Margaret," I said. "I could not have anybody there to wait on me."

"Miss Daisy won't never do everything for herself?"

"Yes, I must," I said. "All the girls do."

"I'd hire out then, Miss Daisy, while you don't want me--I'd be right smart--and I'd bring all my earnin's to you regular. 'Deed I will! Till Miss Daisy want me herself."

I felt my cheeks flush. She would bring *her* earnings to *me*. Yes, that was what we were doing.

"'Clar, Miss Daisy, do don't leave me behind! I could take washin' and do all Miss Daisy's things up right smart--don't believe they knows how to do things up there!--I'll come to no good if I don't go with Miss Daisy, sure."

"You can be good here as well as anywhere, Margaret," I said.

"Miss Daisy don' know. Miss Daisy, s'pose the devil walkin' round about a place; think it a nice place fur to be good in?"

"The devil is not in Magnolia more than anywhere else," I said.

"Dere Mass' Edwards--" Margaret said half under her breath. Even in my room she would not speak the name out loud.

The end of it was, that I wrote up to Washington to Dr. Sandford to ask if I might take the girl with me; and his answer came back, that if it were any pleasure to me I certainly might. So that matter was settled. But the parting with the rest was hard. I do not know whether it was hardest for them or for me. Darry blessed me and prayed for me. Maria wept over me. Theresa mourned and lamented. Tears and wailings came from all the poor women who knew me best and used to come to the Sunday readings; and Pete took occasion to make private request, that when I was grown, or when at any time I should want a manservant, I would remember and send for him. He could do anything, he said; he could drive horses or milk cows or take care of a garden, or *cook*. It was said in a subdued voice, and though with a gleam of his white circle of teeth at the last-mentioned accomplishment, it was said with a depth of grave earnestness which troubled me. I promised as well as I could; but my heart was very sore for my poor people, left now without anybody, even so much as a child, to look after their comfort and give them any hopes for one world or the other.

Those heavy days were done at last. Margaret was speedy with my packing; a week from the time of Dr. Sandford's coming, I had said my last lesson to Miss Pinshon, read my last reading to my poor people, shaken the last handshakings; and we were on the little steamer plying down the Sands river.

I think I was wearied out, for I remember no excitement or interest about the journey, which ought to have had so much for me. In a passive state of mind I followed Miss Pinshon from steamer to station; from one train of cars to another; and saw the familiar landscape flit before me as the cars whirled us on. At Baytown we had been joined by a gentleman who went with us all the rest of the way; and I began by degrees to comprehend that my governess had changed her vocation, and instead of taking care, as heretofore, was going to be taken care of. It did not interest me. I saw it, that was all. I saw Margaret's delight, too, shown by every quick and thoughtful movement that could be of any service to me, and by a certain inexpressible air of deliverance which sat on her, I cannot tell how, from her bonnet down to her

shoes. But her delight reminded me of those that were not delivered.

I think of all the crushing griefs that a young person can be called to bear, one of the sorest is the feeling of wrongdoing on the part of a beloved father or mother. I was sure that my father, blinded by old habit and bound by the laws of the country, did not in the least degree realise the true state of the matter. I knew that the real colour of his gold had never been seen by him. Not the less, *I* knew now that it was bloody; and what was worse, though I do not know *why* it should be worse, I knew that it was soiled. I knew that greed and dishonour were the two collectors of our revenue, and *wrong* our agent. Do I use strong words? They are not too strong for the feelings which constantly bore upon my heart, nor too bitter; though my childish heart never put them into such words at the time. That my father did not know, saved my love and reverence for him; but it did not change anything else.

In the last stage of our journey, as we left a station where the train had stopped, I noticed a little book left on one of the empty seats of the car. It lay there and nobody touched it: till we were leaving the car at Alexandria and almost everybody had gone out, and I saw that it lay there still and nobody would claim it. In passing I took it up. It was a neat little book, with gilt edges, no name in it, and having its pages numbered for the days of the year. And each page was full of Bible words. It looked nice. I put the book in my pocket; and on board the ferry-boat opened it again, and looked for the date of the day in March where we were. I found the words--"He preserveth the way of his saints." They were the words heading the page. I had not time for another bit; but as I left the boat this went into my heart like a cordial.

It was a damp, dark morning. The air was chill as we left the little boat cabin; the streets were dirty; there was a confusion of people seeking carriages or porters or baggage or custom; then suddenly I felt as if I had lighted on a tower of strength, for Dr. Sandford stood at my side. A good-humoured sort of a tower he looked to me, in his steady, upright bearing; and his military coat helped the impression of that. I can see now his touch of his cap to Miss Pinshon, and then the quick glance which took in Margaret and me. In another minute I had shaken hands with my governess, and was in a carriage with Margaret opposite me; and Dr. Sandford was giving my baggage in charge to somebody. And then he took his place beside me and we drove off. And I drew a long breath.

"Punctual to your time, Daisy," said the doctor. "But what made you choose such a time? How much of yourself have you left by the way?"

"Miss Pinshon liked better to travel all night," I said, "because there was no place where she liked to stop to spend the night."

"What was your opinion on that subject?"

"I was more tired than she was, I suppose."

"Has she managed things on the same system for the four years past?"

The doctor put the question with such a cool gravity, that I could not help laughing. Yet I believe my laughing was very near crying. At first he did so put me in mind of all that was about me when I used to see him in that time long before. And an inexpressible feeling of comfort was in his presence now; a feeling of being taken care of. I had been looked after, undoubtedly, all these years--sharply looked after; there was never a night that I could go to sleep without my governess coming in to see that I was in my room, or in bed, and my clothes in order, and my light where it ought to be. And my aunt had not forgotten me, nor her perplexities about me. And Preston had petted me when he was near. But even Preston sometimes lost sight of me in the urgency of his own pleasure or business. There was a great difference in the strong hand of Dr. Sandford's care; and if you had ever looked into his blue eyes, you would know that they forgot nothing. They had always fascinated me; they did now.

Mrs. Sandford was not up when we got to the house where she was staying. It was no matter, for a room was ready for me; and Dr. Sandford had a nice little breakfast brought, and saw me eat it, just as if I were a patient. Then he ordered me to bed, and charged Margaret to watch over me, and he went away, as he said, till luncheon time.

I drew two or three long breaths as Margaret was undressing me; I felt so comfortable.

"Are Miss Pinshon done gone away, Miss Daisy?" my handmaid asked.

"From Magnolia? yes."

"Where she gwine to?"

"I don't know."

"Then she don't go funder along the way we're goin'?"

"No. I wonder, Margaret, if they will have any prayer-meetings in Magnolia now?" For with the mention of Magnolia my thoughts swept back.

"Spect the overseer have his ugly old way!" Margaret uttered with great disgust. "Miss Daisy done promise me, I go 'long with Miss Daisy?" she added.

"Yes. But what makes *you* want to get away from home more than all the rest of them?"

"Reckon I'd done gone kill myself, s'pose Miss Daisy leave me there," the girl said gloomily. "If dey send me down South, I *would*."

"Send you South!" I said; "they would not do that, Margaret."

"Dere was man wantin' to buy me--give mighty high price, de overseer said." In excitement Margaret's tongue sometimes grew thick, like those of her neighbours.

"Mr. Edwards has no right to sell anybody away from the place," I insisted, in mixed unbelief and horror.

"Dunno," said Margaret. "Don't make no difference, Miss Daisy. Who care what he do? Dere's Pete's wife--"

"Pete's wife?" said I. "I didn't know Pete was married! What of Pete's wife?"

"Dat doctor will kill me, for sure!" said Margaret, looking at me. "Do, don't, Miss Daisy! The doctor say you must go right to bed, now. See! you ain't got your clothes off."

"Stop," said I. "What about Pete's wife?"

"I done forget. I thought Miss Daisy knowed. Mebbe it's before Miss Daisy come home."

"What?" said I. "What?"

"It's nothin', Miss Daisy. The overseer he done got mad with Pete's wife and he sold her down South, he did."

"Away from Pete?" said I.

"Pete, he's to de old place," said Margaret, laconically. "'Spect he forgot all about it by dis time. Miss Daisy please have her clothes off and go to bed?"

There was nothing more to wait for. I submitted, was undressed; but the rest and sleep which had been desired were far out of reach now. Pete's wife?--my good, strong, gentle, and I remembered always *grave*, Pete! My heart was on fire with indignation and torn to pieces with sorrow, both at once. Torn with the helpless feeling too that I could not mend the wrong. I do not mean this individual wrong, but the whole state of things under which such wrong was possible. I was restless on my bed, though very weary. I would rather have been up and doing something, than to lie and look at my trouble; only that being there kept me out of the way of seeing people and of talking. Such things done under my father and mother's own authority,--on their own land--to their own helpless dependants; whom yet it was *they* made helpless and kept subject to such possibilities. I turned and tossed, feeling that I *must* do something, while yet I knew I could do nothing. Pete's wife! And where was she now? And *that* was the secret of the unvarying grave shadow that Pete's brow always wore. And now that I had quitted Magnolia, no human friend for the present remained to all that crowd of poor and ignorant and needy humanity. Even their comfort of prayer forbidden; except such comfort as each believer might take by himself alone.

I did not know, I never did know till long after, how to many at Magnolia that prohibition wrought no harm. I think Margaret knew, and even then did not dare tell me. How the meetings for prayer were not stopped. How watch was kept on certain nights, till all stir had ceased in the little community; till lights were out in the overseer's house (and at the great house, while we were there); and how then, silently and softly from their several cabins, the people stole away through the woods to a little hill beyond the cemetery, quite far out of hearing or ken of anybody; and there prayed, and sang too, and "praised God and shouted," as my informant told me; not neglecting all the while to keep a picket watch about their meeting-place, to give the alarm in case anybody should come. So under the soft moonlight skies and at depth of night, the meetings which I had supposed broken up, took new life, and grew, and lived; and prayers did not fail; and the Lord hearkened and heard.

It would have comforted me greatly if I could have known this at the time. But, as I said, I supposed Margaret dared not tell me. After a long time of weary tossing and heartache, sleep came at last to me; but it brought Pete and his wife and the overseer and Margaret in new combinations of trouble; and I got little refreshment.

"Now you have waked up, Miss Daisy?" said Margaret when I opened my eyes. "That poundin' noise has done waked

you!"

"What noise?"

"It's no Christian noise," said Margaret. "What's the use of turnin' the house into a clap of thunder like that? But a man was makin' it o' purpose, for I went out to see; and he telled me it was to call folks to luncheon. Will you get up, Miss Daisy?"

Margaret spoke as if she thought I had much better lie still; but I was weary of the comfort I had found there and disposed to try something else. I had just time to be ready before Dr. Sandford came for me and took me to his sister-in-law. Mrs. Sandford welcomed me with great kindness, even tenderness; exclaimed at my growth; but I saw by her glance at the doctor that my appearance in other respects struck her unfavourably. He made no answer to that, but carried us off to the luncheon-room.

There were other people lodging in the house besides my friends; a long table was spread. Dr. Sandford, I saw, was an immense favourite. Questions and demands upon his attention came thick and fast from both ends and all sides of the table; about all sorts of subjects and in all manner of tones, grave and gay. And he was at home to them all, but in the midst of it never forgot me. He took careful heed to my luncheon; prepared one thing, and called for another; it reminded me of a time long gone by; but it did not help me to eat. I could not eat. The last thing he did was to call for a fresh raw egg, and break it into a half glass of milk. With this in his hand we left the dining-room. As soon as we got to Mrs. Sandford's parlour he gave it to me and ordered me to swallow it. I suppose I looked dismayed.

"Poor child!" said Mrs. Sandford. "Let me have it beaten up for her, Grant, with some sugar; she can't take it so."

"Daisy has done harder things," he said.

I saw he expected me to drink it, and so I did, I do not know how.

"Thank you," he said smiling, as he took the glass. "Now sit down and I will talk to you."

"How she is growing tall, Grant!" said Mrs. Sandford.

"Yes," said he. "Did you sleep well, Daisy?"

"No, sir; I couldn't sleep. And then I dreamed."

"Dreaming is not a proper way of resting. So tired you could not sleep?"

"I do not think it was that, Dr. Sandford."

"Do you know what it was?"

"I think I do," I said, a little unwillingly.

"She is getting very much the look of her mother," Mrs. Sandford remarked again. "Don't you see it, Grant?"

"I see more than that," he answered. "Daisy, do you think this governess of yours has been a good governess?"

I looked wearily out of the window, and cast a weary mental look over the four years of algebraics and philosophy at the bright little child I saw at the further end of them.

"I think I have grown dull, Dr. Sandford," I said.

He came up behind me, and put his arms round me, taking my hand in his, and spoke in quite a different tone.

"Daisy, have you found many 'wonderful things' at Magnolia?"

I looked up, I remember, with the eagerness of a heart full of thoughts, in his face; but I could not speak then.

"Have you looked through a microscope since you have been there, and made discoveries?"

"Not in natural things, Dr. Sandford."

"Ha!" said the doctor. "Do you want to go and take a drive with me?"

"Oh yes!"

"Go and get ready then, please."

I had a very pleasant, quiet drive; the doctor showing me, as he said, not wonderful things but new things, and taking

means to amuse me. And every day for several days I had a drive. Sometimes we went to the country, sometimes got out and examined something in the city. There was a soothing relief in it all, and in the watchful care taken of me at home, and the absence of mathematics and philosophy. All day when not driving or at meals, I lay on Mrs. Sandford's sofa or curled myself up in the depth of a great easy-chair, and turned over her books; or studied my own blue book which I had picked up in the car, and which was so little I had Margaret to make a big pocket in my frock to hold it. But this life was not to last. A few days was all Mrs. Sandford had to spend in Washington.

The place I liked best to go to was the Capitol. Several times Dr. Sandford took me there, and showed me the various great rooms, and paintings, and smaller rooms with their beautiful adornments; and I watched the workmen at work; for the renewing of the building was not yet finished. As long as he had time to spare, Dr. Sandford let me amuse myself as I would; and often got me into talks which refreshed me more than anything. Still, though I was soothed, my trouble at heart was not gone. One day we were sitting looking at the pictures in the great vestibule, when Dr. Sandford suddenly started a subject which put the Capitol out of my head.

"Daisy," said he, "was it your wish or Margaret's, that she should go North with you?"

"Hers," I said, startled.

"Then it is not yours particularly."

"Yes, it is, Dr. Sandford, *very* particularly."

"How is that?" said he.

I hesitated. I shrank from the whole subject; it was so extremely sore to me.

"I ought to warn you," he went on, "that if you take her further, she may, if she likes, leave you, and claim her freedom. That is the law. If her owner takes her into the free States, she may remain in them if she will, whether he does or not."

I was silent still, for the whole thing choked me. I was quite willing she should have her freedom, get it any way she could; but there was my father, and his pleasure and interest, which might not choose to lose a piece of his property; and my mother and *her* interest and pleasure; I knew what both would be. I was dumb.

"You had not thought of this before?" the doctor went on.

"No, sir."

"Does it not change your mind about taking her on?"

"No, sir."

"Did it ever occur to you, or rather, does it not occur to you now, that the girl's design in coming may have been this very purpose of her freedom?"

"I do not think it was," I said.

"Even if not, it will be surely put in her head by other people before she has been at the North long; and she will know that she is her own mistress."

I was silent still. I knew that I wished she might.

"Do you think," Dr. Sandford went on, "that in this view of the case we had better send her back to Magnolia when you leave Washington?"

"No," I said.

"I think it would be better," he repeated.

"Oh, no!" I said. "Oh, no, Dr. Sandford. I can't send her back. You will not send her back, will you?"

"Be quiet," he said, holding fast the hand which in my earnestness I had put in his; "she is not my servant; she is yours; it is for you to say what you will do."

"I will not send her back," I said.

"But it may be right to consider what would be Mr. Randolph's wish on the subject. If you take her, he may lose several hundred dollars' worth of property: it is right for me to warn you. Would he choose to run the risk?"

I remember now what a fire at my heart sent the blood to my face. But with my hand in Dr. Sandford's, and those blue

eyes of his reading me, I could not keep back my thought.

"She ought to be her own mistress," I said.

A brilliant flash of expression filled the blue eyes and crossed his face--I could hardly tell what, before it was gone. Quick surprise--pleasure--amusement--agreement; the first and the two last certainly; and the pleasure I could not help fancying had lent its colour to that ray of light which had shot for one instant from those impenetrable eyes. He spoke just as usual.

"But, Daisy, have you studied this question?"

"I think I have studied nothing else, Dr. Sandford."

"You know the girl is not yours, but your father's."

"She isn't anybody's," I said slowly, and with slow tears gathering in my heart.

"How do you mean?" said he, with again the quiver of a smile upon his lips.

"I mean," I said, struggling with my thoughts and myself, "I mean that nobody could have a right to her."

"Did not her parents belong to your father?"

"To my mother."

"Then she does."

"But, Dr. Sandford," I said, "nobody *can* belong to anybody--in that way."

"How do you make it out, Daisy?"

"Because nobody can give anybody a *right* to anybody else in that way."

"Does it not give your mother a right, that the mother of this girl and her grandmother were the property of your ancestors?"

"They could not be their property justly," I said, glad to get back to my ancestors.

"The law made it so."

"Not God's law, Dr. Sandford," I said, looking up at him.

"No? Does not that law give a man a right to what he has honestly bought?"

"No," I said, "it *can't*--not if it has been dishonestly sold."

"Explain, Daisy," said Dr. Sandford, very quietly; but I saw the gleam of that light in his eye again. I had gone too far to stop. I went on, ready to break my heart over the right and wrong I was separating.

"I mean, the *first* people that sold the first of these coloured people," I said.

"Well?" said the doctor.

"They could not have a right to sell them."

"Yes. Well?"

"Then the people that bought them could not have a right, any more," I said.

"But, Daisy," said Dr. Sandford, "do you know that there are different opinions on this very point?"

I was silent. It made no difference to me.

"Suppose for the moment that the first people, as you say, had no precise right to sell the men and women they brought to this country; yet those who bought them and paid honest money for them, and possessed them from generation to generation--had not *they* a right to pass them off upon other hands, receiving their money back again?"

"I don't know how to explain it," I said. "I mean--if at first--Dr. Sandford, hadn't the people that were sold, hadn't they rights too?"

"Rights of what sort?"

"A right to do what they liked with themselves, and to earn money, and to keep their wives?"

"But those rights were lost, you know, Daisy."

"But *could* they be?" I said. "I mean--Dr. Sandford, for instance, suppose somebody stole your watch from you; would you lose the right to it?"

"It *seems* to me that I should not, Daisy."

"That is what I mean," I said.

"But there is another view of the case, Daisy. Take Margaret, for instance. From the time she was a child, your father's, or your mother's money has gone to support her; her food and clothing and living have been wholly at their expense. Does not that give them a right to her services? ought they not to be repaid?"

I did not want to speak of my father and mother and Margaret. It was coming too near home. I knew the food and clothing Dr. Sandford spoke of; I knew a very few months of a Northern servant's wages would have paid for it all; was this girl's whole life to be taken from her, and by my father and mother, and for such a cause? The feeling of grief and wrong and shame got possession of me. I was ready to break my heart in tears; but I could not show Dr. Sandford what I felt, nor confess to what I thought of my father's action. I had the greatest struggle with myself not to give way and cry. I was very weak bodily, but I know I stood still and did not shed a tear; till I felt Dr. Sandford's hands take hold of me. They put me gently back in the chair from which I had risen.

"What is the matter, Daisy?" he said.

I would not speak, and he did not urge it; but I saw that he watched me till I gained command of myself again.

"Shall we go home now?" he asked.

"In a minute. Dr. Sandford, I do not think papa knows about all this--I do not think he knows about it as I do. I am sure he does not; and when he knows he will think as I do."

"Or perhaps you will think as he does."

I was silent. I wondered if that could be possible--if I too could have my eyes blinded as I saw other people's were.

"Little Daisy," said my friend the doctor, "but you are getting to be not *little* Daisy. How old are you?"

"I shall be fourteen in June."

"Fourteen. Well, it is no wonder that my friend whom I left a philosopher at ten years old, I should find a woman at fourteen; but Daisy, you must not take it on your heart that you have to teach all the ignorant and help all the distressed that come in your way; because simply you cannot do it."

I looked up at him. I could not tell him what I thought, because he would not, I feared, understand it. Christ came to do just such work, and His servants must have it on their hearts to do the same. I cannot tell what was in my look, but I thought the doctor's face changed.

"One Molly Skelton will do for one four years," he said as he rose up. "Come, Daisy."

"But, Dr. Sandford," I said, as I followed him, "you will not do anything about sending Margaret back?"

"Nothing, till you do, Daisy."

Arrived at home, the doctor made me drink a raw egg, and lie down on Mrs. Sandford's sofa; and he sat down and looked at me.

"You are the most troublesome patient that ever I had," said he.

"I am?" I exclaimed.

"Yes. Quite innocently. You cannot help it, Daisy; and you need not be troubled about it. It is all in the way of my profession. It is as if a delicate vessel of Egyptian glass were put to do the work of an iron smelting furnace; and I have to think of all the possible bands and hardening appliances that can be brought into use for the occasion."

"I do not understand," I said.

"No; I suppose not. That is the worst of it."

"But why am I an *Egyptian* glass?" I asked. "I am not very old."

The doctor gave me one of those quick, bright glances and smiles that were very pleasant to get from him and not very common. There came a sort of glow and sparkle in his blue eye then, and a wonderful winsome and gracious trick of the lips.

"It is a very doubtful sort of a compliment," said Mrs. Sandford.

"I did not mean it for a compliment at all," said the doctor.

"I don't believe you did," said his sister; "but what *did* you mean? Grant, I should like to hear you pay a compliment for once."

"You do not know Egyptian glass," said the doctor.

"No. What was it?"

"Very curious."

"Didn't I say that you couldn't pay compliments?" said Mrs. Sandford.

"And unlike any that is made nowadays. There were curious patterns wrought in the glass, made, it is supposed, by the fusing together of rods of glass, extremely minute, of different colours; so that the pattern once formed was ineffaceable and indestructible, unless by the destruction of the vessel which contained it. Sometimes a layer of gold was introduced between the layers of glass."

"How very curious!" said Mrs. Sandford.

"I think I must take you into consultation, Daisy," the doctor went on, turning to me. "It is found that there must be a little delay before you can go up to take a look at Melbourne. Mrs. Sandford is obliged to stop in New York with a sick sister; how long she may be kept there it is impossible to say. Now you would have a dull time, I am afraid; and I am in doubt whether it would not be pleasanter for you to enter school at once. In about three months the school term will end and the summer vacation begin; by that time Mrs. Sandford will be at home and the country ready to receive you. But you shall do whichever you like best."

"Mrs. Sandford will be in New York," I said.

"Yes."

"And I would see you constantly, dear, and have you with me all the Saturdays and Sundays and holidays. And if you like it better, you shall be with me all the time; only I should be obliged to leave you alone too much."

"How long does the summer vacation last?" I inquired.

"Till some time in September. You can enter school now or then, as you choose."

I thought and hesitated, and said I would enter at once. Dr. Sandford said I was not fit for it, but it was on the whole the best plan. So it was arranged, that I should just wait a day or two in New York to get my wardrobe in order and then begin my school experience.

But my thoughts went back afterwards, more than once, to the former conversation; and I wondered what it was about me that made Dr. Sandford liken me to Egyptian glass.



CHAPTER IX.

SHOPPING.

I T was settled that I should wait a day or two in New York to get my wardrobe arranged, and then begin my school experience. But when we got to New York, we found Mrs. Sandford's sister so ill as to claim her whole time. There was none to spare for me and my wardrobe. Mrs. Sandford said I must attend to it myself as well as I could, and the doctor would go with me. He was off duty, he reported, and at leisure for ladies' affairs. Mrs. Sandford told me what I would need. A warm school dress, she said; for the days would be often cold in this latitude until May, and even later; and schoolrooms not always warm. A warm dress for every day was the first thing. A fine merino, Mrs. Sandford said, would be, she thought, what my mother would choose. I had silks which might be warm enough for other occasions. Then I must have a thick coat or cloak. Long coats, with sleeves, were fashionable then, she told me; the doctor would take me where I would find plenty to choose from. And I needed a hat, or a bonnet. Unless, Mrs. Sandford said, I chose to wear my riding-cap with the feather; that was warm, and very pretty, and would do.

How much would it all cost? I asked. Mrs. Sandford made a rapid calculation. The merino would be two dollars a yard, she said; the coat might be got for thirty-five or thereabouts sufficiently good; the hat was entirely what I chose to make it. "But you know, my dear," Mrs. Sandford said, "the sort of quality and style your mother likes, and you will be guided by that."

Must I be guided by that?--I questioned with myself. Yes, I knew. I knew very well; but I had other things to think of. I pondered. While I was pondering, Dr. Sandford was quietly opening his pocket-book and unfolding a roll of bills. He put a number of them into my hand.

"That will cover it all, Daisy," he said. "It is money your father has made over to my keeping, for this and similar purposes."

"Oh, thank you!" I said, breathless; and then I counted the bills. "Oh, thank you, Dr. Sandford: but may I spend all this?"

"Certainly. Mr. Randolph desired it should go, this and more of it, to your expenses, of whatever kind. This covers my sister's estimate, and leaves something for your pocket besides."

"And when shall we go?" I asked.

"To spend it? Now, if you like. Why, Daisy, I did not know--"

"What, sir?" I said as he paused.

"Really, nothing," he said, smiling. "Somehow I had not fancied that you shared the passion of your sex for what they call *shopping*. You are all alike in some things."

"I like it very much to-day," I said.

"It would be safe for you to keep Daisy's money in your own pocket, Grant," Mrs. Sandford said. "It will be stolen from her, certainly."

The doctor smiled and stretched out his hand; I put the bills into it: and away we went. My head was very busy. I knew, as Mrs. Sandford said, the sort and style of purchases my mother would make and approve; but then on the other hand the remembrance was burnt into me, whence that money came which I was expected to spend so freely, and what other uses and calls for it there were, even in the case of those very people whose hands had earned it for us. Not to go further, Margaret's wardrobe needed refitting quite as much as mine. She was quite as unaccustomed as I to the chills and blasts of a cold climate, and fully as unfurnished to meet them. I had seen her draw her thin checked shawl around her, when I knew it was not enough to save her from the weather, and that she had no more. And her gowns, of thin cotton stuff, such as she wore about her housework at Magnolia, were a bare provision against the nipping bite of the air here at the North. Yet nobody spoke of any addition to *her* stock of clothes. It was on my heart alone. But now it was in my hand too, and I felt very glad; though just how to manage Dr. Sandford I did not know. I thought a great deal about the whole matter as we went through the streets; as I had also thought long before; and my mind was clear, that while so many whom I knew needed the money, or while *any* whom I knew needed it, I would spend no useless dollars upon myself. How should I manage Dr. Sandford? There he was, my cash-keeper; and I had not the least wish to unfold my plans to him.

"I suppose the dress is the first thing, Daisy," he said, as we entered the great establishment where everything was to be had; and he inquired for the counter where we should find merinoes. I had no objection ready.

"What colour, Daisy?"

"I want something quiet," I said.

"Something dark," said the doctor, seating himself. "And fine quality. Not green, Daisy, if I might advise. It is too cold."

"Cold!" said I.

"For this season. It is a very nice colour in summer, Daisy," he said, smiling.

And he looked on in a kind of amused way, while the clerk of the merinoes and I confronted each other. There was displayed now before me a piece of claret-coloured stuff, dark and bright; a lovely tint and a very beautiful piece of goods. I knew enough of the matter to know that. Fine and thick and lustrous, it just suited my fancy; I knew it was just what my mother would buy; I saw Dr. Sandford's eye watch me in its amusement with a glance of expectation. But the stuff was two dollars and a quarter a yard. Yes, it suited me exactly; but what was to become of others if I were covered so luxuriously? And how could I save money if I spent it? It was hard to speak, too, before that shopman, who held the merino in his hand, expecting me to say I would take it; but I had no way to escape that trouble. I turned from the rich folds of claret stuff to the doctor at my side.

"Dr. Sandford," I said, "I want to get something that will not cost so much."

"Does it not please you?" he asked.

"Yes; I like it: but I want some stuff that will not cost so much."

"This is not far above my sister's estimate, Daisy."

"No--" I said.

"And the difference is a trifle--if you like the piece."

"I like it," I said; "but it is very much above *my* estimate."

"You had one of your own!" said the doctor. "Do you like something else here better?--or what is your estimate, Daisy?"

"I do not want a poor merino," I said. "I would rather get some other stuff--if I can. I do not want to give more than a dollar."

"The young lady may find what will suit her at the plaid counter," said the shopman, letting fall the rich drapery he had been holding up. "Just round that corner, sir, to the left."

Dr. Sandford led the way, and I followed. There certainly I found plenty of warm stuffs, in various patterns and colours, and with prices as various. But nothing to match the grave elegance of those claret folds. It was coming down a step, to leave that counter for this. I knew it perfectly well; while I sought out the simplest and prettiest dark small plaid I could find.

"Do you like these things better?" the doctor asked me privately.

"No, sir," I said.

"Then why come here, Daisy? Pardon me, may I ask?"

"I have other things to get, Dr. Sandford," I said low.

"But Daisy!" said the doctor, rousing up, "I have performed my part ill. You are not restricted--your father has not restricted you. I am your banker for whatever sums you may need--for whatever purposes."

"Yes," I said, "I know. Oh no, I know papa has not restricted you; but I think I ought not to spend any more. It is my own affair."

"And not mine. Pardon me, Daisy; I submit."

"Please, Dr. Sandford, don't speak so!" I said. "I don't mean that. I mean, it is my own affair and not papa's."

"Certainly, I have no more to say," said the doctor, smiling.

"I will tell you all about it," I said; and then I desired the shopman to cut off the dress I had fixed upon; and we went upstairs to look for cloaks, I feeling hot and confused and half perplexed. I had never worn such a dress as this plaid I had bought in my life. It was nice and good, and pretty too; but it did not match the quality or the elegance of the things my mother always had got for me. *She* would not have liked it nor let me wear it; I knew that; but then--whence came the wealth that flowed over in such exquisite forms upon her and upon me? Were not its original and proper channels bare? And whence were they to be, even in any measure, refilled, if all the supply must, as usual, be led off in other directions? I mused as I went up the stairs, feeling perplexed, nevertheless, at the strangeness of the work I was doing, and with something in my heart giving a pull at my judgment towards the side of what was undoubtedly "pleasant to the eyes." So I followed Dr. Sandford up the stairs and into the wilderness of the cloak department, where all manner of elegancies, in silk, and velvet, and cloth, were displayed in orderly confusion. It was a wilderness to me, in the mood of my thoughts. Was I going to repeat here the process just gone through downstairs?

The doctor seated me, asked what I wanted to see, and gave the order. And forthwith my eyes were regaled with a variety of temptations. A nice little black silk pelisse was hung on the stand opposite me; it was nice; a good gloss was upon the silk, the article was in the neatest style, and trimmed with great simplicity. I would have been well satisfied to wear that. By its side was displayed another of velvet; then yet another of very fine dark cloth; perfect in material and make, faultless in its elegance of finish. But the silk was forty-five and the cloth was forty, and the velvet was sixty dollars. I sat and looked at them. There is no denying that I wanted the silk or the cloth. Either of them would do. Either of them was utterly girl-like and plain, but both of them had the finish of perfection, in make, style, and material. I wanted the one or the other. But, if I had it, what would be left for Margaret?

"Are you tired, Daisy?" said Dr. Sandford, bending down to look in my face.

"No, sir. At least, that was not what I was thinking of."

"When then?" said he. "Will one of these do?"

"They would do," I said slowly. "But, Dr. Sandford, I should like to see something else--something that would do for somebody that was poorer than I."

"Poorer?" said the doctor, looking funny. "What is the matter, Daisy? Have you suddenly become bankrupt? You need not be afraid, for the bank is in my pocket; and I know it will stand all your demands upon it."

"No, but--I would indeed, if you please, Dr. Sandford. These things cost too much for what I want now."

"Do you like them?"

"I like them very well."

"Then take whichever you like best. That is my advice to you, Daisy. The bank will bear it."

"I think I must not. Please, Dr. Sandford, I should like to see something that would not cost so much. Do they *all* cost as much as these?"

The doctor gave the order as I desired. The shopman who was serving us cast another comprehensive glance at me--I had seen him give one at the beginning--and tossing off the velvet coat and twisting off the silk one, he walked away. Presently he came back with a brown silk, which he hung in the place of the velvet one, and a blue cloth, which replaced the black silk. Every whit as costly, and almost as pretty, both of them.

"No," said the doctor,--"you mistook me. We want to look at some goods fitted for persons who have not long purses."

"Something inferior to these--" said the man. He was not uncivil; he just stated the fact. In accordance with which he replaced the last two coats with a little grey dreadnought, and a black cloth; the first neat and rough, the last not to be looked at. It was not in good taste, and a sort of thing that I neither had worn nor could wear. But the grey dreadnought was simple and warm and neat, and would offend nobody. I looked from it to the pretty black cloth which still hung in contrast with it, the one of the first there. Certainly, in style and elegance *this* looked like my mother's child, and the other did not. But this was forty dollars. The dreadnought was exactly half that sum. I had a little debate with myself--I remember it, for it was my first experience of that kind of thing--and all my mother's training had refined in me the sense of what was elegant and fitting, in dress as well as in other matters. Until now, I had never had my fancy crossed by anything I ever had to wear. The little grey dreadnought--how would it go with my silk dresses? It was like what I had seen other people dressed in; never my mother or me. Yet it was perfectly fitting a lady's child, if she could not afford other; and where was Margaret's cloak to come from? And who had the best right? I pondered and debated, and then I told Dr. Sandford I would have the grey coat. I believe I half wished he would make some objection; but he did not; he paid for the dreadnought and ordered it sent home; and then I began to congratulate myself that Margaret's comfort

was secure.

"Is that all, Daisy?" my friend asked.

"Dr. Sandford," said I, standing up and speaking low, "I want to find--can I find here, do you think?--a good warm cloak and dress for Margaret."

"For Margaret?" said the doctor.

"Yes; she is not used to the cold, you know; and she has nothing to keep her comfortable."

"But, Daisy!" said the doctor,--"sit down here again; I must understand this. Was *Margaret* at the bottom of all these financial operations?"

"I knew she wanted something, ever since we came from Washington," I said.

"Daisy, she could have had it."

"Yes, Dr. Sandford;--but--"

"But what, if you will be so good?"

"I think it was right for me to get it."

"I am sorry I do not agree with you at all. It was for *me* to get it--I am supplied with funds, Daisy--and your father has entrusted to me the making of all arrangements which are in any way good for your comfort. I think, with your leave, I shall reverse these bargains. Have you been all this time pleasing Margaret and *not* yourself?"

"No, sir," I said,--"if you please. I cannot explain it, Dr. Sandford, but I know it is right."

"What is right, Daisy? My faculties are stupid."

"No, sir; but--Let it be as it is, please."

"But won't you explain it? I ought to know what I am giving my consent to, Daisy; for just now I am constituted your guardian. What has Margaret to do with your cloaks? There is enough for both."

"But," said I, in a great deal of difficulty,--"there is not enough for me and everybody."

"Are you going to take care of the wants of everybody?"

"I think--I ought to take care of all that I can," I said.

"But you have not the power."

"I won't do but what I *have* the power for."

"Daisy, what would your father and mother say to such a course of action? would they allow it, do you think?"

"But *you* are my guardian now, Dr. Sandford," I said, looking up at him. He paused a minute doubtfully.

"I am conquered!" he said. "You have absolutely conquered me, Daisy. I have not a word to say. I wonder if that is the way you are going through the world in future? What is it now about Margaret?--for I was bewildered and did not understand."

"A warm cloak and dress," I said, delighted; "that is what I want. Can I get them here?"

"Doubtful, I should say," he answered; "but we will try."

And we did succeed in finding the dress, strong and warm and suitable; the cloak we had to go to another shop for. On the way we stopped at the milliner's. My Aunt Gary and Mrs. Sandford employed the same one.

"I put it in your hands, Daisy!" Dr. Sandford said, as we went in. "Only let me look on."

I kept him waiting a good while, I am afraid; but he was very patient and seemed amused. *I* was not. The business was very troublesome to me. This was not so easy a matter as to choose between stuffs and have the yards measured off. Bonnets are bonnets, as my aunt always said; and things good in themselves may not be in the least good for you. And I found the thing that suited was even more tempting here than it had been in the cloak wareroom. There was a little velvet hat which I fancied mamma would have bought for me; it was so stylish, and at the same time so simple, and became me so well. But it was of a price corresponding with its beauty. I turned my back on it, though I seemed to see it

just as well through the back of my head, and tried to find something else. The milliner would have it there was nothing beside that fitted me. The hat must go on.

"She has grown," said the milliner, appealing to Dr. Sandford; "and you see this is the very thing. This tinge of colour inside is just enough to relieve the pale cheeks. Do you see, sir?"

"It is without a fault," said the doctor.

"Take it off, please," I said. "I want to find something that will not cost so much--something that will not cost near so much."

"There is that cap that is too large for Miss Van Allen--" the milliner's assistant remarked.

"It would not suit Mrs. Randolph at all," was the answer aside.

But I begged to see it. Now this was a comfortable, soft quilted silk cap, with a chinchilla border. Not much style about it, but also nothing to dislike, except its simplicity. The price was moderate, and it fitted me.

You are going to be a different Daisy Randolph from what you have been all your life--something whispered to me. And the doctor said, "That makes you look about ten years old again, Daisy." I had a minute of doubt and delay; then I said I would have the cap; and the great business was ended.

Margaret's purchases were all found, and we went home, with money still in my bank, Dr. Sandford informed me. I was very tired; but on the whole I was very satisfied, until my things came home, and I saw that Mrs. Sandford did not like them.

"I wish I could have been with you!" she said.

"What is the matter?" said the doctor. It was the evening, and we were all together for a few minutes, before Mrs. Sandford went to her sister.

"Did you choose these things, Grant?"

"What is the matter with them?"

"They are hardly suitable."

"For the third time, what is the matter with them?" said the doctor.

"They are neat, but they are not *handsome*."

"They will look handsome when they are on," said Dr. Sandford.

"No they won't; they will look common. I don't mean *vulgar*--you could not buy anything in bad taste--but they are just what anybody's child might wear."

"Then Mrs. Randolph's child might."

Mrs. Sandford gave him a look. "That is just the thing," she said. "Mrs. Randolph's child might *not*. I never saw anybody more elegant or more particular about the choice of her dress than Mrs. Randolph; it is always perfect; and Daisy's always was. Mrs. Randolph would not like these."

"Shall we change them, Daisy?" said the doctor.

I said "No."

"Then I hope they will wear out before Mrs. Randolph comes home," he said.

All this, somehow, made me uncomfortable. I went off to the room which had been given to me, where a fire was kept; and I sat down to think. Certainly, I would have liked the other coat and hat better, that I had rejected; and the thought of the rich soft folds of that silky merino were not pleasant to me. The plaid I had bought *did* wear a common look in comparison. I knew it, quite as well as Mrs. Sandford; and that I had never worn common things; and I knew that in the merino, properly made, I should have looked my mother's child; and that in the plaid my mother would not know me. Was I right? was I wrong? I knelt down before the fire, feeling that the straight path was not always easy to find. Yet I had thought I saw it before me. I knelt before the fire, which was the only light in the room, and opened the page of my dear little book that had the Bible lessons for every day. This day's lesson was headed, "That ye adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."

The mist began to clear away. Between adorning and being adorned, the difference was so great, it set my face quite another way directly. I went on. "Let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ."

And how should that be? Certainly, the spirit of that gospel had no regard to self-glorification; and had most tender regard to the wants of others. I began to feel sure that I was in the way and not out of it. Then came--"If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye. But let none of you suffer ... *as a thief, or as an evildoer*"--"Let your light so shine before men"--"Let not mercy and truth forsake thee; bind them about thy neck;"--"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are *just* ... think on these things."

The words came about me, binding up my doubts, making sound my heart, laying a soft touch upon every rough spot in my thoughts. True, honest, just, lovely, and of good report,--yes, I would think on these things, and I would not be turned aside from them. And if I suffered as a Christian, I determined that I would not be ashamed; I prayed that I might never; I would take as no dishonour the laughter or the contempt of those who did not see the two sides of the question; but as a *thief* I would not suffer. I earnestly prayed that I might not. No beauty of dresses or stylishness of coats or bonnets should adorn me, the price of which God saw belonged and was due to the sufferings of others; more especially to the wants of those whose wants made my supply. That my father and mother, with the usage of old habit, and the influence of universal custom, should be blind to what I saw so clearly, made no difference in my duty. I had the light of the Bible rule, which was not yet, I knew, the lamp to their feet. *I* must walk by it, all the same. And my thought went back now with great tenderness to Mammy Theresa's rheumatism, which wanted flannel; to Maria's hyacinths, which were her great earthly interest, out of the things of religion; to Darry's lonely cottage, where he had no lamp to read the Bible o' nights, and no oil to burn in it. To Pete's solitary hut, too, where he was struggling to learn to read well, and where a hymn-book would be the greatest comfort to him. To the old people, whose one solace of a cup of tea would be gone unless I gave it them; to the boys who were learning to read, who wanted testaments; to the bed-ridden and sick, who wanted blankets; to the young and well, who wanted gowns (not indeed for decency, but for the natural pleasure of looking neat and smart)--and to Margaret, first and last, who was nearest to me, and who, I began to think, might want some other trifles besides a cloak. The girl come in at the minute.

"Margaret," I said, "I have got you a warm gown and a good thick warm cloak, to-day."

"A cloak! Miss Daisy--" Margaret's lips just parted and showed the white teeth between them.

"Yes. I saw you were not warm in that thin shawl."

"It's mighty cold up these ways!--" the girls shoulders drew together with involuntary expression.

"And now, Margaret, what other things do you want, to be nice and comfortable? You must tell me now, because after I go to school I cannot see you often, you know."

"Reckon I find something to do at the school, Miss Daisy. Ain't there servants?"

"Yes, but I am afraid there may not be another wanted. What else ought you to have, Margaret?"

"Miss Daisy knows, I'll hire myself out, and reckon I'll get a right smart chance of wages; and then, if Miss Daisy let me take some change, I'd like to get some things--"

"You may keep all your wages, Margaret," I said hastily; "you need not bring them to me; but I want to know if you have all you need *now*, to be nice and warm?"

"Spect I'd be better for some underclothes--" Margaret said, half under her breath.

Of course! I knew it the moment she said it. I knew the scanty coarse supply which was furnished to the girls and women at Magnolia; I knew that more was needed for neatness as well as for comfort, and something different, now that she was where no evil distinction would arise from her having it. I said I would get what she wanted; and went back again to the parlour. I mused as I went. If I let Margaret keep her wages--and I was very certain I could not receive them from her--I must be prepared to answer it to my father. Perhaps,--yes, I felt sure as I thought about it--I must contrive to save the amount of her wages out of what was given to myself; or else my grant might be reversed and my action disallowed, or at least greatly disapproved. And my father had given me no right to dispose of Margaret's wages, or of herself.

So I came into the parlour. Dr. Sandford alone was there, lying on the sofa. He jumped up immediately; pulled a great arm chair near to the fire, and taking hold of me, put me into it. My purchases were lying on the table, where they had been disapproved, but I knew what to think of them now. I could look at them very contentedly.

"How do they seem, Daisy?" said the doctor, stretching himself on the cushions again, after asking my permission and pardon.

"Very well,"--I said, smiling.

"You are satisfied?"

I said yes.

"Daisy," said he, "you have conquered me to-day--I have yielded--I owned myself conquered; but won't you enlighten me? As a matter of favour?"

"About what, Dr. Sandford?"

"I don't understand you."

I remember looking at him and smiling. It was so curious a thing, both that he should, in his philosophy, be puzzled by a child like me, and that he should care about undoing the puzzle.

"There!" said he,--"that is my old little Daisy of ten years old. Daisy, I used to think she was an extremely dainty and particular little person."

"Yes--" said I.

"Was that correct?"

"I don't know," said I. "I think it was."

"Then Daisy, honestly--I am asking as a philosopher, and that means a lover of knowledge, you know,--did you choose those articles to-day to please yourself?"

"In one way, I did," I answered.

"Did they appear to you as they did to Mrs. Sandford,--at the time?"

"Yes, Dr. Sandford."

"So I thought. Then, Daisy, will you make me understand it? For I am puzzled."

I was sorry that he cared about the puzzle, for I did not want to go into it. I was almost sure he would not make it out if I did.

However, he lay there looking at me and waiting.

"Those other things cost too much, Dr. Sandford--that was all."

"There is the puzzle!" said the doctor. "You had the money in your bank for them, and money for Margaret's things too, and more if you wanted it; and no bottom to the bank at all, so far as I could see. And you like pretty things, Daisy, and you did not choose them?"

"No, sir."

I hesitated, and he waited. How was I to tell him? He would simply find it ridiculous. And then I thought--"If any of you suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed."

"I thought I should be comfortable in these things, Dr. Sandford," I then said, glancing at the little chinchilla cap which lay on the table;--"and respectable. And there were other people who needed all the money the other things would have cost."

"What other people?" said the doctor. "As I am your guardian, Daisy, it is proper for me to ask, and not impertinent."

I hesitated again. "I was thinking," I said, "of some of the people I left at Magnolia."

"Do you mean the servants?"

"Yes, sir."

"Daisy, they are cared for."

I was silent.

"What do you think they want?"

"Some that are sick want comfort," I said, "and others who are not sick want help; and others, I think, want a little pleasure." I would fain not have spoken, but how could I help it? The doctor took his feet off the sofa and sat up and confronted me.

"In the meantime," he said, "you are to be 'comfortable and respectable.' But, Daisy, do you think your father and mother would be satisfied with such a statement of your condition?"

"I suppose not," I was obliged to say.

"Then do you think it proper for me to allow such to be the fact?"

I looked at him. What there was in my look it is impossible for me to say; but he laughed a little.

"Yes," he said,--"I know--you have conquered me to-day. I own myself conquered--but the question I ask you is whether I am justifiable."

"I think that depends," I answered, "on whether *I* am justifiable."

"Can you justify yourself, Daisy?" he said, bringing his hand down gently over my smooth hair and touching my cheek. It would have vexed me from anybody else; it did not vex me from him. "Can you justify yourself?" he repeated.

"Yes, sir," I said; but I felt troubled.

"Then do it."

"Dr. Sandford, the Bible says, 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.'"

"Well," said he, refusing to draw any conclusions for me.

"I have more than I want, and they have not enough. I don't think I ought to keep *more* than I want."

"But then arises the question," said he, "how much do you want? Where is the line, beyond which you, or I, for instance, have too much?"

"I was not speaking of anybody but myself," I said.

"But a rule of action which is the right one for you, would be right for everybody."

"Yes, but everybody must apply it for himself," I said. "I was only applying it for myself."

"And applying it for yourself, Daisy, is it to cut off for the future--or ought it--all elegance and beauty? Must you restrict yourself to mere 'comfort and respectability'? Are furs and feathers, for instance, wicked things?"

He did not speak it mockingly; Dr. Sandford never could do an ungentlemanly thing; he spoke kindly and with a little rallying smile on his face. But I knew what he thought.

"Dr. Sandford," said I, "suppose I was a fairy, and that I stripped the gown off a poor woman's back to change it into a feather, and stole away her blankets to make them into fur; what would you think of fur and feathers then?"

There came a curious lightning through the doctor's blue eyes. I did not know in the least what it meant.

"Do you mean to say, Daisy, that the poor people down yonder at Magnolia want such things as gowns and blankets?"

"Some do," I said. "You know, nobody is there, Dr. Sandford, to look after them; and the overseer does not care. It would be different if papa was at home."

"I will never interfere with you any more, Daisy," said the doctor,--"any further than by a little very judicious interference; and you shall find in me the best helper I can be to all your plans. You may use me--you have conquered me,"--said he, smiling, and laying himself back on his cushions again. I was very glad it had ended so, for I could hardly have withstood Dr. Sandford if he had taken a different view of the matter. And his help, I knew, might be very good in getting things sent to Magnolia.



CHAPTER X.

SCHOOL.

I HAD another time the next day between Mrs. Sandford and the mantua-maker. The mantua-maker came to take orders about making my school dress.

"How will you have it trimmed?" she asked. "This sort of stuff will make no sort of an appearance unless it is well trimmed. It wants that. You might have a border of dark green leaves--dark green, like the colour of this stripe--going round the skirt; that would have a good effect; the leaves set in and edged with a very small red cord, or green if you like it better. We trimmed a dress so last week, and it made a very good appearance."

"What do you say, Daisy?"

"How much will it cost?" I asked.

"Oh, the cost is not very much," said the milliner. "I suppose we would do it for you, Mrs. Sandford, for twenty-five dollars."

"That is too much," I said.

"You wouldn't say so, if you knew the work it is to set those leaves round," said the mantua-maker. "It takes hours and hours; and the cording and all. And the silk you know, Mrs. Sandford, *that* costs nowadays. It takes a full yard of the silk, and no washy lining silk, but good stiff dress silk. Some has 'em made of velvet, but to be sure, that would not be suitable for a common stuff like this. It will be very common, Mrs. Sandford, without you have it handsomely trimmed."

"Couldn't you put some other sort of trimming?"

"Well, there's no other way that looks *distingue* on this sort of stuff; that's the most stylish. We could put a band of rows of black velvet--an inch wide, or half an inch; if you have it narrower you must put more of them; and then the sleeves and body to match; but I don't think you would like it so well as the green leaves. A great many people has 'em trimmed so; you like it a little out of the common, Mrs. Sandford. Or, you could have a green ribbon."

"How much would *that* be?" said Mrs. Sandford.

"Oh really, I don't just know," the woman answered; "depends on the ribbon; it don't make much difference to you, Mrs. Sandford; it would be--let me see, Oh, I suppose we could do it with velvet for you for fifteen or twenty dollars. You see there must be buttons or rosettes at the joinings of the velvets; and those come very expensive."

"How much would it be to make the dress plain?" I asked.

"*That* would be plain," the mantua-maker answered quickly. "The style is, to trim everything very much. Oh, that would be quite plain with the velvet."

"But without any trimming at all?" I asked. "How much would that be?" I felt an odd sort of shame at pressing the question: yet I knew I must.

"Without trimming!" said the woman. "Oh, you could not have it *without trimming*; there is nothing made without trimming; it would have no appearance at all. People would think you had come out of the country. No young ladies have their dresses made without trimming this winter."

"Mrs. Sandford," said I, "I should like to know what the dress would be without trimming."

"What would it be, Melinda?" The woman was only a forewoman at her establishment.

"Oh, well, Mrs. Sandford, the naked dress I have no doubt could be made for you for five dollars."

"You would not have it *so*, Daisy, my dear?" said Mrs. Sandford.

But I said I would have it so. It cost me a little difficulty, and a little shrinking, I remember, to choose this and to hold to it in the face of the other two. It was the last battle of that campaign. I had my way; but I wondered privately to myself whether I was going to look very unlike the children of other ladies in my mother's position: and whether such severity over myself was really needed. I turned the question over again in my own room, and tried to find out why it troubled me. I could not quite tell. Yet I thought, as I was doing what I knew to be duty, I had no right to feel this trouble about it. The trouble wore off before a little thought of my poor friends at Magnolia. But the question came up again at dinner.

"Daisy," said Mrs. Sandford, "did you ever have anything to do with the Methodists?"

"No, ma'am," I said, wondering. "What are the Methodists?"

"I don't know, I am sure," she said, laughing, "only they are people who sing hymns a great deal, and teach that nobody ought to wear gay dresses."

"Why?" I asked.

"I can't say. I believe they hold that the Bible forbids ornamenting ourselves."

I wondered if it did; and determined I would look. And I thought the Methodists must be nice people.

"What is on the carpet now?" said the doctor. "Singing or dressing? You are attacking Daisy, I see, on some score."

"She won't have her dress trimmed," said Mrs. Sandford.

The doctor turned round to me, with a wonderful genial pleasant expression of his fine face; and his blue eye, that I always liked to meet full, going through me with a sort of soft power. He was not smiling, yet his look made me smile.

"Daisy," said he, "are you going to make yourself unlike other people?"

"Only my dress, Dr. Sandford," I said.

"L'habit, c'est l'homme!--" he answered gravely, shaking his head.

I remembered his question and words many times in the course of the next six months.

In a day or two more my dress was done, and Dr. Sandford went with me to introduce me at the school. He had already made the necessary arrangements. It was a large establishment, reckoned the most fashionable, and at the same time one of the most thorough, in the city; the house, or houses, standing in one of the broad clear Avenues, where the streams of human life that went up and down were all of the sort that wore trimmed dresses and rolled about in handsome carriages. Just in the centre and height of the thoroughfare Mme. Ricard's establishment looked over it. We went in at a stately doorway, and were shown into a very elegant parlour; where at a grand piano a young lady was taking a music lesson. The noise was very disagreeable; but that was the only disagreeable thing in the place. Pictures were on the walls, a soft carpet on the floor; the colours of carpet and furniture were dark and rich; books and trinkets and engravings in profusion gave the look of cultivated life and the ease of plenty. It was not what I had expected; nor was Mme. Ricard, who came in noiselessly and stood before us while I was considering the wonderful moustache of the music teacher. I saw a rather short, grave person, very plainly dressed--but indeed I never thought of the dress she wore. The quiet composure of the figure was what attracted me, and the peculiar expression of the face. It was sad, almost severe; so I thought it at first; till a smile once for an instant broke upon the lips, like a flitting sunbeam out of a cloudy sky; then I saw that kindness was quite at home there, and sympathy and a sense of merriment were not wanting; but the clouds closed again, and the look of care, of sorrow, I could not quite tell what it was, only that it was *unrest*, retook its place on brow and lip. The eye, I think, never lost it. Yet it was a searching and commanding eye; I was sure it knew how to rule.

The introduction was soon made, and Dr. Sandford bid me good-bye. I felt as if my best friend was leaving me; the only one I had trusted in since my father and mother had gone away. I said nothing, but perhaps my face showed my thought, for he stooped and kissed me.

"Good-bye, Daisy. Remember, I shall expect a letter every fortnight."

He had ordered me before to write to him as often as that, and give him a minute account of myself; how many studies I was pursuing, how many hours I gave to them each day, what exercise I took, and what amusement; and how I thrived withal. Mme. Ricard had offered to show me my room, and we were mounting the long stairs while I thought this over.

"Is Dr. Sandford your cousin, Miss Randolph?" was the question which came in upon my thoughts.

"No, ma'am," I answered in extreme surprise.

"Is he any relation to you?"

"He is my guardian."

"I think Dr. Sandford told me that your father and mother are abroad?"

"Yes, ma'am; and Dr. Sandford is my guardian."

We had climbed two flights of stairs, and I was panting. As we went up, I had noticed a little unusual murmur of noises, which told me I was in a new world. Little indistinguishable noises, the stir and hum of the busy hive into which I had entered. Now and then a door had opened, and a head or a figure came out; but as instantly went back again on seeing Madame, and the door was softly closed. We reached the third floor. There a young lady appeared at the further end of the gallery, and curtsied to my conductress.

"Miss Bentley," said Madame, "this is your new companion, Miss Randolph. Will you be so good as to show Miss Randolph her room?"

Madame turned and left us, and the young lady led me into the room she had just quitted. A large room, light and bright, and pleasantly furnished; but the one thing that struck my unaccustomed eyes was the evidence of fulness of occupation. One bed stood opposite the fireplace; another across the head of that, between it and one of the windows; a third was between the doors on the inner side of the room. Moreover, the first and the last of these were furnished with two pillows each. I did not in the moment use my arithmetic; but the feeling which instantly pressed upon me was that of want of breath.

"This is the bed prepared for you, I believe," said my companion civilly, pointing to the third one before the window. "There isn't room for anybody to turn round here now."

I began mechanically to take off my cap and gloves, looking hard at the little bed, and wondering what other rights of possession were to be given me in this place. I saw a washstand in one window and a large mahogany wardrobe on one side of the fireplace; a dressing table or chest of drawers between the windows. Everything was handsome and nice; everything was in the neatest order; but--where were my clothes to go? Before I had made up my mind to ask, there came a rush into the room; I supposed, of the other inmates. One was a very large, fat, dull-faced girl; I should have thought her a young woman, only that she was here in a school. Another, bright and pretty, and very good-humoured if there was any truth in her smiling black eyes, was much slighter and somewhat younger; a year or two in advance of myself. The third was a girl about my own age, shorter and smaller than I, with also a pretty face, but an eye that I was not so sure of. She was the last one to come in, and she immediately stopped and looked at me; I thought, with no pleasure.

"This is Miss Randolph, girls," said Miss Bentley. "Miss Randolph, Miss Macy."

I curtsied to the fat girl, who gave me a little nod.

"I am glad she isn't as big as I am," was her comment on the introduction. I was glad, too.

"Miss Lansing--"

This was bright-eyes, who bowed and smiled--she always smiled--and said, "How do you do?" Then rushed off to a drawer in search of something.

"Miss St. Clair, will you come and be introduced to Miss Randolph?"

The St. Clair walked up demurely and took my hand. Her words were in abrupt contrast. "Where are her things going, Miss Bentley?" I wondered that pretty lips could be so ungracious. It was not temper which appeared on them, but cool rudeness.

"Madame said we must make some room for her," Miss Bentley answered.

"I don't know where," remarked Miss Macy. "I have not two inches."

"She can't have a peg nor a drawer of mine," said the St. Clair. "Don't you put her there, Bentley." And the young lady left us with that.

"We must manage it somehow," said Miss Bentley. "Lansing, look here, can't you take your things out of this drawer? Miss Randolph has no place to lay anything. She *must* have a little place, you know."

Lansing looked up with a perplexed face, and Miss Macy remarked that nobody had a bit of room to lay anything.

"I am very sorry," I said.

"It is no use being sorry, child," said Miss Macy; "we have got to fix it, somehow. I know who *ought* to be sorry. Here--I can take this pile of things out of this drawer; that is all *I* can do. Can't she manage with this half?"

But Miss Lansing came and made her arrangements, and then it was found that the smallest of the four drawers was cleared and ready for my occupation.

"But if we give you a whole drawer," said Miss Macy, "you must be content with one peg in the wardrobe--will you?"

"Oh, and she can have one or two hooks in the closet," said bright-eyes. "Come here, Miss Randolph, I will show you."

And there in the closet I found was another place for washing, with cocks for hot and cold water; and a press and plenty of iron hooks; with dresses and hats hanging on them. Miss Lansing moved and changed several of these, till she had cleared a space for me.

"There," she said, "now you'll do, won't you? I don't believe you can get a scrape of a corner in the wardrobe; Macy and Bentley and St. Clair take it up so. I haven't but one dress hanging there, but you've got a whole drawer in the bureau."

I was not very awkward and clumsy in my belongings, but an elephant could scarcely have been more bewildered if he had been requested to lay his proboscis up in a glove box. "I cannot put a dress in the drawer," I remarked.

"Oh, you can hang one up here under your cap; and that is all any of us do. Our things, all except our everyday things, go down stairs in our trunks. Have you many trunks?"

I told her no, only one. I did not know why it was a little disagreeable to me to say that. The feeling came and passed. I hung up my coat and cap, and brushed my hair; my new companion looking on. Without any remark, however, she presently rushed off, and I was left alone. I began to appreciate that. I sat down on the side of my little bed; to my fancy the very chairs were appropriated; and looked at my new place in the world.

Five of us in that room! I had always had the comfort of great space and ample conveniences about me; was it a *luxury* I had enjoyed? It had seemed nothing more than a necessity. And now must I dress and undress myself before so many spectators? could I not lock up anything that belonged to me? were all my nice and particular habits to be crushed into one drawer and smothered on one or two clothes-pins? Must everything I did be seen? And, above all, where could I pray? I looked round in a sort of fright. There was but one closet in the room, and that was a washing closet, and held besides a great quantity of other people's belongings. I could not, even for a moment, shut it against them. In a kind of terror, I looked to make sure that I was alone, and fell on my knees. It seemed to me that all I could do was to pray every minute that I should have to myself. They would surely be none too many. Then, hearing a footstep somewhere, I rose again and took from my bag my dear little book. It was so small I could carry it where I had not room for my Bible. I looked for the page of the day, I remember now, with my eyes full of tears.

"Be watchful," were the first words that met me. Aye, I was sure I would need it; but how was a watch to be kept up, if I could never be alone to take counsel with myself? I did not see it; this was another matter from Miss Pinshon's unlocked door. After all, that unlocked door had not greatly troubled me; my room had not been of late often invaded. Now I had no room. What more would my dear little book say to me?

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

Was the battle to go so hard against me? and what should I do without that old and well-tried weapon of "all-prayer?" Nothing; I should be conquered. I must have and keep that, I resolved; if I lay awake and got up at night to use it. Dr. Sandford would not like such a proceeding; but there were worse dangers than the danger of lessened health. I *would* pray; but what next?

"Take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently."--"What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

I stood by the side of my bed, dashing the tears from my eyes. Then I heard, as I thought, some one coming, and in haste looked to see what else might be on the page: what further message or warning. And something like a sunbeam of healing flashed into my heart with the next words.

"Fear thou not: for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

"I, the Lord thy God, will hold thy right hand."

I was healed. I put up my little book in my bag again, feeling whole and sound. It did not matter that I was crowded and hindered and watched; for it was written also, "He preserveth the way of his saints;" and I was safe.

I sat a little while longer alone. Then came a rush and rustle of many feet upon the stairs, many dresses moving, many voices blending in a soft little roar; as ominous as the roar of the sea which one hears in a shell. My four room-mates poured into the room, accompanied by two others; very busy and eager about their affairs that they were discussing.

Meanwhile they all began to put themselves in order.

"The bell will ring for tea directly," said Miss Macy, addressing herself to me; "are you ready?"

"Tisn't much trouble to fix *her* hair," said my friend with the black eyes.

Six pair of eyes for a moment were turned upon me.

"You are too old to have your hair so," remarked Miss Bentley. "You ought to let it grow."

"Why don't you?" said Miss Lansing.

"She is a Roundhead," said the St. Clair, brushing her own curls; which were beautiful and crinkled all over her head, while my hair was straight. "I don't suppose she ever saw a Cavalier before."

"St. Clair, you are too bad!" said Miss Macy. "Miss Randolph is a stranger."

St. Clair made no answer, but finished her hair and ran off; and presently the others filed off after her; and a loud clanging bell giving the signal, I thought best to go too. Every room was pouring forth its inmates; the halls and passages were all alive and astir. In the train of the moving crowd, I had no difficulty to find my way to the place of gathering.

This was the school parlour; not the one where I had seen Mme. Ricard. Parlours, rather; there was a suite of them, three deep; for this part of the house had a building added in the rear. The rooms were large and handsome; not like school rooms, I thought; and yet very different from my home; for they were bare. Carpets and curtains, sofas and chairs and tables were in them, to be sure; and even pictures; yet they were bare; for books and matters of art and little social luxuries were wanting, such as I had all my life been accustomed to, and such as filled Mme. Ricard's own rooms. However, this first evening I could hardly see how the rooms looked, for the lining of humanity which ran round all the walls. There was a shimmer as of every colour in the rainbow; and a buzz that could only come from a hive full. I, who had lived all my life where people spoke softly, and where many never spoke together, was bewildered.

The buzz hushed suddenly, and I saw Mme. Ricard's figure going slowly down the rooms. She was in the uttermost contrast to all her household. Ladylike always, and always dignified, her style was her own, and I am sure that nobody ever felt that she had not enough. Yet Mme. Ricard had nothing about her that was conformed to the fashions of the day. Her dress was of a soft kind of serge, which fell around her or swept across the rooms in noiseless yielding folds. Hoops were the fashion of the day; but Mme. Ricard wore no hoops; she went with ease and silence where others went with a rustle and a warning to clear the way. The back of her head was covered with a little cap as plain as a nun's cap; and I never saw an ornament about her. Yet criticism never touched Mme. Ricard. Not even the criticism of a set of school-girls; and I had soon to learn that there is none more relentless.

The tea-table was set in the further room of the three. Mme. Ricard passed down to that. Presently I heard her low voice saying, "Miss Randolph." Low as it always was, it was always heard. I made my way down through the rooms to her presence; and there I was introduced to the various teachers. Mademoiselle Genevieve, Miss Babbitt, Mme. Jupon, and Miss Dumps. I could not examine them just then. I felt I was on exhibition myself.

"Is Miss Randolph to come to me, Madame?" the first of these ladies asked. She was young, bright, black-eyed, and full of energy; I saw so much.

"I fancy she will come to all of you," said Madame. "Except Miss Babbitt. You can write and read, I dare say, Miss Randolph?" she went on with a smile. I answered of course.

"What have been your principal studies for the past year?"

I said mathematics, astronomy, and philosophy and history.

"Then she is mine!" exclaimed Mlle. Genevieve.

"She is older than she looks," said Miss Babbitt.

"Her hair is young, but her eyes are not," said the former speaker, who was a lively lady.

"French have you studied?" Madame went on.

"Not so much," I said.

"Mme. Jupon will want you."

"I am sure she is a good child," said Mme. Jupon, who was a good-natured, plain-looking Frenchwoman, without a particle of a Frenchwoman's grace or address. "I will be charmed to have her."

"You may go back to your place, Miss Randolph," said my mistress. "We will arrange all the rest to-morrow."

"Shall I go back with you?" asked Mlle. Genevieve. "Do you mind going alone?"

She spoke very kindly, but I was at a loss for her meaning. I saw the kindness; why it showed itself in such an offer I could not imagine.

"I am very much obliged to you, ma'am," I began, when a little burst of laughter stopped me. It came from all the teachers; even Mme. Ricard was smiling.

"You are out for once, Genevieve," she said.

"La charmante!" said Mme. Jupon. "Voyez l'a plomb!"

"No, you don't want me," said Mlle. Genevieve, nodding. "Go--you'll do."

I went back to the upper room and presently tea was served. I sat alone; there was nobody near me who knew me; I had nothing to do while munching my bread and butter but to examine the new scene. There was a great deal to move my curiosity. In the first place, I was surprised to see the rooms gay with fine dresses. I had come from the quiet of Magnolia, and accustomed to the simplicity of my mother's taste; which if it sometimes adorned me, did it always in subdued fashion, and never flaunted either its wealth or beauty. But on every side of me I beheld startling costumes; dresses that explained my mantua-maker's eagerness about velvet and green leaves. I saw that she was right; her trimmings would have been "quiet" here. Opposite me was a brown merino, bordered with blocks of blue silk running round the skirt. Near it was a dress of brilliant red picked out with black cord and heavy with large black buttons. Then a black dress caught my eye which had an embattled trimming of black and gold, continued round the waist and completed with a large gold buckle. Then there was a grey cashmere with red stars; and a bronze-coloured silk with black velvet a quarter of a yard wide let into the skirt; the body all of black velvet. I could go on if my memory would serve me. The rooms were full of this sort of thing. Yet more than the dresses the heads surprised me. Just at that time the style of hair dressing was one of those styles which are enduring, and perhaps even very beautiful, in the hands of a first-rate artist and on the heads of those very few women who dress well; but which are more and more hideous the farther you get from that distant pinnacle of the mode, and the lower down they spread among the ranks of society. I thought, as I looked from one to another, I had never seen anything so ill in taste, so outraged in style, so unspeakable in ugliness as well as in pretension. I supposed then it was the fashion principally which was to blame. Since then, I have seen the same fashion on one of those heads that never wear anything but in good style. It gathered a great wealth of rich hair into a mass at the back of the head, yet leaving the top and front of the hair in soft waves; and the bound up mass behind was loose and soft and flowed naturally from the head, it had no hard outline nor regular shape; it was nature's luxuriance just held in there from bursting down over neck and shoulders; and hardly that, for some locks were almost escaping. The whole was to the utmost simple, natural, graceful, rich. But these caricatures! All that they knew was to mass the hair at the back of the head; and that fact was attained. But some looked as if they had a hard round cannon-ball fastened there; others suggested a stuffed pincushion, ready for pins; others had a mortar-shell in place of a cannon-ball, the size was so enormous; in nearly all, the hair was strained tight over or under something; in not one was there an effect which the originator of the fashion would not have abhorred. Girlish grace was nowhere to be seen, either in heads or persons; girlish simplicity had no place. It was a school: but the company looked fitter for the stiff assemblages of ceremony that should be twenty years later in their lives.

My heart grew very blank. I felt unspeakably alone; not merely because there was nobody there whom I knew, but because there was nobody whom it seemed to me I ever should know. I took my tea and bits of bread and butter, feeling forlorn. A year in that place seemed to me longer than I could bear. I had exchanged my King Log for King Stork.

It was some relief when after tea we were separated into other rooms and sat down to study. But I dreamed over my book. I wondered how heads could study that had so much trouble on the outside. I wandered over the seas to that spot somewhere that was marked by the ship that carried my father and mother. Only now going out towards China; and how long months might pass before China would be done with and the ship be bearing them back again. The lesson given me that night was not difficult enough to bind my attention; and my heart grew very heavy. So heavy, that I felt I *must* find help somewhere. And when one's need is so shut in, then it looks in the right quarter--the only one left open.

My little book was upstairs in my bag: but my thoughts flew to my page of that day and the "Fear thou not, for I am with thee." Nobody knows, who has not wanted them, how good those words are. Nobody else can understand how sweet they were to me. I lost for a little all sight of the study table and the faces round it. I just remembered who was

WITH ME; in the freedom and joy of that presence both fears and loneliness seemed to fade away. "I, the Lord, will hold thy right hand." Yes, and I, a weak little child, put my hand in the hand of my great Leader, and felt safe and strong.

I found very soon I had enemies to meet that I had not yet reckoned with. The night passed peacefully enough; and the next day I was put in the schoolroom and found my place in the various classes. The schoolrooms were large and pleasant; large they had need to be, for the number of day scholars who attended in them was very great. They were many as well as spacious; different ages being parted off from each other. Besides the schoolrooms proper, there were rooms for recitation, where the classes met their teachers; so we had the change and variety of moving from one part of the house to another. We met Mlle. Genevieve in one room, for mathematics and Italian; Mme. Jupon in another, for French. Miss Dumps seized us in another, for writing and geography, and made the most of us; she was a severe little person in her teaching and in her discipline; but she was good. We called her Miss Maria, in general. Miss Babbitt had the history; and she did nothing to make it intelligible or interesting. My best historical times thus far, by much, had been over my clay map and my red and black headed pins, studying the changes of England and her people. But Mlle. Genevieve put a new life into mathematics. I could never love the study; but she made it a great deal better than Miss Pinshon made it. Indeed, I believe that to learn anything under Mlle. Genevieve would have been pleasant. She had so much fire and energy; she taught with such a will; her black eyes were so keen both for her pupils and her subject. One never thought of the discipline in Mlle. Genevieve's room, but only of the study. I was young to be there, in the class where she put me; but my training had fitted me for it. With Mme. Jupon also I had an easy time. She was good-nature itself, and from the first showed a particular favour and liking for me. And as I had no sort of wish to break rules, with Miss Maria too I got on well. It was out of school and out of study hours that my difficulties came upon me.

For a day or two I did not meet them. I was busy with the school routine, and beginning already to take pleasure in it. Knowledge was to be had here; lay waiting to be gathered up; and that gathering I always enjoyed. Miss Pinshon had kept me on short allowance. It was the third or fourth day after my arrival, that going up after dinner to get ready for a walk I missed my chinchilla cap from its peg. I sought for it in vain.

"Come, Daisy," said Miss Lansing, "make haste. Babbitt will be after you directly if you aren't ready. Put on your cap."

"I can't find it," I said. "I left it here, in its place, but I can't find it."

There was a burst of laughter from three of my room-mates, as Miss St. Clair danced out from the closet with the cap on her own brows; and then with a caper of agility, taking it off, flung it up to the chandelier, where it hung on one of the burners.

"For shame, Faustina, that's too bad. How can she get it?" said Miss Bentley.

"I don't want her to get it," said the St. Clair coolly.

"Then how can she go to walk?"

"I don't want her to go to walk."

"Faustina, that isn't right. Miss Randolph is a stranger; you shouldn't play tricks on her."

"Roundheads were always revolutionists," said the girl recklessly. "*A la lanterne!* Heads or hats--it don't signify which. That is an example of what our Madame calls 'symbolism.'"

"Hush--sh! Madame would call it something else. Now how are we going to get the cap down?"

For the lamp hung high, having been pushed up out of reach for the day. The St. Clair ran off, and Miss Macy followed; but the two others consulted, and Lansing ran down to waylay the chambermaid and beg a broom. By the help of the broom handle my cap was at length dislodged from its perch, and restored to me. But I was angry. I felt the fiery current running through my veins; and the unspeakable saucy glance of St. Clair's eye, as I passed her to take my place in the procession, threw fuel on the fire. I think for years I had not been angry in such a fashion. The indignation I had at different times felt against the overseer at Magnolia was a justifiable thing. Now I was angry and piqued. The feeling was new to me. I had been without it very long. I swallowed the ground with my feet during my walk; but before the walk came to an end the question began to come up in my mind, what was the matter? and whether I did well? These sprinklings of water on the flame I think made it leap into new life at first; but as they came and came again, I had more to think about than St. Clair when I got back to the house. Yes, and as we were all taking off our things together I was conscious that I shunned her; that the sight of her was disagreeable; and that I would have liked to visit some gentle punishment upon her careless head. The bustle of business swallowed up the feeling for the rest of the time till we went to bed.

But then it rose very fresh, and I began to question myself about it in the silence and darkness. Finding myself inclined to justify myself, I bethought me to try this new feeling by some of the words I had been studying in my little book for a few days past. "The entrance of thy words giveth light"--was the leading text for the day that had just gone; now I thought I would try it in my difficulty. The very next words on the page I remembered were these--"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

It came into my mind as soon, that this feeling of anger and resentment which troubled me had to do with darkness, not with the light. In vain I reasoned to prove the contrary; I *felt* dark. I could not look up to that clear white light where God dwells, and feel at all that I was "walking in the light as he is in the light." Clearly Daisy Randolph was out of the way. And I went on with bitterness of heart to the next words--"Ye *were* sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light."

And what then? was I to pass by quietly the insolence of St. Clair? was I to take it quite quietly, and give no sign even of annoyance? take no means of showing my displeasure, or of putting a stop to the naughtiness that called it forth? My mind put these questions impatiently, and still, as it did so, an answer came from somewhere.--"Walk as children of light." I *knew* that children of light would reprove darkness only with light; and a struggle began. Other words came into my head then, which made the matter only clearer. "If any man smite thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other." "Love your enemies." Ah, but how could I? with what should I put out this fire kindled in my heart, which seemed only to burn the fiercer whatever I threw upon it? And then other words came still sweeping upon me with their sweetness, and I remembered who had said, "I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee." I softly got out of bed, wrapped the coverlid round me, and knelt down to pray. For I had no time to lose. To-morrow I must meet my little companion, and to-morrow I *must* be ready to walk as a child of light, and to-night the fires of darkness were burning in my heart. I was long on my knees. I remember, in a kind of despair at last I flung myself on the word of Jesus, and cried to Him as Peter did when he saw the wind boisterous. I remember how the fire died out in my heart, till the very coals were dead; and how the day and the sunlight came stealing in, till it was all sunshine. I gave my thanks, and got into bed, and slept without a break the rest of the night.



CHAPTER XI.

A PLACE IN THE WORLD.

I WAS an humbler child when I got out of bed the next morning, I think, than ever I had been in my life before. But I had another lesson to learn.

I was not angry any more at Miss St. Clair. That was gone. Even when she did one or two other mischievous things to me, the rising feeling of offence was quickly got under; and I lived in great charity with her. My new lesson was of another sort.

Two or three days passed, and then came Sunday. It was never a comfortable day at Mme. Ricard's. We all went to church of course, under the care of one or other of the teachers; and we had our choice where to go. Miss Babbitt went to a Presbyterian church. Miss Maria to a high Episcopal. Mme. Jupon attended a little French Protestant chapel; and Mlle. Genevieve and Mme. Ricard went to the Catholic church. The first Sunday I had gone with them, not knowing at all whither. I found that would not do; and since then I had tried the other parties. But I was in a strait; for Miss Maria's church seemed to me a faded image of Mlle. Genevieve's; the Presbyterian church which Miss Babbitt went to was stiff and dull; I was not at home in either of them, and could not understand or enjoy what was spoken. The very music had an air of incipient petrification, if I can speak so about sounds. At the little French chapel I could as little comprehend the words that were uttered. But in the pulpit there was a man with a shining face; a face full of love and truth and earnestness. He spoke out of his heart, and no set words; and the singing was simple and sweet and the hymns beautiful. I could understand them, for I had the hymn-book in my hands. Also I had the French Bible, and Mme. Jupon, delighted to have me with her, assured me that if I listened I would very soon begin to understand the minister's preaching just as well as if it were English. So I went with Mme. Jupon, and thereby lost some part of Mlle. Genevieve's favour; but that I did not understand till afterwards.

We had all been to church as usual, this Sunday, and we were taking off our hats and things upstairs, after the second service. My simple toilet was soon made; and I sat upon the side of my little bed, watching those of my companions. They were a contrast to mine. The utmost that money could do, to bring girls into the fashion, was done for these girls; for the patrons of Mme. Ricard's establishment were nearly all rich.

Costly coats and cloaks, heavily trimmed, were surmounted with every variety of showy head-gear, in every variety of unsuitableness. To study bad taste, one would want no better field than the heads of Mme. Ricard's seventy boarders dressed for church. Not that the articles which were worn on the heads were always bad; some of them came from irreproachable workshops; but there was everywhere the bad taste of overdressing, and nowhere the tact of appropriation. The hats were all on the wrong heads. Everybody was a testimony of what money can do without art. I sat on my little bed, vaguely speculating on all this as I watched my companions disrobing; at intervals humming the sweet French melody to which the last hymn had been sung; when St. Clair paused in her talk and threw a glance in my direction. It lighted on my plain plaid frock and undressed hair.

"Don't you come from the country, Miss Randolph?" she said, insolently enough.

I answered yes. And I remembered what my mantua-maker had said.

"Did you have that dress made there?"

"For shame, St. Clair!" said Miss Bentley; "let Miss Randolph alone. I am sure her dress is very neat."

"I wonder if women don't wear long hair where she came from?" said the girl, turning away from me again. The others laughed.

I was as little pleased at that moment with the defence as with the attack. The instant thought in my mind was, that Miss Bentley knew no more how to conduct the one than Miss St. Clair to make the other; if the latter had no civility, the first had no style. Now the St. Clair was one of the best dressed girls in school and came from one of the most important families. I thought, if she knew where I came from, and who my mother was, she would change her tone. Nevertheless, I wished mamma would order me to let my hair grow, and I began to think whether I might not do it without order. And I thought also that the spring was advancing, and warm weather would soon be upon us; and that these girls would change their talk and their opinion about me when they saw my summer frocks. There was nothing like *them* in all the school. I ran over in my mind their various elegance, of texture and lace, and fine embroidery, and graceful, simple drapery. And also I thought, if these girls could see Magnolia, its magnificent oaks, and its acres of timber, and its sweeps of rich fields, and its troops of servants, their minds would be enlightened as to me and my

belongings.

These meditations were a mixture of comfort and discomfort to me; but on the whole I was not comfortable. This process of comparing myself with my neighbours, I was not accustomed to; and even though its results were so favourable, I did not like it. Neither did I quite relish living under a cloud; and my eyes being a little sharpened now, I could see that not by my young companions alone, but by every one of the four teachers, I was looked upon as a harmless little girl whose mother knew nothing about the fashionable world. I do not think that anything in my manner showed either my pique or my disdain; I believe I went out of doors just as usual; but these things were often in my thoughts, and taking by degrees more room in them.

It was not till the Sunday came round again, that I got any more light. The afternoon service was over; we had come home and laid off our bonnets and cloaks; for though we were in April it was cold and windy; and my schoolfellows had all gone downstairs to the parlour, where they had the privilege of doing what they pleased before tea. I was left alone. It was almost my only time for being alone in the whole week. I had an hour then; and I used to spend it in my bedroom with my Bible. To-day I was reading the first epistle of John, which I was very fond of; and as my custom was, not reading merely, but pondering and praying over the words verse by verse. So I found that I understood them better and enjoyed them a great deal more. I came to these words,--

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."

I had dwelt sometime upon the first part of the verse, forgetting all my discomforts of the week past; and came in due course to the next words. I never shall forget how they swept in upon. "*The world knoweth us not.*"--What did that mean? "Because it knew him not." How did it not know Him; He was in the midst of men; He lived no hidden life; the world knew Him well enough as a benefactor, a teacher, a reprove; in what sense did it *not* know Him? And I remembered, it did not know Him as one of its own party. He was "this fellow,"--and "the deceiver;"--"the Nazarene;" "they called the master of the house Beelzebub." And so the world knoweth *us* not; and I knew well enough why; because we must be like Him. And then, I found an unwillingness in myself to have these words true of me. I had been very satisfied under the slighting tones and looks of the little world around me, thinking that they were mistaken and would by and by know it; they would know that in all that they held so dear, of grace and fashion and elegance and distinguished appearance, my mother, and of course I, were not only their match but above them. Now, must I be content to have them never know it? But, I thought, I could not help their seeing the fact; if I dressed as my mother's child was accustomed to dress, they would know what sphere of life I belonged to. And then the words bore down upon me again, with their uncompromising distinctness,--"*the world knoweth us not.*" I saw it was a mark and character of those that belonged to Christ. I saw that, if I belonged to Him, the world must not know me. The conclusion was very plain. And to secure the conclusion, the way was very plain too; I must simply not be like the world. I must not be of the world; and I must let it be known that I was not.

Face to face with the issue, I started back. For not to be of the world, meant, not to follow their ways. I did not want to follow some of their ways; I had no desire to break the Sabbath, for example; but I did like to wear pretty and elegant and expensive things, and fashionable things. It is very true, I had just denied myself this pleasure, and bought a plain dress and coat that did not charm me; but that was in favour of Margaret and to save money for her. And I had no objection to do the same thing again and again, for the same motive; and to deny myself to the end of the chapter, so long as others were in need. But that was another matter from shaking hands with the world at once, and being willing that for all my life it should never know me as one of those whom it honoured. Never *know* me, in fact. I must be something out of the world's consciousness, and of no importance to it. And to begin with, I must never try to enlighten my schoolfellows' eyes about myself. Let them think that Daisy Randolph came from somewhere in the country and was accustomed to wear no better dresses in ordinary than her school plaid. Let them never be aware that I had ponies and servants and lands and treasures. Nay, the force of the words I had read went farther than that. I felt it, down in my heart. Not only I must take no measures to proclaim my title to the world's regard; but I must be such and so unlike it in my whole way of life, dress and all, that the world would not wish to recognize me, nor have anything to do with me.

I counted the cost now, and it seemed heavy. There was Miss Bentley, with her clumsy finery, put on as it were one dollar above the other. She patronized me, as a little country-girl who knew nothing. Must I not undeceive her? There was Faustina St. Clair, really of a good family, and insolent on the strength of it; must I never let her know that mine was as good and that my mother had as much knowledge of the proprieties and elegances of life as ever hers had? These girls and plenty of the others looked down upon me as something inferior; not belonging to their part of society; must I be content henceforth to live so simply that these and others who judge by the outside would never be any wiser as to what I really was? Something in me rebelled. Yet the words I had been reading were final and absolute. "The world knoweth us *not*;" and "us," I knew meant the little band in whose hearts Christ is king. Surely I was one of them. But I

was unwilling to slip out of the world's view and be seen by it no more. I struggled.

It was something very new in my experience. I had certainly felt struggles of duty in other times, but they had never lasted long. This lasted. With an eye made keen by conscience, I looked now in my reading to see what else I might find that would throw light on the matter and perhaps soften off the uncompromising decision of the words of St John. By and by I came to these words--

"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own. But because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, *therefore the world hateth you.*"

I shut the book. The issue could not be more plainly set forth. I must choose between the one party and the other. Nay, I had chosen;--but I must agree to belong but to one.

Would anybody say that a child could not have such a struggle? that fourteen years do not know yet what "the world" means? Alas, it is a relative term; and a child's "world" may be as mighty for her to face, as any other she will ever know. I think I never found any more formidable. Moreover, it is less unlike the big world than some would suppose.

On the corner of the street, just opposite to our windows, stood a large handsome house which we always noticed for its flowers. The house stood in a little green courtyard exquisitely kept, which at one side and behind gave room for several patches of flower beds, at this time filled with bulbous plants. I always lingered as much as I could in passing the iron railings, to have a peep at the beauty within. The grass was now of a delicious green, and the tulips and hyacinths and crocuses were in full bloom, in their different oval-shaped beds, framed in with the green. Besides these, from the windows of a greenhouse that stretched back along the street, there looked over a brilliant array of other beauty; I could not tell what; great bunches of scarlet and tufts of white and gleamings of yellow, that made me long to be there.

"Who lives in that house?" Miss Bentley asked one evening. It was the hour before tea, and we were all at our room windows gazing down into the avenue.

"Why, don't you know?" said slow Miss Macy. "That's Miss Cardigan's house."

"I wonder who she is?" said Miss Lansing. "It isn't a New York name."

"Yes, it is," said Macy. "She's lived there for ever. She used to be there, and her flowers, when I was four years old."

"I guess she isn't anybody, is she?" said Miss Bentley. "I never see any carriages at the door. Hasn't she a carriage of her own, I wonder, or how does she travel? Such a house ought to have a carriage."

"I'll tell you," said the St. Clair, coolly as usual. "She goes out in a wagon with an awning to it. *She* don't know anything about carriages."

"But she must have money, you know," urged Miss Bentley. "She couldn't keep up that house, and the flowers, and the greenhouse and all, without money."

"She's got money," said the St. Clair. "Her mother made it selling cabbages in the market. Very likely she sold flowers too."

There was a general exclamation and laughter at what was supposed to be one of St. Clair's flights of mischief; but the young lady stood her ground calmly, and insisted that it was a thing well known. "My grandmother used to buy vegetables from old Mrs. Cardigan when we lived in Broadway," she said. "It's quite true. That's why she knows nothing about carriages."

"That sort of thing don't hinder other people from having carriages," said Miss Lansing. "There's Mr. Mason, next door to Miss Cardigan,--his father was a tailor; and the Steppes, two doors off, do you know what they were? They were millers, a little way out of town; nothing else; had a mill and ground flour. They made a fortune I suppose, and now here they are in the midst of other people."

"Plenty of carriages, too," said Miss Macy; "and everything else."

"After all," said Miss Bentley, after a pause, "I suppose everybody's money had to be made somehow, in the first instance. I suppose all the Millers in the world came from real millers once; and the Wheelrights from wheelwrights."

"And what a world of smiths there must have been first and last," said Miss Lansing. "The world is full of their

descendants."

"*Everybody's* money wasn't made, though," said the St. Clair, with an inexpressible attitude of her short upper lip.

"I guess it was,—if you go back far enough," said Miss Macy, whom nothing disturbed. But I saw that while Miss Lansing and Miss St. Clair were at ease in the foregoing conversation, Miss Bentley was not.

"You *can't* go back far enough," said the St. Clair, haughtily.

"How then?" said the other. "How do you account for it? Where did their money come from?"

"It grew," said the St. Clair ineffably. "They were lords of the soil."

"Oh!—But it had to be dug out, I suppose?" said Miss Macy.

"There were others to do that."

"After all," said Miss Macy, "how is money that grew any better than money that is made? it is all made by somebody, too."

"If it is made by somebody else, it leaves your hands clean," the St. Clair answered, with an insolence worthy of maturer years; for Miss Macy's family had grown rich by trade. She was of a slow temper however and did not take fire.

"My grandfather's hands were clean," she said; "yet he made his own money. Honest hands always are clean."

"Do you suppose Miss Cardigan's were when she was handling her cabbages?" said St. Clair. "I have no doubt Miss Cardigan's house smells of cabbages now."

"O St. Clair!" Miss Lansing said, laughing.

"I always smell them when I go past," said the other, elevating her scornful little nose; it was a handsome nose too.

"I don't think it makes any difference," said Miss Bentley, "provided people *have* money, how they came by it. Money buys the same thing for one that it does for another."

"Now, my good Bentley, that is just what it *don't*," said St. Clair, drumming up the window-pane with the tips of her fingers.

"Why not?"

"Because!—people that have always had money know how to use it; and people who have just come into their money *don't* know. You can tell the one from the other as far off as the head of the avenue."

"But what is to hinder their going to the same milliner and mantua-maker, for instance, or the same cabinet-maker,—and buying the same things?"

"Or the same jeweller, or the same—anything? So they could if they knew which they were."

"Which *what* were? It is easy to tell which is a fashionable milliner, or mantua-maker; everybody knows that."

"It don't do some people any good," said St. Clair, turning away. "When they get in the shop they do not know what to buy; and if they buy it they can't put it on. People that are not fashionable can't *be* fashionable."

I saw the glance that fell, scarcely touching, on my plain plaid frock. I was silly enough to feel it too. I was unused to scorn. St. Clair returned to the window, perhaps sensible that she had gone a little too far.

"I can tell you now," she said, "what that old Miss Cardigan has got in her house—just as well as if I saw it."

"Did you ever go in?" said Lansing eagerly.

"We don't visit," said the other. "But I can tell you just as well; and you can send Daisy Randolph some day to see if it is true."

"Well, go on, St. Clair—what is there?" said Miss Macy.

"There's a marble hall, of course; that the mason built; it isn't her fault. Then in the parlours there are thick carpets, that cost a great deal of money and are as ugly as they can be, with every colour in the world. The furniture is red satin, or may be blue, staring bright, against a light green wall panelled with gold. The ceilings are gold and white, with enormous chandeliers. On the wall there are some very big picture frames, with nothing in them—to speak of; there is a

table in the middle of the floor with a marble top, and the piers are filled with mirrors down to the floor: and the second room is like the first and the third is like the second, and there is nothing else in any of the rooms but what I have told you."

"Well, it is a very handsome house, I should think, if you have told true," said Miss Bentley.

St. Clair left the window with a scarce perceptible but most wicked smile at her friend Miss Lansing; and the group scattered. Only I remained to think it over and ask myself, could I let go my vantage ground? could I make up my mind to do for ever without the smile and regard of that portion of the world which little St. Clair represented? It is powerful even in a school!

I had seen how carelessly this undoubted child of birth and fashion wielded the lash of her tongue; and how others bowed before it. I had seen Miss Bentley wince, and Miss Macy bite her lip; but neither of them dared affront the daughter of Mrs. St. Clair. Miss Lansing was herself of the favoured class, and had listened lightly. Fashion was power, that was plain. Was I willing to forego it? Was I willing to be one of those whom fashion passes by as St. Clair had glanced on my dress--as something not worthy a thought.

I was not happy, those days. Something within me was struggling for self assertion. It was new to me; for until then I had never needed to assert my claims to anything. For the first time, I was looked down upon, and I did not like it. I do not quite know why I was made to know this so well. My dress, if not showy or costly, was certainly without blame in its neatness and niceness, and perfectly becoming my place as a schoolgirl. And I had very little to do at that time with my schoolmates, and that little was entirely friendly in its character. I am obliged to think, looking back at it now, that some rivalry was at work. I did not then understand it. But I was taking a high place in all my classes. I had gone past St. Clair in two or three things. Miss Lansing was too far behind in her studies to feel any jealousy on that account; but besides that, I was an unmistakable favourite with all the teachers. They liked to have me do anything for them or with them; if any privilege was to be given, I was sure to be one of the first names called to share it; if I was spoken to for anything, the manner and tone were in contrast with those used towards almost all my fellows. It may have been partly for these reasons that there was a little positive element in the slight which I felt. The effect of the whole was to make a long struggle in my mind. "The world knoweth us not"--gave the character and condition of that party to which I belonged. I was feeling now what those words mean,--and it was not pleasant.

This struggle had been going on for several weeks, and growing more and more wearying, when Mrs. Sandford came one day to see me. She said I did not look very well, and obtained leave for me to take a walk with her. I was glad of the change. It was a pleasant bright afternoon; we strolled up the long avenue, then gay and crowded with passers to and fro in every variety and in the height of the mode; for our avenue was a favourite and very fashionable promenade. The gay world nodded and bowed to each other; the sun streamed on satins and laces, flowers and embroidery; elegant toilets passed and repassed each other, with smiling recognition; the street was a show. I walked by Mrs. Sandford's side in my chinchilla cap, for I had not got a straw hat yet, though it was time; thinking--"The world knoweth us not"--and carrying on the struggle in my heart all the while. By and by we turned to come down the avenue.

"I want to stop a moment here on some business," said Mrs. Sandford, as we came to Miss Cardigan's corner; "would you like to go in with me, Daisy?"

I was pleased, and moreover glad that it was the hour for my companions to be out walking. I did not wish to be seen going in at that house and to have all the questions poured on me that would be sure to come. Moreover, I was curious to see how far Miss St. Clair's judgment would be verified. The marble hall was undoubted; it was large and square, with a handsome staircase going up from it; but the parlour, into which we were ushered the next minute, crossed all my expectations. It was furnished with dark chintz; no satin, red or blue, was anywhere to be seen; even the curtains were chintz. The carpet was not rich; the engravings on the walls were in wooden frames varnished; the long mirror between the windows, for that was there, reflected a very simple mahogany table, on which lay a large work basket, some rolls of muslin and flannel, work cut and uncut, shears and spools of cotton. Another smaller table held books and papers and writing materials. This was shoved up to the corner of the hearth, where a fire--a real, actual fire of sticks--was softly burning. The room was full of the sweet smell of the burning wood. Between the two tables, in a comfortable large chair, sat the lady we had come to see. My heart warmed at the look of her immediately. Such a face of genial gentle benevolence; such a healthy sweet colour in the old cheeks; such a hearty, kind, and withal shrewd and sound, expression of eye and lip. She was stout and dumpy in figure, rather fat; with a little plain cap on her head and a shawl pinned round her shoulders. Somebody who had never been known to the world of fashion. But oh, how homely and comfortable she and her room looked! she and her room and her cat; for a great white cat sat with her paws doubled under her in front of the fire.

"My sister begged that I would call and see you, Miss Cardigan," Mrs. Sandford began, "about a poor family named Whittaker, that live somewhere in Ellen Street."

"I know them. Be seated," said our hostess. "I know them well. But I don't know this little lady."

"A little friend of mine, Miss Cardigan; she is at school with your neighbour opposite,--Miss Daisy Randolph."

"If nearness made neighbourhood," said Miss Cardigan, laughing, "Mme. Ricard and I would be neighbours; but I am afraid the rule of the Good Samaritan would put us far apart. Miss Daisy--do you like my cat; or would you like maybe to go in and look at my flowers?--yes?--Step in that way, dear; just go through that room, and on, straight through; you'll smell them before you come to them."

I gladly obeyed her, stepping in through the darkened middle room, where already the greeting of the distant flowers met me; then through a third smaller room, light and bright and full of fragrance, and to my surprise, lined with books. From this an open glass door let me into the greenhouse and into the presence of the beauties I had so often looked up to from the street. I lost myself then. Geraniums breathed over me; roses smiled at me; a daphne at one end of the room filled the whole place with its fragrance. Amaryllis bulbs were magnificent; fuchsias dropped with elegance; jonquils were shy and dainty; violets were good; hyacinths were delicious; tulips were splendid. Over and behind all these and others, were wonderful ferns, and heaths most delicate in their simplicity, and myrtles most beautiful with their shining dark foliage and starry white blossoms. I lost myself at first, and wandered past all these new and old friends in a dream; then I waked up to an intense feeling of homesickness. I had not been in such a greenhouse in a long time; the geraniums and roses and myrtles summoned me back to the years when I was a little happy thing at Melbourne House--or summoned the images of that time back to me. Father and mother and home--the delights and freedoms of those days--the carelessness, and the care--the blessed joys of that time before I knew Miss Pinshon, or school, and before I was perplexed with the sorrows and the wants of the world, and before I was alone--above all, when papa and mamma and I were *at home*. The geraniums and the roses set me back there so sharply that I felt it all. I had lost myself at first going into the greenhouse; and now I had quite lost sight of everything else, and stood gazing at the faces of the flowers with some tears on my own, and, I suppose, a good deal of revelation of my feeling; for I was unutterably startled by the touch of two hands upon my shoulders and a soft whisper in my ear, "What is it, my bairn?"

It was Miss Cardigan's soft Scotch accent, and it was besides a question of the tenderest sympathy. I looked at her, saw the kind and strong grey eyes which were fixed on me wistfully; and hiding my face in her bosom I sobbed aloud.

I don't know how I came to be there, in her arms, nor how I did anything so unlike my habit; but there I was, and it was done, and Miss Cardigan and I were in each other's confidence. It was only for one moment that my tears came; then I recovered myself.

"What sort of discourse did the flowers hold to you, little one?" said Miss Cardigan's kind voice; while her stout person hid all view of me that could have been had through the glass door.

"Papa is away," I said, forcing myself to speak,--"and mamma:--and we used to have these flowers--"

"Yes, yes; I know. I know very well," said my friend. "The flowers didn't know but you were there yet. They hadn't discretion. Mrs. Sandford wants to go, dear. Will you come again and see them? They will say something else next time."

"Oh, may I?" I said.

"Just whenever you like, and as often as you like. So I'll expect you."

I went home, very glad at having escaped notice from my schoolmates, and firmly bent on accepting Miss Cardigan's invitation at the first chance I had. I asked about her of Mrs. Sandford in the first place; and learned that she was "a very good sort of person; a little queer, but very kind; a person that did a great deal of good and had plenty of money. Not in society, of course," Mrs. Sandford added; "but I dare say she don't miss that; and she is just as useful as if she were."

"Not in society." That meant, I supposed, that Miss Cardigan would not be asked to companies where Mrs. Randolph would be found, or Mrs. Sandford; that such people would not "know" her, in fact. That would certainly be a loss to Miss Cardigan; but I wondered how much? "The world knoweth us not,"--the lot of all Christ's people,--could it involve anything in itself very bad? My old Juanita, for example, who held herself the heir to a princely inheritance, was it any harm to her that earthly palaces knew her only as a servant? But then, what did not matter to Juanita or Miss Cardigan might matter to somebody who had been used to different things. I knew how it had been with myself for a time past. I was puzzled. I determined to wait and see, if I could, how much it mattered to Miss Cardigan.

CHAPTER XII.

FRENCH DRESSES.

MY new friend had given me free permission to come and see her whenever I found myself able. Saturday afternoon we always had to ourselves in the school; and the next Saturday found me at Miss Cardigan's door again as soon as my friends and room-mates were well out of my way. Miss Cardigan was not at home, the servant said, but she would be in presently. I was just as well pleased. I took off my cap, and carrying it in my hand I went back through the rooms to the greenhouse. All still and fresh and sweet, it seemed more delightful than ever, because I knew there was nobody near. Some new flowers were out. An azalea was in splendid beauty, and a white French rose, very large and fair, was just blossoming, and with the red roses and the hyacinths and the violets and the daphne and the geraniums, made a wonderful sweet place of the little greenhouse. I lost myself in delight again; but this time the delight did not issue in homesickness. The flowers had another message for me to-day. I did not heed it at first, busy with examining and drinking in the fragrance and the loveliness about me; but even as I looked and drank, the flowers began to whisper to me. With their wealth of perfume, with all their various, glorious beauty, one and another leaned towards me or bent over me with the question--"Daisy, are you afraid?--Daisy, are you afraid?--The good God who has made us so rich, do you think he will leave you poor? He loves you, Daisy. You needn't be a bit afraid but that He is enough, even if the world does not know you. He is rich enough for you as well as for us."

I heard no voice, but surely I heard that whisper, plain enough. The roses seemed to kiss me with it. The sweet azalea repeated it. The hyacinths stood witnesses of it. The gay tulips and amaryllis held up a banner before me on which it was blazoned.

I was so ashamed, and sorry, and glad, all at once, that I fell down on my knees there, on the stone matted floor, and gave up the world from my heart and for ever, and stretched out my hands for the wealth that does not perish and the blessing that has no sorrow with it.

I was afraid to stay long on my knees; but I could hardly get my eyes dry again, I was so glad and so sorry. I remember I was wiping a tear or two away when Miss Cardigan came in. She greeted me kindly.

"There's a new rose out, did ye see it?" she said; "and this blue hyacinth has opened its flowers. Isn't that bonny?"

"What is *bonny*, ma'am?" I asked.

Miss Cardigan laughed, the heartiest, sonsiest low laugh.

"There's a many things the Lord has made bonny," she said. "I thank Him for it. Look at these violets--they're bonny; and this sweet red rose." She broke it off the tree and gave it to me. "It's bad that it shames your cheeks so. What's the matter wi' 'em, my bairn?"

Miss Cardigan's soft finger touched my cheek as she spoke; and the voice and tone of the question were so gently, tenderly kind that it was pleasant to answer. I said I had not been very strong.

"Nor just weel in your mind. No, no. Well, what did the flowers say to you to-day, my dear? Eh? They told you something?"

"Oh yes!" I said.

"Did they tell you that 'the Lord is good; a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in Him?'"

"Oh yes," I said, looking up at her in surprise. "How did you know?"

For all answer, Miss Cardigan folded her two arms tight about me and kissed me with earnest good will.

"But they told me something else," I said, struggling to command myself;--"they told me that I had *not* 'trusted in Him.'"

"Ah, my bairn!" she said. "But the Lord is good."

There was so much both of understanding and sympathy in her tones, that I had a great deal of trouble to control myself. I felt unspeakably happy too, that I had found a friend that could understand. I was silent, and Miss Cardigan looked at me.

"Is it all right, noo?" she asked.

"Except *me*,--" I said with my eyes swimming.

"Ah, well!" she said. "You've seen the sky all black and covered with the thick clouds--that's like our sins: but, 'I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins.' You know how it is when the wind comes and clears the clouds all off, and you can look up through the blue, till it seems as if your eye would win into heaven itself. Keep the sky clear, my darling, so that you can always see up straight to God, with never the fleck of a cloud between. But do you ken what will clear the clouds away?"

And I looked up now with a smile and answered, "The precious blood of Christ"--for the two texts had been close together in one of the pages of my little book not long before.

Miss Cardigan clapped her hands together softly and laughed. "Ye've got it!" she said. "Ye have gotten the pearl of great price. And where did ye find it, my dear?"

"I had a friend, that taught me in a Sunday-school, four years ago,--" I said.

"Ah, there weren't so many Sunday-schools in my day," said Miss Cardigan. "And ye have found, maybe, that this other sort of a school, that ye have gotten to now, isn't helpful altogether? Is it a rough road, my bairn?"

"It is my own fault," I said, looking at her gratefully. The tender voice went right into my heart.

"Well, noo, ye'll just stop and have tea with me here; and whenever the way is rough, ye'll come over to my flowers and rest yourself. And rest me too; it does me a world o' good to see a young face. So take off your coat, my dear, and let us sit down and be comfortable."

I was afraid at first that I could not; I had no liberty to be absent at tea-time. But Miss Cardigan assured me I should be home in good season; the school tea was at seven, and her own was always served at six. So very gladly, with an inexpressible sense of freedom and peace, I took off my coat and gloves, and followed my kind friend back to the parlour where her fire was burning. For although it was late in April, the day was cool and raw; and the fire one saw nowhere else was delightful in Miss Cardigan's parlour.

Every minute of that afternoon was as bright as the fire glow. I sat in the midst of that, on an ottoman, and Miss Cardigan, busy between her two tables, made me very much interested in her story of some distressed families for whom she was working. She asked me very little about my own affairs; nothing that the most delicate good breeding did not warrant; but she found out that my father and mother were at a great distance from me, and I almost alone, and she gave me the freedom of her house. I was to come there whenever I could and liked; whenever I wanted to "rest my feet," as she said; especially I might spend as much of every Sunday with her as I could get leave for. And she made this first afternoon so pleasant to me with her gentle beguiling talk, that the permission to come often was like the entrance into a whole world of comfort. She had plenty to talk about; plenty to tell, of the poor people to whom she and others were ministering; of plans and methods to do them good; all which somehow she made exceedingly interesting. There was just a little accent to her words, which made them, in their peculiarity, all the more sweet to me; but she spoke good English; the "noo" which slipped out now and then, with one or two other like words, came only, I found, at times when the fountain of feeling was more full than ordinary, and so flowed over into the disused old channel. And her face was so fresh, rosy, round and sweet, withal strong and sound, that it was a perpetual pleasure to me.

As she told her stories of New York needy and suffering, I mentally added my poor people at Magnolia, and began to wonder with myself, was all the world so? Were these two spots but samples of the whole? I got into a brown study, and was waked out of it by Miss Cardigan's "What is it, my dear?"

"Ma'am?" I said.

"Ye are studying some deep question," she said, smiling. "Maybe it's too big for you."

"So it is," said I, sighing. "Is it so everywhere, Miss Cardigan?"

"So how, my bairn?"

"Is there so much trouble everywhere in the world?"

Her face clouded over.

"Jesus said, 'The poor ye have always with you, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good.'"

"But that is what I don't understand about," I said. "*How much* ought one to do, Miss Cardigan?"

There came a ray of infinite brightness over her features; I can hardly describe it; it was warm with love, and bright with

pleasure, and I thought sparkled with a little amusement.

"Have you thought upon that?" she said.

"Yes," I said,--"very much."

"It is a great question!" she said, her face becoming grave again.

"I know," I said, "of course one ought to do all one can. But what I want to know is, how much one *can*. How much ought one to spend, for such things?"

"It's a great question," Miss Cardigan repeated, more gravely than before. "For when the King comes, to take account of His servants, He will want to know what we have done with every penny. Be sure, He will."

"Then how can one tell?" said I, hoping earnestly that now I was going to get some help in my troubles. "How can one know? It is very difficult."

"I'll no say it's not difficult," said Miss Cardigan, whose thoughts seemed to have gone into the recesses of her own mind. "Dear, its nigh our tea-time. Let us go in."

I followed her, much disappointed, and feeling that if she passed the subject by so, I could not bring it up again. We went through to the inner room; the same from which the glass door opened to the flowers. Here a small table was now spread. This room was cosy. I had hardly seen it before. Low bookcases lined it on every side; and above the bookcases hung maps; maps of the city and of various parts of the world where missionary stations were established. Along with the maps, a few engravings and fine photographs. I remember one of the Colosseum, which I used to study; and a very beautiful engraving of Jerusalem. But the one that fixed my eyes this first evening, perhaps because Miss Cardigan placed me in front of it, was a picture of another sort. It was a good photograph, and had beauty enough besides to hold my eyes. It showed a group of three or four. A boy and girl in front, handsome, careless, and well-to-do, passing along, with wandering eyes. Behind them and disconnected from them by her dress and expression, a tall woman in black robes with a baby on her breast. The hand of the woman was stretched out with a coin which she was about dropping into an iron-bound coffer which stood at the side of the picture. It was "the widow's mite;" and her face, wan, sad, sweet, yet loving and longing, told the story. The two coins were going into the box with all her heart.

"You know what it is?" said my hostess.

"I see, ma'am," I replied; "it is written under."

"That box is the Lord's treasury."

"Yes, ma'am," I said,--"I know."

"Do you remember how much that woman gave?"

"Two mites,"--I said.

"It was something more than that," said my hostess. "It was more than anybody else gave that day. Don't you recollect? It was *all her living*."

I looked at Miss Cardigan, and she looked at me. Then my eyes went back to the picture, and to the sad yet sweet and most loving face of the poor woman there.

"Ma'am," said I, "do you think people that are *rich* ought to give all they have?"

"I only know, my Lord was pleased with her," said Miss Cardigan softly; "and I always think I should like to have Him pleased with me too."

I was silent, looking at the picture and thinking.

"You know what made that poor widow give her two mites?" Miss Cardigan asked presently.

"I suppose she wanted to give them," I said.

"Ay," said my hostess, turning away,--"she loved the Lord's glory beyond her own comfort. Come, my love, and let us have some tea. She gave all she had, Miss Daisy, and the Lord liked it; do ye think you and me can do less?"

"But that is what I do not understand," I said, following Miss Cardigan to the little tea-table, and watching with great comfort the bright unruffled face which promised to be such a help to me.

"Now you'll sit down there," said my hostess, "where you can see my flowers while I can see you. It's poor work eating, if we cannot look at something or hear something at the same time; and maybe we'll do the two things. And ye'll have a bit of honey--here it is. And Lotty will bring us up a bit of hot toast--or is bread the better, my dear? Now ye're at home; and maybe you'll come over and drink tea with me whenever you can run away from over there. I'll have Lotty set a place for you. And then, when ye think of the empty place, you will know you had better come over and fill it. See--you could bring your study book and study here in this quiet little corner by the flowers."

I gave my very glad thanks. I knew that I could often do this.

"And now for the 'not understanding,'" said Miss Cardigan, when tea was half over. "How was it, my dear?"

"I have been puzzled," I said, "about giving--how much one ought to give, and how much one ought to spend--I mean for oneself."

"Well," said Miss Cardigan brightly, "we have fixed that. The poor woman gave *all her living*."

"But one must spend *some* money for oneself," I said. "One must have bonnets and cloaks and dresses."

"And houses, and books, and pictures," said Miss Cardigan, looking around her. "My lamb, let us go to the Bible again. That says, 'whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.' So I suppose we must buy cloaks and bonnets on the same principle."

I turned this over in my mind. Had I done this, when I was choosing my chinchilla cap and grey cloak? A little ray of infinite brightness began to steal in upon their quiet colours and despised forms.

"If the rich are to give their all, as well as the poor, it doesn't say--mind you--that they are to give it all to the hungry, or all to the destitute; but only, they are to give it all *to Christ*. Then, He will tell them what to do with it; do ye understand, my dear?"

Miss Cardigan's eye was watching me, not more kindly than keen. A wise and clear grey eye it was.

"But isn't it difficult to know sometimes what to do?" I said. "I have been so puzzled to know about dresses. Mamma is away, and I had to decide."

"It's no very difficult," said Miss Cardigan,--"if once ye set your face in the right *airth*--as we speak. My dear, there's a great many sorts of dresses and bonnets and things; and I'd always buy just that bonnet and that gown, in which I thought I could do most work for my Master; and that wouldn't be the same sort of bonnet for you and for me," she said with a merry smile. "Now ye'll have another cup of tea, and ye'll tell me if my tea's good."

It was wonderfully good to me. I felt like a plant dried up for want of water, suddenly set in a spring shower. Refreshment was all around me, without and within. The faces of the flowers looked at me through the glass, and the sweet breath of them came from the open door. The room where I was sitting pleased me mightily, in its comfortable and pretty simplicity; and I had found a friend, even better than my old Maria and Darry at Magnolia. It was not very long before I told all about these to my new counsellor.

For the friendship between us ripened and grew. I often found a chance to fill my place at the dear little tea-table. Sundays I could always be there; and I went there straight from afternoon church, and rested among Miss Cardigan's books and in her sweet society and in the happy freedom and rest of her house, with an intensity of enjoyment which words can but feebly tell. So in time I came to tell her all my troubles and the perplexities which had filled me; I was willing to talk to Miss Cardigan about things that I would have breathed to no other ear upon earth. She was so removed from all the sphere of my past or present life, so utterly disconnected from all the persons and things with which I had had to do, it was like telling about them to a being of another planet. Yet she was not so removed but that her sympathies and her judgment could be living and full grown for my help; all ready to take hold of the facts and to enter into the circumstances, and to give me precious comfort and counsel. Miss Cardigan and I came to be very dear to each other.

All this took time. Nobody noticed at first, or seemed to notice, my visits to the "house with the flowers," as the girls called it. I believe, in my plain dress, I was not thought of importance enough to be watched. I went and came very comfortably; and the weeks that remained before the summer vacation slipped away in quiet order.

Just before the vacation, my aunt came home from Europe. With her came the end of my obscurity. She brought me, from my mother, a great supply of all sorts of pretty French dresses hats, gloves, and varieties--chosen by my mother--as pretty and elegant, and simple too, as they could be; but once putting them on, I could never be unnoticed by my schoolmates any more. I knew it, with a certain feeling that was not displeasure. Was it pride? Was it anything more than my pleasure in all pretty things? I thought it was something more. And I determined that I would not put on any of

them till school was broken up. If it *was* pride, I was ashamed of it. But besides French dresses, my aunt brought me a better thing; a promise from my father.

"He said I was to tell you, Daisy my dear--and I hope you will be a good child and take it as you ought--but dear me! how she is growing," said Mrs. Gary, turning to Mme. Ricard; "I cannot talk about Daisy as a 'child' much longer. She's tall."

"Not too tall," said madame.

"No, but she is going to be tall. She has a right; her mother is tall, and her father. Daisy, my dear, I do believe you are going to look like your mother. You'll be very handsome if you do. And yet, you look different----"

"Miss Randolph will not shame anybody belonging to her," said Mme. Ricard, graciously.

"Well, I suppose not," said my aunt. "I was going to tell you what your father said, Daisy. He said--you know it takes a long while to get to China and back, and if it does him good he will stay a little while there; and then there's the return voyage, and there may be delays; so altogether it was impossible to say exactly how long he and your mother will be gone. I mean, it was impossible to know certainly that they would be able to come home by next summer; indeed I doubt if your father ever does come home."

I waited in silence.

"So altogether," my aunt went on, turning for a moment to Mme. Ricard, "there was a doubt about it; and your father said, he charged me to tell Daisy, that if she will make herself contented--that is, supposing they cannot come home next year, you know--if she will make herself happy and be patient and bear one or two years more, and stay at school and do the best she can, *then*, the year after next or the next year he will send for you, your father says, *unless* they come home themselves--they will send for you; and then, your father says, he will give you any request you like to make of him. Ask anything you can think of, that you would like best, and he will do it or get it, whatever it is. He didn't say like King Herod, 'to the half of his kingdom,' but I suppose he meant that. And meanwhile, you know you have a guardian now, Daisy, and there is no use for me in your affairs; and having conveyed to you your mother's gifts and your father's promises, I suppose there is nothing further for me to do to you."

I was silent yet, thinking. Two years more would be a dear purchase of any pleasure that might come after. Two years! And four were gone already. It seemed impossible to wait or to bear it. I heard no more of what my aunt was saying, till she turned to me again and asked, "Where are you going to pass the vacation?"

I did not know, for Mrs. Sandford was obliged to be with her sister still, so that I could not go to Melbourne.

"Well, if your new guardian thinks well of it--you can consult him if it is necessary--and if he does not object, you can be with me if you like. Preston has leave of absence this summer, I believe; and he will be with us."

It was in effect arranged so. My aunt took me about the country from one watering place to another; from Saratoga to the White Mountains; and Preston's being with us made it a gay time. Preston had been for two years at West Point; he was grown and improved everybody said; but to me he was just the same. If anything, *not* improved; the old grace and graciousness of his manner was edged with an occasional hardness or abruptness which did not use to belong to him, and which I did not understand. There seemed to be a latent cause of irritation somewhere.

However, my summer went off smoothly enough. September brought me back to Mme. Ricard's, and in view of Miss Cardigan's late roses and budding chrysanthemums. I was not sorry. I had set my heart on doing as much as could be done in these next two years, if two they must be.

I was the first in my room; but before the end of the day they all came pouring in; the two older and the two younger girls. "Here's somebody already," exclaimed Miss Macy as she saw me. "Why, Daisy Randolph! is it possible that's you? Is it Daisy Randolph? What have you done to yourself? How you *have* improved!"

"She is very much improved," said Miss Bentley more soberly.

"She has been learning the fashions," said Miss Lansing, her bright eyes dancing as good-humouredly as ever. "Daisy, now when your hair gets long you'll look quite nice. That frock is made very well."

"She is changed," said Miss St. Clair, with a look I could not quite make out.

"No," I said; "I hope I am not changed."

"Your dress is," said St. Clair.

I thought of Dr. Sandford's "*L'habit, c'est l'homme*." "My mother had this dress made," I said; "and I ordered the other one; that is all the difference."

"You're on the right side of the difference, then," said Miss St. Clair.

"Has your mother come back, Daisy?" Miss Lansing asked.

"Not yet. She sent me this from Paris."

"It's very pretty!" she said, with, I saw, an increase of admiration; but St. Clair gave me another strange look. "How much prettier Paris things are than American!" Lansing went on. "I wish I could have all my dresses from Paris. Why, Daisy, you've grown handsome."

"Nonsense!" said Miss Macy; "she always was, only you didn't see it."

"Style is more than a face," said Miss St. Clair cavalierly. Somehow I felt that this little lady was not in a good mood towards me. I boded mischief; for being nearly of an age, we were together in most of our classes, studied the same things, and recited at the same times. There was an opportunity for clashing.

They soon ran off, all four, to see their friends and acquaintances and learn the news of the school. I was left alone, making my arrangement of clothes and things in my drawer and my corner of the closet; and I found that some disturbance, in those few moments, had quite disarranged the thoughts of my heart. They were peaceful enough before. There was some confusion now. I could not at first tell what was uppermost; only that St. Clair's words were those that most returned to me. "She has changed." *Had* I changed? or was I going to change? was I going to enter the lists of fashion with my young companions, and try who would win the race? No doubt my mother could dress me better than almost any of their mothers could dress them; what then? would this be a triumph? or was this the sort of name and notoriety that became and befitted a servant of Jesus? I could not help my dresses being pretty; no, but I could help making much display of them. I could wear my own school plaid when the weather grew cooler; and one or two others of my wardrobe were all I need show. "Style is more than a face." No doubt. What *then*? Did I want style and a face too? Was I wishing to confound St. Clair? Was I escaping already from that bond and a mark of a Christian-- "The world knoweth us not?" I was startled and afraid. I fell down on my knees by the side of my bed, and tried to look at the matter as God looked at it. And the Daisy I thought he would be pleased with, was one who ran no race for worldly supremacy. I resolved she should not. The praise of God, I thought, was far better than the praise of men.

My mind was quite made up when I rose from my knees; but I looked forward to a less quiet school term than the last had been. Something told me that the rest of the girls would take me up now, for good and for evil. My Paris dress set me in a new position, no longer beneath their notice. I was an object of attention. Even that first evening I felt the difference.

"Daisy, when is your mother coming home?" "Oh, she is gone to China; Daisy's mother is gone to China!"--"She'll bring you lots of queer things, won't she?"--"What a sweet dress!"--"That didn't come from China?"--"Daisy, who's head in mathematics, you or St. Clair? I hope you will get before her!"

"Why?" I ventured to ask.

"Oh, you're the best of the two; everybody knows that. But St. Clair is smart, isn't she?"

"She thinks she is," answered another speaker; "she believes she's at the tip-top of creation; but she never had such a pretty dress on as that in her days; and she knows it and she don't like it. It's real fun to see St. Clair beat; she thinks she is so much better than other girls, and she has such a way of twisting that upper lip of hers. Do you know how St. Clair twists her upper lip? Look!--she's doing it now."

"She's handsome though, ain't she?" said Miss Macy. "She'll be beautiful."

"No," said Mlle. Genevieve; "not that. Never that. She will be handsome; but beauty is a thing of the soul. *She* will not be beautiful. Daisy, are you going to work hard this year?"

"Yes, mademoiselle."

"I believe you," she said, taking my face between her two hands and kissing it.

"Whoever saw Mlle. Genevieve do that before!" said Miss Macy, as the other left us. "She is not apt to like the scholars."

I knew she had always liked me. But everybody had always liked me, I reflected; this time at school was the first of my knowing anything different. And in this there now came a change. Since my wearing and using the Paris things sent to

me by my mother, which I dared not fail to use and wear, I noticed that my company was more sought in the school. Also my words were deferred to, in a way they had not been before. I found, and it was not an unpleasant thing, that I had grown to be a person of consequence. Even with the French and English teachers; I observed that they treated me with more consideration. And so I reflected within myself again over Dr. Sanford's observation, "*L'habit, c'est l'homme.*" Of course it was a consideration given to my clothes, a consideration also to be given up if I did not wear such clothes. I saw all that. The world *knew me*, just for the moment.

Well, the smooth way was very pleasant. I had it with everybody for a time.

My little room-mate and classmate St. Clair was perhaps the only exception to the general rule. I never felt that she liked me much. She let me alone, however; until one unlucky day--I do not mean to call it unlucky, either--when we had, as usual, compositions to write, and the theme given out was "Ruins." It was a delightful theme to me. I did not always enjoy writing compositions; this one gave me permission to roam in thoughts and imaginations that I liked. I went back to my old Egyptian studies at Magnolia, and wrote my composition about "Karnak." The subject was full in my memory; I had gone over and over and all through it; I had measured the enormous pillars and great gateways, and studied the sculpture on the walls, and paced up and down the great avenue of sphinxes. Sethos, and Amunoph and Rameses, the second and third, were all known and familiar to me; and I knew just where Shishak had recorded his triumphs over the land of Judea. I wrote my composition with the greatest delight. The only danger was that I might make it too long.

One evening I was using the last of the light, writing in the window recess of the school parlour, when I felt a hand laid on my shoulders.

"You are so hard at work!" said the voice of Mlle. Genevieve.

"Yes, mademoiselle, I like it."

"Have you got all the books and all that you want?"

"Books, mademoiselle?"--I said wondering.

"Yes; have you got all you want?"

"I have not got any books," I said; "there are none that I want in the school library."

"Have you never been in madame's library?"

"No, mademoiselle."

"Come!"

I jumped up and followed her, up and down stairs and through halls and turnings, till she brought me into a pretty room lined with books from floor to ceiling. Nobody was there. Mademoiselle lit the gas with great energy, and then turned to me, her great black eyes shining.

"Now what do you want, *mon enfant*? here is everything."

"Is there anything about Egypt?"

"Egypt! Are you in Egypt? See here--look, here is Denon--here is Laborde; here are two or three more. Do you like that? Ah! I see by the way your grey eyes grow big--Now sit down, and do what you like. Nobody will disturb you. You can come here every evening for the hour before tea."

Mademoiselle scarce stayed for my thanks, and left me alone. I had not seen either Laborde or Denon in my grandfather's library at Magnolia; they were after his time. The engravings and illustrations also had not been very many or very fine in his collection of travellers' books. It was the greatest joy to me to see some of those things in Mme. Ricard's library, that I had read and dreamed about so long in my head. It was adding eyesight to hearsay. I found a good deal too that I wanted to read, in these later authorities. Evening after evening I was in madame's library, lost among the halls of the old Egyptian conquerors.

The interest and delight of my work quite filled me, so that the fate of my composition hardly came into my thoughts, or the fact that other people were writing compositions too. And when it was done, I was simply very sorry that it was done. I had not written it for honour or for duty, but for love. I suppose that was the reason why it succeeded. I remember I was anything but satisfied with it myself, as I was reading it aloud for the benefit of my judges. For it was a day of prize compositions; and before the whole school and even some visitors, the writings of the girls were given aloud, each by its author. I thought, as I read mine, how poor it was, and how magnificent my subject demanded that it

should be. Under the shade of the great columns, before those fine old sphinxes, my words and myself seemed very small. I sat down in my place again, glad that the reading was over.

But there was a little buzz; then a dead expectant silence; then Mme. Ricard arose. My composition had been the last one. I looked up with the rest, to hear the award that she would speak; and was at first very much confounded to hear my own name called. "Miss Randolph--" It did not occur to me what it was spoken for; I sat still a moment in a maze. Mme. Ricard stood waiting; all the room was in a hush.

"Don't you hear yourself called?" said a voice behind me. "Why don't you go?"

I looked round at Miss Macy, who was my adviser, then doubtfully I looked away from her and caught the eyes of Mlle. Genevieve. She nodded and beckoned me to come forward. I did it hastily then, and found myself curtsying in front of the platform where stood madame.

"The prize is yours, Miss Randolph," she said graciously. "Your paper is approved by all the judges."

"Quite artistic,"--I heard a gentleman say at her elbow.

"And it shows an amount of thorough study and perfect preparation, which I can but hold up as a model to all my young ladies. You deserve this, my dear."

I was confounded; and a low curtsy was only a natural relief to my feelings. But madame unhappily took it otherwise.

"This is yours," she said, putting into my hands an elegant little bronze standish;--"and if I had another prize to bestow for grace of good manners, I am sure I would have the pleasure of giving you that too."

I bent again before madame, and got back to my seat as I could. The great business of the day was over, and we soon scattered to our rooms. And I had not been in mine five minutes before the penalties of being distinguished began to come upon me.

"Well, Daisy!" said Miss Lansing,--"you've got it. How pretty! isn't it, Macy?"

"It isn't a bit prettier than it ought to be, for a prize in such a school," said Miss Macy. "It will do."

"I've seen handsomer prizes," said Miss Bentley.

"But you've got it, more ways than one, Daisy," Miss Lansing went on. "I declare! Aren't you a distinguished young lady! Madame, too! why we all used to think we behaved pretty well *before company*,--didn't we, St. Clair?"

"I hate favour and favouritism!" said that young lady, her upper lip taking the peculiar turn to which my attention had once been called. "Madame likes whatever is French."

"But Randolph is not French, are you, Randolph?" said Blackeyes, who was good-natured through everything.

"Madame is not French herself," said Miss Bentley.

"I hate everything at school!" St. Clair went on.

"It's too bad," said her friend. "Do you know, Daisy, St. Clair always has the prize for compositions. What made you go and write that long stuff about Rameses? the people didn't understand it, and so they thought it was fine."

"I am sure there was a great deal finer writing in Faustina's composition," said Miss Bentley.

I knew very well that Miss St. Clair had been accustomed to win this half-yearly prize for good writing. I had expected nothing but that she would win it this time. I had counted neither on my own success nor on the displeasure it would raise. I took my hat and went over to my dear Miss Cardigan; hoping that ill-humour would have worked itself out by bed-time. But I was mistaken.

St Clair and I had been pretty near each other in our classes, though once or twice lately I had got an advantage over her; but we had kept on terms of cool social distance until now. Now the spirit of rivalry was awake. I think it began to stir at my Paris dresses and things; Karnak and Mme. Ricard finished the mischief.

On my first coming to school I had been tempted in my horror at the utter want of privacy to go to bed without prayer; waiting till the rest were all laid down and asleep and the lights out, and then slipping out of bed with great care not to make a noise, and watching that no whisper of my lips should be loud enough to disturb anybody's slumbers. But I was sure after a while, that this was a cowardly way of doing; and I could not bear the words, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father." I

determined in the vacation that I would do so no more, cost what it might the contrary. It cost a tremendous struggle. I think, in all my life I have done few harder things, than it was to me then to kneel down by the side of my bed in full blaze of the gaslights and with four curious pairs of eyes around to look on; to say nothing of the four busy tongues wagging about nothing all the time. I remember what a hush fell upon them the first night; while beyond the posture of prayer I could do little. Only unformed or half formed thoughts and petitions struggled in my mind, through a crowd of jostling regrets and wishes and confusions, in which I could hardly distinguish anything. But no explosion followed, of either ridicule or amusement, and I had been suffered from that night to do as I would, not certainly always in silence, but quite unmolested.

I had carried over my standish to Miss Cardigan to ask her to take care of it for me; I had no place to keep it. But Miss Cardigan was not satisfied to see the prize; she wanted to hear the essay read; and was altogether so elated that a little undue elation perhaps crept into my own heart. It was not a good preparation for what was coming.

I went home in good time. In the hall, however, Mlle. Genevieve seized upon me; she had several things to say, and before I got up stairs to my room all the rest of its inmates were in bed. I hoped they were asleep. I heard no sound while I was undressing, nor while I knelt, as usual now, by my bedside. But as I rose from my knees I was startled by a sort of grunt that came from St. Clair's corner.

"Humph!--Dear me! we're so good,--Grace and Devotion,--Christian grace, too!"

"Hold your tongue, St. Clair," said Miss Macy, but not in a way, I thought, to check her; if she could have been checked.

"But it's too bad, Macy," said the girl. "We're all so rough, you know. *We* don't know how to behave ourselves; we can't make curtseys; our mothers never taught us anything,--and dancing masters are no good. We ought to go to Egypt. There isn't anything so truly dignified as a pyramid. There is a great deal of a *plomb* there!"

"Who talked about a *plomb*?" said Miss Bentley.

"You have enough of that, at any rate, Faustina," said Lansing.

"Mrs. St. Clair's child ought to have that," said Miss Macy.

"Ah, but it isn't Christian grace, after all," persisted Faustina. "You want a cross at the top of a pyramid to make it perfect."

"Hush, Faustina!" said Miss Macy.

"It's fair,"--said Miss Bentley.

"You had better not talk about Christian grace, girls. That isn't a matter of opinion."

"Oh, isn't it!" cried St. Clair, half rising up in her bed. "What is it, then?"

Nobody answered.

"I say!--Macy, what *is* Christian grace--if you know! If you *don't* know, I'll put you in the way to find out."

"How shall I find out?"

"Will you do it, if I show it you?"

"Yes."

"Ask Randolph. That's the first step. Ask her,--yes! just ask her, if you want to know. I wish Mme. Ricard was here to hear the answer."

"Nonsense!" said Macy.

"Ask her! You said you would. Now ask her."

"What is Christian grace, Daisy?" said Miss Bentley.

I heard, but I would not answer. I hoped the storm would blow over, after a puff or two. But Blackeyes, without any ill-nature, I think, which was not in her, had got into the gale. She slipped out of bed and came to my side, putting her hand on my shoulder and bringing her laughing mouth down near my ear. A very angry impulse moved me before she spoke.

"Daisy!"--she said, laughing, in a loud whisper,--"come, wake up! you're not asleep, you know. Wake up and tell us;--everybody knows *you* know;--what *is* Christian grace? Daisy!--"

She shook me a little.

"If you knew, you would not ask me,"--I said in great displeasure. But a delighted shout from all my room-mates answered this unlucky speech, which I had been too excited to make logical.

"Capital!" cried St. Clair. "That's just it--we *don't* know; and we only want to find out whether she does. Make her tell, Lansing--prick a little pin into her--that will bring it out."

I was struggling between anger and sorrow, feeling very hurt, and at the same time determined not to cry. I kept absolutely still, fighting the fight of silence with myself. Then Lansing, in a fit of thoughtless mischief, finding her shakes and questions vain, actually put in practice St. Clair's suggestion, and attacked me with a pin from the dressing table. The first prick of it overthrew the last remnant of my patience.

"Miss Lansing!"--I exclaimed, rousing up in bed and confronting her. They all shouted again.

"Now we'll have it!" cried St. Clair. "Keep cool, Blackeyes; let's hear--we'll have an exposition now. Theme, Christian grace."

Ah, there rushed through my heart with her words a remembrance of other words--a fluttering vision of something "gentle and easy to be entreated"--"first pure, then peaceable"--"gentleness, goodness, meekness."--But the grip of passion held them all down or kept them all back. After St. Clair's first burst, the girls were still and waited for what I would say. I was facing Miss Lansing, who had taken her hand from my shoulder.

"Are you not ashamed of yourself?" I said; and I remember I thought how my mother would have spoken to them. "Miss Lansing's good nature"--I went on slowly,--"Miss Macy's kindness--Miss Bentley's independence--and Miss St. Clair's good breeding!"--

"*And* Miss Randolph's religion!" echoed the last-named, with a quiet distinctness which went into my heart.

"What about my independence?" said Miss Bentley.

"Now we've got enough, girls,--lie down and go to sleep," said Miss Macy. "There's quite enough of this. There was too much before we began. Stop where you are."

They did not stop, however, without a good deal of noisy chaffing and arguing, none of which I heard. Only the words, "Miss Randolph's religion," rung in my ears. I lay down with them lying like lead on my heart. I went to sleep under them. I woke up early, while all the rest were asleep, and began to study them.

"Miss Randolph's religion!" If it had been only that, only mine. But the religion I professed was the religion of Christ; the name I was called by was *His* name, the thing I had brought into discredit was His truth. I hope in all my life I may never know again the heart-pangs that this thought cost me. I studied how to undo the mischief I had done. I could find no way. I had seemed to prove my religion an unsteady, superficial thing; the evidence I had given I could not withdraw; it must stand. I lay thinking, with the heartache, until the rousing bell rang, and the sleepers began to stir from their slumbers. I got up and began to dress with the rest.

"What was it all that happened last night?" said Miss Lansing.

"Advancement in knowledge,"--said Miss St. Clair.

"Now, girls--don't begin again," said Miss Macy.

"Knowledge is a good thing," said the other, with pins in her mouth. "I intend to take every opportunity that offers of increasing mine; especially I mean to study Egyptians and Christians. I haven't any Christians among my own family or acquaintance--so you see, naturally, Macy, I am curious; and when a good specimen offers--"

"I am not a good specimen," I said.

"People are not good judges of themselves, it is said," the girl went on. "Everybody considers Miss Randolph a sample of what that article ought to be."

"You don't use the word right," remarked Miss Macy. "A *sample* is taken from what is,--not from what ought to be."

"I don't care," was St. Clair's reply.

"I did not behave like a Christian last night," I forced myself to say. "I was impatient."

"Like an impatient Christian then, I suppose," said St Clair.

I felt myself getting impatient again, with all my sorrow and humiliation of heart. And yet more humbled at the consciousness, I hastened to get out of the room. It was a miserable day, that day of my first school triumphs, and so were several more that followed. I was very busy; I had no time for recollection and prayer; I was in the midst of gratulations and plaudits from my companions and the teachers; and I missed, O how I missed the praise of God. I felt like a traitor. In the heat of the fight I had let my colours come to the ground. I had dishonoured my Captain. Some would say it was a little thing; but I felt then and I know now, there are no little things; I knew I had done harm; how much it was utterly beyond my reach to know.

As soon as I could I seized an opportunity to get to Miss Cardigan. I found her among her flowers, nipping off here a leaf and there a flower that had passed its time; so busy, that for a few moments she did not see that I was different from usual. Then came the question which I had been looking for.

"Daisy, you are not right to-day?"

"I haven't been right since I got that standish," I burst forth.

Miss Cardigan looked at me again, and then did what I had not expected; she took my head between her two hands and kissed me. Not losing her hold, she looked into my face.

"What is it, my pet?"

"Miss Cardigan," I said, "can any one be a Christian and yet--yet--"

"Do something unworthy a Christian?" she said. "I wot well they can! But then, they are weak Christians."

I knew that before. But somehow, hearing her say it brought the shame and the sorrow more fresh to the surface. The tears came. Miss Cardigan pulled me into the next room and sat down, drawing me into her arms; and I wept there with her arms about me.

"What then, Daisy?" she asked at length, as if the suspense pained her.

"I acted so, Miss Cardigan," I said; and I told her all about it.

"So the devil has found a weak spot in your armour," she said. "You must guard it well, Daisy."

"How can I?"

"How can you? Keep your shield before it, my bairn. What is your shield for? The Lord has given you a great strong shield, big enough to cover you from head to foot, if your hands know how to manage it."

"What is that, Miss Cardigan?"

"The shield of *faith*, dear. Only believe. According to your faith be it unto you."

"Believe what?" I asked, lifting my head at last.

"Believe that if you are a weak little soldier, your Captain knows all about it; and any fight that you go into for His sake, He will bear you through. I don't care what. Any fight, Daisy."

"But I got impatient," I said, "at the girls' way of talking."

"And perhaps you were a wee bit set up in your heart because you got the prize of the day."

"*Proud!*" said I.

"Don't it look like it? Even proud of being a Christian, mayhap."

"Could I!" I said. "Was I?"

"It wouldn't be the first time one with as little cause had got puffed up a bit. But heavenly charity 'is not puffed up.'"

"I know that," I said and my tears started afresh.

"How shall I help it in future?" I asked after a while, during which my friend had been silent.

"Help it?" she said cheerfully. "You can't help it--but Jesus can."

"But my impatience, and--my pride," I said, very downcast.

"Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall I shall arise.' But there is no need you should fall, Daisy. Remember 'the Lord is able to make him stand'--may be said of every one of the Lord's people."

"But will He keep me from impatience, and take pride out of my heart? Why, I did not know it was there, Miss Cardigan."

"Did He say 'Whatsoever you shall ask in my name, I will do it?' And when He has written 'Whatsoever,' are you going to write it over and put 'anything not too hard'? Neither you nor me, Daisy?"

"*Whatsoever*, Miss Cardigan," I said slowly.

"He said so. Are you going to write it over again?"

"No," I said. "But then, may one have *anything* one asks for."

"Anything in the world--if it is not contrary to His will--provided we ask in faith, nothing doubting. 'For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.'"

"But how can we *know* what is according to His will?"

"*This* is, at any rate," said Miss Cardigan; "for He has commanded us to be holy as He is holy."

"But--other things?" I said. "How can one ask for everything 'in faith, nothing wavering?' How can one be sure?"

"Only just this one way, Daisy, my dear," Miss Cardigan answered; and I remember to this day the accent of her native land which touched every word. "If ye're wholly the Lord's--wholly, mind,--ye'll not like aught but what the Lord likes; ye'll know what to ask for, and ye'll know the Lord will give it to you:--that is, if ye want it *enough*. But a 'double-minded man is unstable in all his ways;' and his prayers can't hit the mark, no more than a gun that's twisted when it's going off."

"Then,"--I began and stopped, looking at her with my eyes full of tears.

"Ay," she said,--"just so. There's no need that you nor me should be under the power of the evil one, for we're *free*. The Lord's words arn't too good to be true: every one of 'em is as high as heaven; and there isn't a sin nor an enemy but you and I may be safe from, if we trust the Lord."

I do not remember any more of the conversation. I only know that the sun rose on my difficulties, and the shadows melted away. I had a happy evening with my dear old friend, and went home quite heart-whole.



CHAPTER XIII.

GREY COATS.

I WENT back to school comforted. I had got strength to face all that might be coming in the future. And life has been a different thing to me ever since. Paul's words, "I can do all things through Christ,"--I have learned are not his words any more than mine.

From that time I grew more and more popular in the school. I cannot tell why; but popularity is a thing that grows upon its own growth. It was only a little while before my companions almost all made a pet of me. It is humbling to know that this effect was hastened by some of the French dresses my mother had sent me, and which convenience obliged me to wear. They were extremely pretty; the girls came round me to know where I got them, and talked about who I was; and "Daisy Randolph," was the name most favoured by their lips from that time until school closed. With the exception, I must add, of my four room-mates. Miss St. Clair held herself entirely aloof from me, and the others chose her party rather than mine. St. Clair never lost, I think, any good chance or omitted any fair scheme to provoke me; but all she could do had lost its power. I tried to soften her; but Faustina was a rock to my advances. I knew I had done irreparable wrong that evening; the thought of it was almost the only trouble I had during those months.

An old trouble was brought suddenly home to me one day. I was told a person wanted to speak to me in the lower hall. I ran down, and found Margaret. She was in the cloak and dress I had bought for her; looking at first very gleeful, and then very business-like, as she brought out from under her cloak a bit of paper folded with something in it.

"What is this?" I said, finding a roll of bills.

"It's my wages, Miss Daisy. I only kept out two dollars, ma'am--I wanted a pair of shoes so bad--and I couldn't be let go about the house in them old shoes with holes in 'em; there was holes in both of 'em, Miss Daisy."

"But your wages, Margaret?" I said--"I have nothing to do with your wages."

"Yes, Miss Daisy--they belongs to master, and I allowed to bring 'em to you. They's all there so fur. It's all right."

I felt the hot shame mounting to my face. I put the money back in Margaret's hand, and hurriedly told her to keep it; we were not at Magnolia; she might do what she liked with the money; it was her own earnings.

I shall never forget the girl's confounded look, and then her grin of brilliant pleasure. I could have burst into tears as I went up the stairs, thinking of others at home. Yet the question came too, would my father like what I had been doing? He held the girl to be his property and her earnings his earnings. Had I been giving Margaret a lesson in rebellion, and preparing her to claim her rights at some future day? Perhaps. And I made up my mind that I did not care. Live upon stolen money I would not, any more than I could help. But was I not living on it all the while? The old subject brought back! I worried over it all the rest of the day, with many a look forward and back.

As the time of the vacation drew near, I looked hard for news of my father and mother, or tidings of their coming home. There were none. Indeed, I got no letters at all. There was nothing to cause uneasiness; the intervals were often long between one packet of letters and the next; but I wanted to hear of some change now that the school year was ended. It had been a good year to me. In that little world I had met and faced some of the hardest temptations of the great world; they could never be new to me again; and I had learned both my weakness and my strength.

No summons to happiness reached me that year. My vacation was spent again with my Aunt Gary, and without Preston. September saw me quietly settled at my studies for another school year; to be gone through with what patience I might.

That school year had nothing to chronicle. I was very busy, very popular, kindly treated by my teachers, and happy in a smooth course of life. Faustina St. Clair had been removed from the school; to some other I believe; and with her went all my causes of annoyance. The year rolled round, my father and mother in China or on the high seas; and my sixteenth summer opened upon me.

A day or two before the close of school, I was called to the parlour to see a lady. Not my aunt; it was Mrs. Sandford; and the doctor was with her.

I had not seen Mrs. Sandford, I must explain, for nearly a year; she had been away in another part of the country, far from New York.

"Why, Daisy!--is this Daisy?" she exclaimed.

"Is it not?" I asked.

"Not the old Daisy. You are so grown, my dear!--so--That's right, Grant; let us have a little light to see each other by."

"It is Miss Randolph--" said the doctor, after he had drawn up the window shade.

"Like her mother! isn't she? and yet, not like--"

"Not at all like."

"She is, though, Grant; you are mistaken; she *is* like her mother; though as I said, she isn't. I never saw anybody so improved. My dear, I shall tell all my friends to send their daughters to Mme. Ricard."

"Dr. Sandford," said I, "Mme. Ricard does not like to have the sun shine into this room."

"It's Daisy, too," said the doctor, smiling, as he drew down the shade again. "Don't *you* like it, Miss Daisy?"

"Yes, of course," I said; "but she does not."

"It is not at all a matter of course," said he; "except as you are Daisy. Some people, as you have just told me, are afraid of the sun."

"Oh, that is only for the carpets," I said.

Dr. Sandford gave me a good look, like one of his looks of old times, that carried me right back somehow to Juanita's cottage.

"How do you do, Daisy?"

"A little pale," said Mrs. Sandford.

"Let her speak for herself."

I said I did not know I was pale.

"Did you know you had head-ache a good deal of the time?"

"Yes, Dr. Sandford, I knew that. It is not very bad."

"Does not hinder you from going on with study?"

"Oh no, never."

"You have a good deal of time for study at night, too, do you not?--after the lights are out."

"At night? how did you know that? But it is not always *study*."

"No. You consume also a good deal of beef and mutton, nowadays? You prefer substantials in food as in everything else?"

I looked at my guardian, very much surprised that he should see all this in my face, and with a little of my childish fascination about those steady blue eyes. I could not deny that in these days I scarcely lived by eating. But in the eagerness and pleasure of my pursuits I had not missed it, and amid my many busy and anxious thoughts I had not cared about it.

"That will do," said the doctor. "Daisy, have you heard lately from your father or mother?"

My breath came short as I said no.

"Nor have I. Failing orders from them, you are bound to respect mine; and I order you change of air, and to go wherever Mrs. Sandford proposes to take you."

"Not before school closes, Dr. Sandford?"

"Do you care about that?"

"My dear child," said Mrs. Sandford, "we are going to West Point--and we want to take you with us. I know you will enjoy it, my dear; and I shall be delighted to have you. But we want to go next week."

"Do you care, Daisy?" Dr. Sandford repeated.

I had to consider. One week more, and the examination would be over and the school term ended. I was ready for the examination; I expected to keep my standing, which was very high; by going away now I should lose that, and miss some distinction. So at least I thought. I found that several things were at work in my heart that I had not known were there. After a minute I told Mrs. Sandford I would go with her when she pleased.

"You have made up your mind that you do not care about staying to the end here?" said the doctor.

"Dr. Sandford," I said, "I believe I *do* care; but not about anything worth while."

He took both my hands, standing before me, and looked at me, I thought, as if I were the old little child again.

"A course of fresh air," he said, "will do you more good than a course of any other thing just now. And we may find 'wonderful things' at West Point, Daisy."

"I expect you will enjoy it, Daisy," Mrs. Sandford repeated.

There was no fear. I knew I should see Preston, at any rate; and I had been among brick walls for many months. I winced a little at the thought of missing all I had counted upon at the close of term; but it was mainly pride that winced, so it was no matter.

We left the city three or four days later. It was a June day--can I ever forget it? What a brilliance of remembrance comes over me now? The bustle of the close schoolrooms, the heat and dust of the sunny city streets, were all left behind in an hour; and New York was nowhere! The waves of the river sparkled under a summer breeze; the wall of the palisades stretched along, like the barriers of fairyland; so they seemed to me; only the barrier was open and I was about to enter. So till their grey and green ramparts were passed, and the broader reaches of the river beyond, and as evening began to draw in we came to higher shores and a narrower channel, and were threading our way among the lights and shadows of opposing headlands and hilltops. It grew but more fresh and fair as the sun got lower. Then, in a place where the river seemed to come to an end, the "Pipe of Peace" drew close in under the western shore, to a landing. Buildings of grey stone clustered and looked over the bank. Close under the bank's green fringes a little boat-house and large clean wooden pier received us; from the landing a road went steeply sloping up. I see it all now in the colours which clothed it then. I think I entered fairyland when I touched foot to shore. Even down at the landing, everything was clean and fresh and in order. The green branches of that thick fringe which reached to the top of the bank had no dust on them; the rocks were parti-coloured with lichens; the river was bright, flowing and rippling past; the "Pipe of Peace" had pushed off and sped on, and in another minute or two was turning the point, and then--out of sight. Stillness seemed to fill the woods and the air as the beat of her paddles was lost. I breathed stillness. New York was fifty miles away, physically and morally at the antipodes.

I find it hard to write without epithets. As I said I was in fairyland; and how shall one describe fairyland?

Dr. Sandford broke upon my reverie by putting me into the omnibus. But the omnibus quite belonged to fairyland too; it did not go rattling and jolting, but stole quietly up the long hill; letting me enjoy a view of the river and the hills of the opposite shore, coloured as they were by the setting sun, and crisp and sharp in the cool June air. Then a great round-topped building came in place of my view; the road took a turn behind it.

"What is that?" I asked the doctor.

"I am sorry, Daisy, I don't know. I am quite as ignorant as yourself."

"That's the riding-hall," I heard somebody say.

One omnibus full had gone up before us; and there were only two or three people in ours besides our own party. I looked round, and saw that the information had been given by a young man in a sort of uniform; he was all in grey, with large round gilt buttons on his coat, and a soldier's cap. The words had been spoken in a civil tone, that tempted me on.

"Thank you!" I said. "The riding-hall!--who rides in it?"

"We do," he said, and then smiled,--"The cadets."

It was a frank smile and a pleasant face and utterly the look of a gentleman. So, though I saw that he was very much amused, either at himself or me, I went on--

"And those other buildings?"

"Those are the stables."

I wondered at the neat beautiful order of the place. Then, the omnibus slowly mounting the hill, the riding-hall and

stables were lost to sight. Another building, of more pretension, appeared on our left hand, on the brow of the ascent; our road turned the corner round this building, and beneath a grove of young trees the gothic buttresses and windows of grey stone peeped out. Carefully dressed green turf, with gravelled walks leading from different directions to the doors, looked as if this was a place of business. Somebody pulled the string here and the omnibus stopped.

"This is the library," my neighbour in grey remarked; and with that rising and lifting his cap, he jumped out. I watched him rapidly walking into the library; he was tall, very erect, with a fine free carriage and firm step. But then the omnibus was moving on and I turned to the other side. And the beauty took away my breath. There was the green plain girded with trees and houses, beset with hills, the tops of which I could see in the distance, with the evening light upon them. The omnibus went straight over the plain; green and smooth and fresh, it lay on the one side and on the other side of us, excepting one broad strip on the right. I wondered what had taken off the grass there; but then we passed within a hedge enclosure and drew up at the hotel steps.

"Have you met an acquaintance already, Daisy?" Dr. Sandford asked as he handed me out.

"An acquaintance?" said I. "No, but I shall find him soon, I suppose." For I was thinking of Preston. But I forgot Preston the next minute. Mrs. Sandford had seized my hand and drew me up the piazza steps and through the hall, out to the piazza at the north side of the house. I was in fairyland surely! I had thought so before, but I knew it now. Those grand hills, in the evening colours, standing over against each other on the east and on the west, and the full magnificent river lying between them, bright and stately, were like nothing I had ever seen or imagined. My memory goes back now to point after point of delight which bewildered me. There was a dainty little sail sweeping across just at the bend of the river; I have seen many since; I never forget that one. There was a shoulder of one of the eastern hills, thrown out towards the south-west, over which the evening light fell in a mantle of soft gold, with a fold of shadow on the other side. The tops of those eastern hills were warm with sunlight, and here and there a slope of the western hills. There was a point of the lower ground, thrust out into the river, between me and the eastern shore, which lay wholly in shadow, one shadow, one soft mass of dusky green, rounding out into a promontory. Above it, beyond it, at the foot of the hills, a white church spire rose as sharp as a needle. It is all before me, even the summer stillness in which my senses were wrapt. There was a clatter in the house behind me, but I did not hear it then.

I was obliged to go away to get ready for tea. The house was full; only one room could be spared for Mrs. Sandford and me. That one had been engaged beforehand, and its window looked over the same view I had seen from the piazza. I took my post at this window while waiting for Mrs. Sandford. Cooler and crisper the lights, cooler and grayer the shadows had grown; the shoulder of the east mountain had lost its mantle of light; just a gleam rested on a peak higher up; and my single white sail was getting small in the distance, beating up the river. I was very happy. My school year, practically, was finished, and I was vaguely expecting some order or turn of affairs which would join me to my father and mother. I remember well what a flood of satisfied joy poured into my heart as I stood at the window. I seemed to myself so very rich, to taste all that delight of hills and river; the richness of God's giving struck me with a sort of wonder. And then being so enriched and tasting the deep treasures of heaven and earth which I had been made to know, happy so exceedingly--it came to my heart with a kind of pang, the longing to make others know what I knew; and the secret determination to use all my strength as Christ's servant--in bringing others to the joy of the knowledge of Him.

I was called from my window then, and my view was exchanged for the crowded dining-room, where I could eat nothing. But after tea we got out upon the piazza again, and a soft north-west breeze seemed to be food and refreshment too. Mrs. Sandford soon found a colonel and a general to talk to; but Dr. Sandford sat down by me.

"How do you like it, Daisy?"

I told him, and thanked him for bringing me.

"Are you tired?"

"No--I don't think I am tired."

"You are not hungry, of course, for you can eat nothing. Do you think you shall sleep?"

"I don't feel like it now. I do not generally get sleepy till a great while after this."

"You will go to sleep somewhere about nine o'clock," said the doctor; "and not wake up till you are called in the morning."

I thought he was mistaken, but as I could not prove it I said nothing.

"Are you glad to get away from school?"

"On some accounts. I like school too, Dr. Sandford; but there are some things I do not like."

"That remark might be made, Daisy, about every condition of life with which I am acquainted."

"I could not make it just now," I said. He smiled.

"Have you secured a large circle of friends among your schoolmates,--that are to last for ever?"

"I do not think they love me well enough for that," I said, wondering somewhat at my guardian's questioning mood.

"Nor you them?"

"I suppose not."

"Why, Daisy," said Mrs. Sandford, "I am surprised! I thought you used to love everybody."

I tried to think how that might be, and whether I had changed. Dr. Sandford interrupted my thoughts again--

"How is it with friends out of school?"

"Oh, I have none," I said; thinking only of girls like myself.

"None?" he said. "Do you really know nobody in New York?"

"Nobody,--but one old lady."

"Who is that, Daisy?"

He asked short and coolly, like one who had a right to know; and then I remembered he had the right. I gave him Miss Cardigan's name and number.

"Who is she? and who lives with her?"

"Nobody lives with her; she has only her servants."

"What do you know about her then, besides what she has told you? Excuse me, and please have the grace to satisfy me."

"I know I must," I said half laughing.

"*Must?*"

"You know I must too, Dr. Sandford."

"I don't know it, indeed," said he. "I know I must ask; but I do not know what power can force you to answer."

"Isn't it my duty, Dr. Sandford?"

"Nobody but Daisy Randolph would have asked that question," he said. "Well, if duty is on my side, I know I am powerful. But, Daisy, you always used to answer me, in times when there was no duty in the case."

"I remember," I said, smiling to think of it; "but I was a child then, Dr. Sandford."

"Oh!--Well, apropos of duty, you may go on about Miss Cardigan."

"I do not know a great deal to tell. Only that she is very good, very kind to me and everybody; very rich, I believe; and very wise, I think. I know nothing more--except the way her money was made."

"How was it?"

"I have heard that her mother was a marketwoman," I said very unwillingly; for I knew the conclusions that would be drawn.

"Is it likely," Dr. Sandford said slowly, "that the daughter of a marketwoman should be a good friend in every respect for the daughter of Mrs. Randolph?"

"It may not be *likely*," I answered with equal slowness;--"but it is true."

"Can you prove your position, Daisy?"

"What is your objection to her, Dr. Sandford?"

"Simply what you have told me. The different classes of society are better apart."

I was silent. If Miss Cardigan was not of my class, I knew I wanted to be of hers. There were certain words running in my head about "a royal priesthood, a peculiar people," and certain other words too--which I thought it was no use to tell Dr. Sandford.

"She has no family, you say, nor friends who live with her, or whom you meet at her house?"

"None at all. I think she is quite alone."

There was silence again. That is, between the doctor and me. Mrs. Sandford and her officers kept up a great run of talk hard by.

"Now, Daisy," said the doctor, "you have studied the matter, and I do not doubt you have formed a philosophy of your own by this time. Pray make me the wiser."

"I have no philosophy of my own, Dr. Sandford."

"Your own thus far, that nobody shares it with you."

"Is that your notion of me?" I said, laughing.

"A very good notion. Nothing is worse than commonplace people. Indulge me, Daisy."

So I thought I had better.

"Dr. Sandford--if you will indulge me. What is *your* notion of dignity?"

He passed his hand over his hair, with a comical face. It was a very fine face, as I knew long ago; even a noble face. A steady, clear, blue eye like his, gives one a sure impression of power in the character, and of sweetness, too. I was glad he had asked me the question, but I waited for him to answer mine first.

"My notion of dignity!" he exclaimed. "I don't believe I have any, Daisy."

"No, but we are talking seriously."

"Very. We always are when you are one of the talkers."

"Then please explain your notion of dignity."

"I know it when I see it," said the doctor; "but faith! I don't know what makes it."

"Yes, but you think some people, or some classes, are set up above others."

"So do you."

"What do you think makes the highest class, then?"

"You are going too deep, or too high, which is the same thing. All I mean is, that certain feet which fate has planted on lofty levels, ought not to come down from them."

"But it is good to know where we stand."

"Very," said Dr. Sandford, laughing. That is, in his way of laughing. It was never loud.

"I will tell you where I want to stand," I went on. "It is the highest level of all. The Lord Jesus said, 'Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is MY BROTHER, and MY SISTER, and MOTHER.' I want to be one of those."

"But, Daisy," said Dr. Sandford, "the society of the world is not arranged on that principle."

I knew it very well. I said nothing.

"And you cannot, just yet, go out of the world."

It was no use to tell Dr. Sandford what I thought. I was silent still.

"Daisy," said he, "you are worse than you used to be." And I heard a little concern in his words, only half hid by the tone.

"You do not suppose that such words as those you quoted just now, were meant to be a practical guide in the daily affairs of life? Do you?"

"How can I help it, Dr. Sandford?" I answered. "I would like to have my friends among those whom the King will call His sisters and brothers."

"And what do you think of correct grammar, and clean hands?" he asked.

"Clean hands!" I echoed.

"You like them," he said, smiling. "The people you mean often go without them--if report says true."

"Not the people *I* mean," I said.

"And education, Daisy; and refined manners; and cultivated tastes; what will you do without all these? In the society you speak of they are seldom found."

"You do not know the society I speak of, Dr. Sandford; and Miss Cardigan has all these, more or less; besides something a great deal better."

Dr. Sandford rose up suddenly and introduced me to a Captain Southgate who came up; and the conversation ran upon West Point things and nothings after that. I was going back over my memory, to find in how far religion had been associated with some other valued things in the instances of my experience, and I heard little of what was said. Mr. Dinwiddie had been a gentleman, as much as any one I ever knew; he was the first. My old Juanita had the manners of a princess, and the tact of a fine lady. Miss Cardigan was a capital compound of sense, goodness, business energies, and gentle wisdom. The others--well, yes, they were of the despised orders of the world. My friend Darry, at the stables of Magnolia--my friend Maria, in the kitchen of the great house--the other sable and sober faces that came around theirs in memory's grouping--they were not educated nor polished nor elegant. Yet well I knew, that having owned Christ before men, He would own them before the angels of heaven; and what would they be in that day! I was satisfied to be numbered with them.

I slept, as Dr. Sandford had prophesied I would that night. I awoke to a vision of beauty.

My remembrance of those days that followed is like a summer morning, with a diamond hanging to every blade of grass.

I awoke suddenly, that first day, and rushed to the window. The light had broken, the sun was up; the crown of the morning was upon the heads of the hills; here and there a light wreath of mist lay along their sides, floating slowly off, or softly dispersing; the river lay in quiet beauty waiting for the gilding that should come upon it. I listened--the brisk notes of a drum and fife came to my ear, playing one after another joyous and dancing melody. I thought that never was a place so utterly delightful as this place. With all speed I dressed myself, noiselessly, so as not to waken Mrs. Sandford; and then I resolved I would go out and see if I could not find a place where I could be by myself; for in the house there was no chance of it. I took Mr. Dinwiddie's Bible and stole downstairs. From the piazza where we had sat last night, a flight of steps led down. I followed it and found another flight, and still another. The last landed me in a gravelled path; one track went down the steep face of the bank, on the brow of which the hotel stood; another track crossed that and wound away to my right, with a gentle downward slope. I went this way. The air was delicious; the woods were musical with birds; the morning light filled my pathway and glancing from trees or rocks ahead of me, lured me on with a promise of glory. I seemed to gather the promise as I went, and still I was drawn farther and farther. Glimpses of the river began to show through the trees; for all this bank side was thickly wooded. I left walking and took to running. At last I came out upon another gravelled walk, low down on the hillside, lying parallel with the river and open to it. Nothing lay between but some masses of granite rock, grey and lichened, and a soft fringe of green underbrush and small wood in the intervals. Moreover, I presently found a comfortable seat on a huge grey stone, where the view was uninterrupted by any wood growth; and if I thought before that this was fairyland, I now almost thought myself a fairy. The broad river was at my feet; the morning light was on all the shores, sparkled from the granite rocks below me and flashed from the polished leaves, and glittered on the water; filling all the blue above with radiance; touching here and there a little downy cloud; entering in and lying on my heart. I shall never forget it. The taste of the air was as one tastes life and strength and vigour. It all rolled in on me a great burden of joy.

It was not the worst time or place in the world to read the Bible. But how all the voices of nature seemed to flow in and mix with the reading, I cannot tell, no more than I can number them; the whirr of a bird's wing, the liquid note of a wood thrush, the stir and movement of a thousand leaves, the gurgle of rippling water, the crow's call, and the song-sparrow's ecstasy. Once or twice the notes of a bugle found their way down the hill, and reminded me that I was in a place of delightful novelty. It was just a fillip to my enjoyment, as I looked on and off my page alternately.

By and by I heard footsteps, quick yet light footsteps, sounding on the gravel. Measured and quick they came; then two figures rounded a point close by me. There were two, but their footfalls had sounded as one. They were dressed

alike, all in grey, like my friend in the omnibus. As they passed me, the nearest one hastily pulled off his cap, and I caught just a flash from a bright eye. It was the same. I looked after them as they left my point and were soon lost behind another; thinking that probably Preston was dressed so and had been taught to walk so; and with renewed admiration of a place where the inhabitants kept such an exquisite neatness in their dress and moved like music. There was a fulness of content in my mind, as at length I slowly went back up my winding path to the hotel, warned by the furious sounds of a gong that breakfast was in preparation.

As I toiled up the last flight of steps I saw Dr. Sandford on the piazza. His blue eye looked me all over and looked me through, I felt. I was accustomed to that, both from the friend and the physician, and rather liked it.

"What is on the other side of the house?" I asked.

"Let us go and see." And as we went, the doctor took my book from my hand to carry it for me. He opened it, too, and looked at it. On the other side or two sides of the house stretched away the level green plain. At the back of it, stood houses half hidden by trees; indeed all round two sides of the plain there was a border of buildings and of flourishing trees as well. Down the north side, from the hotel where we were, a road went winding: likewise under arching trees; here and there I could see cannon and a bit of some military work. All the centre of the plain was level and green, and empty; and from the hotel to the library stretched a broad strip of bare ground, brown and dusty, alongside of the road by which we had come across last night. In the morning sun, as indeed under all other lights and at all other hours, this scene was one of satisfying beauty. Behind the row of houses at the western edge of the plain, the hills rose up, green and wooded, height above height; and an old fortification stood out now under the eastern illumination, picturesque and grey, high up among them. As Dr. Sandford and I were silent and looking, I saw another grey figure pass down the road.

"Who are those people that wear grey, with a black stripe down the leg?" I asked.

"Grey?" said the doctor. "Where?"

"There is one yonder under the trees," I said, "and there was one in the omnibus yesterday. Are those the cadets?"

"I suppose so."

"Then Preston wears that dress. I wonder how I shall find him, Dr. Sandford?"

"Find whom?" said the doctor, waking up.

"My cousin Preston--Preston Gary. He is here."

"Here?" repeated the doctor.

"Yes--he is a cadet--didn't you know it? He has been here a long while; he has only one more year, I believe. How can we find him, Dr. Sandford?"

"I am ignorant, Daisy."

"But we must find him," I said, "for of course he will want to see me, and I want to see him, very much."

The doctor was silent, and I remember an odd sense I had that he was not pleased. I cannot tell how I got it; he neither did nor said anything to make me think so; he did not even look anywise different from usual; yet I felt it and was sure of it, and unspeakably mystified at it. Could Preston have been doing anything wrong? Yet the doctor would not know that, for he was not even aware that Preston was in the Military Academy till I told him.

"I do not know, Daisy," he said at last; "but we can find out. I will ask Captain Southgate or somebody else."

"Thank you," I said. "Who are those, Dr. Sandford, those others dressed in dark frock coats, with bright bars over their shoulders?--like that one just now going out of the gate?"

"Those are officers of the army."

"There are a good many of them. What are they here for? Are there many soldiers here?"

"No--" said the doctor, "I believe not. I think these gentlemen are put here to look after the grey coats--the cadets, Daisy, The cadets are here in training, you know."

"But that officer who just went out--who is walking over the plain now--he wore a sword, Dr. Sandford; and a red sash. They do not all wear them. What is that for?"

"What is under discussion?" said Mrs. Sandford, coming out. "How well Daisy looks this morning, don't she?"

"She has caught the military fever already," said the doctor. "I brought her here for a sedative; but I find it is no such matter."

"Sedative!" said Mrs. Sandford; but at this instant my ears were "caught" by a burst of music on the plain. Mrs. Sandford broke into a fit of laughter. The doctor's hand touched my shoulder.

"Get your hat, Daisy," he said, "I will go with you to hear it."

I might tell of pleasure from minute to minute of that day, and of the days following. The breath of the air, the notes of the wind instruments, the flicker of sunlight on the gravel, all come back to me as I write, and I taste them again. Dr. Sandford and I went down the road I have described, leading along the edge of the plain at its northern border; from which the view up over the river, between the hills, was very glorious. Fine young trees shaded this road; on one side a deep hollow or cup in the green plain excited my curiosity; on the other, lying a little down the bank, a military work of some odd sort planted with guns. Then one or two pyramidal heaps of cannon-balls by the side of the road, marked this out as unlike all other roads I had ever traversed. At the farther side of the plain we came to the row of houses I had seen from a distance, which ran north and south, looking eastward over all the plain. The road which skirted these houses was shaded with large old trees, and on the edge of the greensward under the trees we found a number of iron seats placed for the convenience of spectators. And here, among many others, Dr. Sandford and I sat down.

There was a long line of the grey uniforms now drawn up in front of us; at some little distance; standing still and doing nothing, that I could see. Nearer to us and facing them stood a single grey figure; I looked hard, but could not make out that it was Preston. Nearer still, stood with arms folded one of those whom the doctor had said were army officers; I thought, the very one I had seen leave the hotel; but all like statues, motionless and fixed. Only the band seemed to have some life in them.

"What is it, Dr. Sandford?" I whispered, after a few minutes of intense enjoyment.

"Don't know, Daisy."

"But what are they doing?"

"I don't know, Daisy."

I nestled down into silence again, listening, almost with a doubt of my own senses, as the notes of the instruments mingled with the summer breeze and filled the June sunshine. The plain looked most beautiful, edged with trees on three sides, and bounded to the east, in front of me, by a chain of hills soft and wooded, which I afterwards found were beyond the river. Near at hand, the order of military array, the flash of a sword, the glitter of an epaulette, the glance of red sashes here and there, the regularity of a perfect machine. I said nothing more to Dr. Sandford; but I gathered drop by drop the sweetness of the time.

The statues broke into life a few minutes later, and there was a stir of business of some sort; but I could make out nothing of what they were doing. I took it on trust, and enjoyed everything to the full till the show was over.



CHAPTER XIV.

YANKEES.

FOR several days I saw nothing of Preston. He was hardly missed.

I found that such a parade as that which pleased me the first morning came off twice daily; and other military displays, more extended and more interesting, were to be looked for every day at irregular times. I failed not of one. So surely as the roll of the drum or a strain of music announced that something of the sort was on hand, I caught up my hat and was ready. And so was Dr. Sandford. Mrs. Sandford would often not go; but the doctor's hat was as easily put on as mine, and as readily; and he attended me, I used to think, as patiently as a great Newfoundland dog. As patient, and as supreme. The evolutions of soldiers and clangour of martial music were nothing to *him*, but he must wait upon his little mistress. I mean of course the Newfoundland dog; not Dr. Sandford.

"Will you go for a walk, Daisy?" he said, the morning of the third or fourth day. "There is nothing doing on the plain, I find."

"A walk? Oh, yes!" I said. "Where shall we go?"

"To look for wonderful things," he said.

"Only don't take the child among the rattlesnakes," said Mrs. Sandford. "*They* are wonderful, I suppose, but not pleasant. You will get her all tanned, Grant!"

But I took these hints of danger as coolly as the doctor himself did; and another of my West Point delights began.

We went beyond the limits of the post, passed out at one of the gates which shut it in from the common world, and forgot for the moment drums and fifes. Up the mountain side, under the shadow of the trees most of the time, though along a good road; with the wild hill at one hand rising sharp above us. Turning round that, we finally plunged down into a grand dell of the hills, leaving all roads behind and all civilization, and having a whole mountain between us and the West Point plain. I suppose it might have been a region for rattlesnakes, but I never thought of them. I had never seen such a place in my life. From the bottom of the gorge where we were, the opposite mountain side sloped up to a great height; wild, lonely, green with a wealth of wood, stupendous, as it seemed to me, in its towering expanse. At our backs, a rocky and green precipice rose up more steeply yet, though to a lesser elevation, topped with the grey walls of the old fort, the other face of which I had seen from our hotel. A wilderness of nature it was; wild and stern. I feasted on it. Dr. Sandford was moving about, looking for something; he helped me over rocks, and jumped me across morasses, and kept watchful guard of me; but else he let me alone; he did not talk, and I had quite enough without. The strong delight of the novelty, the freedom, the delicious wild things around, the bracing air, the wonderful lofty beauty, made me as happy as I thought I could be. I feasted on the rocks and wild verdure, the mosses and ferns and lichen, the scrub forest and tangled undergrowth, among which we plunged and scrambled: above all, on those vast leafy walls which shut in the glen, and almost took away my breath with their towering lonely grandeur. All this time Dr. Sandford was as busy as a bee, in quest of something. He was a great geologist and mineralogist; a lover of all natural science, but particularly of chemistry and geology. When I stopped to look at him, I thought he must have put his own tastes in his pocket for several days past that he might gratify mine. I was standing on a rock, high and dry and grey with lichen; he was poking about in some swampy ground.

"Are you tired, Daisy?" he said, looking up.

"My feet are tired," I said.

"That is all of you that can be tired. Sit down where you are--I will come to you directly."

So I sat down and watched him, and looked off between whiles to the wonderful green walls of the glen. The summer blue was very clear overhead; the stillness of the place very deep; insects, birds, a flutter of leaves, and the grating of Dr. Sandford's boot upon a stone, all the sounds that could be heard.

"Why you are warm, as well as tired, Daisy," he said, coming up to my rock at last.

"It *is* warm," I answered.

"Warm?" said he. "Look here, Daisy!"

"Well, what in the world is that?" I said, laughing. "A little mud or earth is all that I can see."

"Ah, your eyes are not good for much, Daisy--except to look at."

"Not good for much for *that*," I said, amused; for his eyes were bent upon the earth in his hand.

"I don't know," said he, getting up on the rock beside me and sitting down. "I used to find strange things in them once. But this is something you will like, Daisy."

"Is it?"

"If you like wonderful things as well as ever."

"Oh, I do!" I said. "What is it, Dr. Sandford?"

He carefully wrapped up his treasure in a bit of paper and put it in his pocket; then he cut down a small hickory branch and began to fan me with it; and while he sat there fanning me he entered upon a lecture such as I had never listened to in my life. I had studied a little geology of course, as well as a little of everything else; but no lesson like this had come in the course of my experience. Taking his text from the very wild glen where we were sitting and the mountain sides upon which I had been gazing, Dr. Sandford spread a clear page of nature before me and interpreted it. He answered unspoken questions; he filled great vacancies of my ignorance; into what had been abysses of thought he poured a whole treasury of intelligence and brought floods of light. All so quietly, so luminously, with such a wealth of knowledge and facility of giving it, that it is a simple thing to say no story of Eastern magic was ever given into more charmed ears around an Arabian desert fire. I listened and he talked and fanned me. He talked like one occupied with his subject and not with me: but he met every half-uttered doubt or question, and before he had done he satisfied it fully. I had always liked Dr. Sandford; I had never liked him so much; I had never, since the old childish times, had such a free talk with him. And now, he did not talk to me as a child or a very young girl, except in bending himself to my ignorance; but as one who loves knowledge likes to give it to others, so he gave it to me. Only I do not remember seeing him like to give it in such manner to anybody else. I think the novelty added to the zest when I thought about it; at the moment I had no time for side thoughts. At the moment my ears could but receive the pearls and diamonds of knowledge which came from the speaker's lips, set in silver of the simplest clear English. I notice that the people who have the most thorough grasp of a subject make ever least difficulty of words about it.

The sun was high and hot when we returned, but I cared nothing for that. I was more than ever sure that West Point was fairyland. The old spring of childish glee seemed to have come back to my nerves.

"Dinner is just ready," said Mrs. Sandford, meeting us in the hall. "Why, where *have* you been? And look at the colour of Daisy's face! Oh, Grant, what have you done with her?"

"Very good colour--" said the doctor, peering under my hat.

"She's all flushed and sunburnt, and overheated."

"Daisy is never anything but cool," he said; "unless when she gets hold of a principle, and somebody else gets hold of the other end. We'll look at these things after dinner, Daisy."

"Principles?" half exclaimed Mrs. Sandford, with so dismayed an expression that the doctor and I both laughed.

"Not exactly," said the doctor, putting his hand in his pocket. "Look here."

"I see nothing but a little dirt."

"You shall see something else by and by--if you will."

"You have never brought your microscope here, Grant? Where in the world will you set it up?"

"In your room--after dinner--if you permit."

Mrs. Sandford permitted; and though she did not care much about the investigations that followed, the doctor and I did. As delightful as the morning had been, the long afternoon stretched its bright hours along; till Mrs. Sandford insisted I must be dressed, and pushed the microscope into a corner and ordered the doctor away.

That was the beginning of the pleasantest course of lessons I ever had in my life. From that time Dr. Sandford and I spent a large part of every day in the hills; and often another large part over the microscope. No palace and gardens in the Arabian nights were ever more enchanting, than the glories of nature through which he led me; nor half so wonderful. "A little dirt," as it seemed to ordinary eyes, was the hidden entrance way oftentimes to halls of knowledge more magnificent and more rich than my fancy had ever dreamed of.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Sandford found a great many officers to talk to.

It was not till the evening of the next day following my first walk into the mountains, that I saw Preston. It was parade time; and I was sitting as usual on one of the iron settees which are placed for the convenience of spectators. I was almost always there at parade and guardmounting. The picture had a continual fascination for me, whether under the morning sun, or the evening sunset; and the music was charming. This time I was alone, Dr. and Mrs. Sandford being engaged in conversation with friends at a little distance. Following with my ear the variations of the air the band were playing my mind was at the same time dwelling on the riches it had just gained in the natural history researches of the day, and also taking in half consciously the colours of the hills and the light that spread over the plain; musing, in short, in a kind of dream of delight; when a grey figure came between me and my picture. Finding that it did not move, I raised my eyes.

"The same Daisy as ever!" said Preston, his eyes all alight with fun and pleasure. "The same as ever! And how came you here? and when did you come? and how did you come?"

"We have been here ever since Friday. Why haven't you been to see me? Dr. Sandford sent word to you."

"Dr. Sandford!" said Preston, taking the place by my side. "How did you come here, Daisy?"

"I came by the boat, last Friday. How should I come?"

"Who are you with?"

"Dr. Sandford--and Mrs. Sandford."

"Mrs. Sandford, and Dr. Sandford," said Preston, pointedly. "You are not with the doctor, I suppose."

"Why yes, I am," I answered. "He is my guardian--don't you know, Preston? He brought me. How tall you have grown!"

"A parcel of Yankees," said Preston. "Poor little Daisy."

"What do you mean by 'Yankees'?" I said. "You do not mean just people at the North, for you speak as if it was something bad."

"It is. So I do," said Preston. "They are a mean set--fit for nothing but to eat codfish and scrape. I wish you had nothing to do with Yankees."

I thought how all the South lived upon stolen earnings. It was a disagreeable turn to my meditations for a moment.

"Where have you hid yourself since you have come here?" Preston went on. "I have been to the hotel time and again to find you."

"Have you!" I said. "Oh, I suppose I was out walking."

"With whom were you walking."

"I don't know anybody here, but those I came with. But, Preston, why are you not over yonder with the others?"

I was looking at the long grey line formed in front of us on the plain.

"I got leave of absence, to come and see you, Daisy. And *you* have grown, and improved. You're wonderfully improved. Are you the very same Daisy? and what are you going to do here?"

"Oh, I'm enjoying myself. Now, Preston why does that man stand so?"

"What man?"

"That officer--here in front, standing all alone, with the sash and sword. Why does he stand so?"

"Hush. That is Captain Percival. He is the officer in charge."

"What is that?"

"Oh, he looks after the parade, and things."

"But why does he stand so, Preston?"

"Stand how?" said Preston, unsympathizingly. "That is good standing."

"Why, with his shoulders up to his ears," I said; "and his arms lifted up as if he was trying to put his elbows upon a

high shelf. It is *very* awkward."

"They all stand so," said Preston. "That's right enough."

"It is ungraceful."

"It is military."

"Must one be ungraceful in order to be military?"

"*He* isn't ungraceful. That is Percival--of South Carolina."

"The officer yesterday stood a great deal better," I went on.

"Yesterday? That was Blunt. He's a Yankee."

"Well, what then, Preston?" I said laughing.

"I despise them!"

"Aren't there Yankees among the cadets?"

"Of course; but they are no count--only here and there there's one of good family. Don't you have anything to do with them, Daisy!--mind;--not with one of them, unless I tell you who he is."

"With one of whom? What are you speaking of?"

"The cadets."

"Why I have nothing to do with them," I said. "How should I?"

Preston looked at me curiously.

"Nor at the hotel, neither, Daisy--more than you can help. Have nothing to say to the Yankees."

I thought Preston had taken a strange fancy. I was silent.

"It is not fitting," he went on. "We are going to change all that. I want to have nothing to do with Yankees."

"What are you going to change?" I asked. "I don't see how you can help having to do with them. They are among the cadets, and they are among the officers."

"We have our own set," said Preston. "I have nothing to do with them in the corps."

"Now, Preston, look; what are they about? All the red sashes are getting together."

"Parade is dismissed. They are coming up to salute the officer in charge."

"It is so pretty!" I said, as the music burst out again, and the measured steps of the advancing line of "red sashes" marked it. "And now Captain Percival will unbend his stiff elbows. Why could not all that be done easily, Preston?"

"Nonsense, Daisy!--it is military."

"Is it? But Mr. Blunt did it a great deal better. Now they are going. Must you go?"

"Yes. What are you going to do to-morrow?"

"I don't know--I suppose we shall go into the woods again."

"When the examination is over, I can attend to you. I haven't much time just now. But there is really nothing to be done here, since one can't get on horseback out of the hours."

"I don't want anything better than I can get on my own feet," I said joyously. "I find plenty to do."

"Look here, Daisy," said Preston--"don't you turn into a masculine, muscular woman, that can walk her twenty miles and wear hobnailed shoes--like the Yankees you are among. Don't forget that you are the daughter of a Southern gentleman--"

He touched his cap hastily and turned away--walking with those measured steps towards the barracks; whither now all the companies of grey figures were in full retreat. I stood wondering, and then slowly returned with my friends to the hotel; much puzzled to account for Preston's discomposure and strange injunctions. The sunlight had left the tops of

the hills; the river slept in the gathering grey shadows, soft, tranquil, reposeful. Before I got to the hotel, I had quite made up my mind that my cousin's eccentricities were of no consequence.

They recurred to me, however, and were as puzzling as ever. I had no key at the time.

The next afternoon was given to a very lively show: the light artillery drill before the Board of Visitors. We sat out under the trees to behold it; and I found out now the meaning of the broad strip of plain between the hotel and the library, which was brown and dusty in the midst of the universal green. Over this strip, round and round, back, and forth, and across, the light artillery wagons rushed, as if to show what they could do in time of need. It was a beautiful sight, exciting and stirring; with the beat of horses' hoofs, the clatter of harness, the rumble of wheels tearing along over the ground, the flash of a sabre now and then, the ringing words of command, and the soft, shrill echoing bugle which repeated them. I only wanted to understand it all; and in the evening I plied Preston with questions. He explained things to me patiently.

"I understand," I said, at last, "I understand what it would do in war time. But we are not at war, Preston."

"No."

"Nor in the least likely to be."

"We can't tell. It is good to be ready."

"But what do you mean?" I remember saying. "You speak as if we might be at war. Who is there for us to fight?"

"Anybody that wants putting in order," said Preston. "The Indians."

"O Preston, Preston!" I exclaimed. "The Indians! when we have been doing them wrong ever since the white men came here; and you want to do them more wrong!"

"I want to hinder them from doing us wrong. But I don't care about the Indians, little Daisy. I would just as lief fight the Yankees."

"Preston, I think you are very wrong."

"You think all the world is," he said.

We were silent, and I felt very dissatisfied. What *was* all this military schooling a preparation for, perhaps? How could we know. Maybe these heads and hands, so gay to-day in their mock fight, would be grimly and sadly at work by and by, in real encounter with some real enemy.

"Do you see that man, Daisy?" whispered Preston, suddenly in my ear. "That one talking to a lady in blue."

We were on the parade ground, among a crowd of spectators, for the hotels were very full, and the Point very gay now. I said I saw him.

"That is a great man."

"Is he?" I said, looking and wondering if a great man could hide behind such a physiognomy.

"Other people think so, I can tell you," said Preston. "Nobody knows what that man can do. That is Davis of Mississippi."

The name meant nothing to me then. I looked at him as I would have looked at another man. And I did not like what I saw. Something of sinister, nothing noble, about the countenance; power there might be--Preston said there was--but the power of the fox and the vulture it seemed to me; sly, crafty, selfish, cruel.

"If nobody knows what he can do, how is it so certain that he is a great man?" I asked. Preston did not answer. "I hope there are not many great men that look like him." I went on.

"Nonsense, Daisy!" said Preston, in an energetic whisper. "That is Davis of Mississippi."

"Well?" said I. "That is no more to me than if he were Jones of New York."

"Daisy!" said Preston. "If you are not a true Southerner, I will never love you any more."

"What do you mean by a true Southerner? I do not understand."

"Yes, you do. A true Southerner is always a Southerner, and takes the part of a Southerner in every dispute--right or wrong."

"What makes you dislike Northerners so much?"

"Cowardly Yankees!" was Preston's reply.

"You must have an uncomfortable time among them, if you feel so," I said.

"There are plenty of the true sort here. I wish you were in Paris, Daisy; or somewhere else."

"Why?" I said, laughing.

"Safe with my mother, or *your* mother. You want teaching. You are too latitudinarian. And you are too thick with the Yankees, by half."

I let this opinion alone, as I could do nothing with it; and our conversation broke off with Preston in a very bad humour.

The next day, when we were deep in the woods, I asked Dr. Sandford if he knew Mr. Davis of Mississippi. He answered Yes, rather drily. I knew the doctor knew everybody.

I asked why Preston called him a great man.

"Does he call him a great man?" Dr. Sandford asked.

"Do you?"

"No, not I, Daisy. But that may not hinder the fact. And I may not have Mr. Gary's means of judging."

"What means can he have?" I said.

"Daisy," said Dr. Sandford suddenly, when I had forgotten the question in plunging through a thicket of brushwood, "if the North and the South should split on the subject of slavery, what side would you take?"

"What do you mean by a 'split'?" I asked slowly, in my wonderment.

"The States are not precisely like a perfect crystal, Daisy, and there is an incipient cleavage somewhere about Mason and Dixon's line."

"I do not know what line that is."

"No. Well, for practical purposes, you may take it as the line between the slave States and the free."

"But how could there be a split?" I asked.

"There is a wedge applied even now, Daisy--the question whether the new States forming out of our Western territories, shall have slavery in them or shall be free States."

I was silent upon this; and we walked and climbed for a little distance, without my remembering our geological or mineralogical, or any other objects in view.

"The North say," Dr. Sandford then went on, "that these States shall be free. The South--or some men at the South--threaten that if they be, the South will split from the North, have nothing to do with us, and set up for themselves."

"Who is to decide it?" I asked.

"The people. This fall the election will be held for the next President; and that will show. If a slavery man be chosen, we shall know that a majority of the nation go with the Southern view."

"If not?"--

"Then there may be trouble, Daisy."

"What sort of trouble?" I asked hastily.

Dr. Sandford hesitated, and then said, "I do not know how far people will go."

I mused, and forgot the sweet flutter of green leaves, and smell of moss and of hemlock, and golden bursts of sunshine, amongst which we were pursuing our way. Preston's strange heat and Southernism, Mr. Davis's wife and greatness, a coming disputed election, quarrels between the people where I was born and the people where I was brought up, divisions and jealousies, floated before my mind in unlovely and confused visions. Then, remembering my father and my mother and Gary McFarlane, and others whom I had known, I spoke again.

"Whatever the Southern people say, they will do, Dr. Sandford."

"*Provided--*" said the doctor.

"What, if you please?"

"Provided the North will let them, Daisy."

I thought privately they could not hinder. Would there be a trial? Could it be possible there would be a trial?

"But you have not answered my question," said the doctor. "Aren't you going to answer it?"

"What question?"

"As to the side you would take."

"I do not want any more slave States, Dr. Sandford."

"I thought so. Then you would be with the North."

"But people will never be so foolish as to come to what you call a 'split,' Dr. Sandford."

"Upon my word, Daisy, as the world is at present, the folly of a thing is no presumptive argument against its coming into existence. Look--here we shall get a nice piece of quartz for your collection."

I came back to the primary rocks, and for the present dismissed the subject of the confusions existing on the surface of the earth; hoping sincerely that there would be no occasion for calling it up again.

For some time I saw very little of Preston. He was busy, he said. My days flowed on like the summer sunshine, and were as beneficent. I was gaining strength every day. Dr. Sandford decreed that I must stay as long as possible. Then Mr. Sandford came, the doctor's brother, and added his social weight to our party. Hardly needed, for I perceived that we were very much sought after; at least my companions. The doctor in especial was a very great favourite, both with men and women; who I notice are most ready to bestow their favour where it is least cared for. I don't know but Dr. Sandford cared for it; only he did not show that he did. The claims of society however began to interfere with my geological and other lessons.

A few days after his brother's arrival, the doctor had been carried off by a party of gentlemen who were going back in the mountains to fish in the White Lakes. I was left to the usual summer delights of the place; which indeed to me were numberless; began with the echo of the morning gun (or before) and ended not till the three taps of the drum at night. The cadets had gone into camp by this time; and the taps of the drum were quite near, as well as the shrill sweet notes of the fife at reveille and tattoo. The camp itself was a great pleasure to me; and at guardmounting or parade I never failed to be in my place. Only to sit in the rear of the guard tents and watch the morning sunlight on the turf, and on the hills over the river, and shining down the camp alleys, was a rich satisfaction. Mrs. Sandford laughed at me; her husband said it was "natural," though I am sure he did not understand it a bit; but the end of all was, that I was left very often to go alone down the little path to the guard tents among the crowd that twice a day poured out there from our hotel and met the crowd that came up from Cozzens's hotel below.

So it was, one morning that I remember. Guardmounting was always late enough to let one feel the sun's power; and it was a sultry morning, this. We were in July now, and misty, vaporous clouds moved slowly over the blue sky, seeming to intensify the heat of the unclouded intervals. But wonderful sweet it was; and I under the shade of my flat hat, with a little help from the foliage of a young tree, did not mind it at all. Every bit of the scene was a pleasure to me; I missed none of the details. The files of cadets in the camp alleys getting their arms inspected; the white tents themselves, with curtains tightly done up; here and there an officer crossing the camp ground and stopping to speak to an orderly; then the coming up of the band, the music, the marching out of the companies; the leisurely walk from the camp of the officer in charge, drawing on his white gloves; his stand and his attitude; and then the pretty business of the parade. All under that July sky; all under that flicker of cloud and sun, and the soft sweet breath of air that sometimes stole to us to relieve the hot stillness; and all with that setting and background of cedars and young foliage and bordering hills over which the cloud shadows swept. Then came the mounting-guard business. By and by Preston came to me.

"Awfully hot, Daisy!" he said.

"Yes, you are out in it," I said, compassionately.

"What are *you* out in it for?"

"Why, I like it," I said. "How come you to be one of the red sashes this morning?"

"I have been an officer of the guard this last twenty-four hours."

"Since yesterday morning?"

"Yes."

"Do you like it, Preston?"

"*Like* it!" he said. "Like guard duty! Why, Daisy, when a fellow has left his shoe-string untied, or something or other like that, they put him on extra guard duty to punish him."

"Did you ever do so, Preston?"

"Did I ever do so?" he repeated savagely. "Do you think I have been raised like a Yankee, to take care of my shoes? That Blunt is just fit to stand behind a counter and measure inches!"

I was very near laughing, but Preston was not in a mood to bear laughing at.

"I don't think it is beneath a gentleman to keep his shoe-strings tied," I said.

"A gentleman can't always think of everything!" he replied.

"Then you are glad you have only one year more at the Academy?"

"Of course I am glad! I'll never be under Yankee rule again; not if I know it."

"Suppose they elect a Yankee President?" I said; but Preston's look was so eager and so sharp at me that I was glad to cover my rash suggestion under another subject as soon as possible.

"Are you going to be busy this afternoon?" I asked him.

"No, I reckon not."

"Suppose you come and go up to the fort with me?"

"What fort?"

"Fort Putnam. I have never been there yet."

"There is nothing on earth to go there for," said Preston, shrugging his shoulders. "Just broil yourself in the sun, and get nothing for it. It's an awful pull uphill; rough, and all that; and nothing at the top but an old stone wall."

"But there is the view!" I said.

"You have got it down here--just as good. Just climb up the hotel stairs fifty times without stopping, and then look out of the thing at the top--and you have been to Fort Putnam."

"Why, I want you to go to the top of Crow's Nest," I said.

"Yes! I was ass enough to try that once," said Preston, "when I was just come, and thought I must do everything; but if anybody wants to insult me, let him just ask me to do it again!"

Preston's mood was unmanageable. I had never seen him so in old times. I thought West Point did not agree with him. I listened to the band, just then playing a fine air, and lamented privately to myself that brass instruments should be so much more harmonious than human tempers. Then the music ceased and the military movements drew my attention again.

"They all walk like you," I observed carelessly, as I noticed a measured step crossing the camp ground.

"Do they?" said Preston sneeringly. "I flatter myself I do not walk like *all* of them. If you notice more closely, Daisy, you will see a difference. You can tell a Southerner, on foot or on horseback, from the sons of tailors and farmers--strange if you couldn't!"

"I think you are unjust, Preston," I said. "You should not talk so. Major Blunt walks as well and stands much better than any officer I have seen; and he is from Vermont; and Capt. Percival is from South Carolina, and Mr. Hunter is from Virginia, and Col. Forsyth is from Georgia. They are all of them less graceful than Major Blunt."

"What do you think of Dr. Sandford?" said Preston in the same tone; but before I could answer I heard a call of "Gary!-Gary!" I looked round. In the midst of the ranks of spectators to our left stood a cadet, my friend of the omnibus. He

was looking impatiently our way, and again exclaimed in a sort of suppressed shout--"Gary!" Preston heard him that time; started from my side, and placed himself immediately beside his summoner, in front of the guard tents and spectators. The two were in line, two or three yards separating them, and both facing towards a party drawn up at some little distance on the camp ground, which I believe were the relieving guard. I moved my own position to a place immediately behind them, where I spied an empty camp-stool, and watched the two with curious eyes. Uniforms, and military conformities generally, are queer things if you take the right point of view. Here were these two, a pair, and not a pair. The grey coat and the white pantaloons (they had all gone into white now), the little soldier's cap, were a counterpart in each of the other; the two even stood on the ground as if they were bound to be patterns each of the other; and when my acquaintance raised his arms and folded them after the most approved fashion, to my great amusement Preston's arms copied the movement: and they stood like two brother statues still, from their heels to their cap rims. Except when once the right arm of my unknown friend was unbent to give a military sign, in answer to some demand or address from somebody in front of him which I did not hear. Yet as I watched, I began to discern how individual my two statues really were. I could not see faces, of course. But the grey coat on the one looked as if its shoulders had been more carefully brushed than had been the case with the other; the spotless pantaloons, which seemed to be just out of the laundress's basket, as I suppose they were, sat with a trimmer perfection in one case than in the other. Preston's pocket gaped, and was, I noticed, a little bit ripped; and when my eye got down to the shoes, his had not the black gloss of his companion's. With that one there was not, I think, a thread awry. And then, there was a certain relaxation in the lines of Preston's figure impossible to describe, stiff and motionless though he was; something which prepared one for a lax and careless movement when he moved. Perhaps this was fancy and only arose from my knowledge of the fact; but with the other no such fancy was possible. Still, but alert; motionless, but full of vigour; I expected what came; firm, quick, and easy action, as soon as he should cease to be a statue.

So much to a back view of character; which engrossed me till my two statues went away.

A little while after Preston came. "Are you here yet?" he said.

"Don't you like to have me here?"

"It's hot. And it is very stupid for you, I should think. Where is Mrs. Sandford?"

"She thinks as you do, that it is stupid."

"You ought not to be here without some one."

"Why not? What cadet was that who called you, Preston?"

"Called me? Nobody called me."

"Yes he did. When you were sitting with me. Who was it?"

"I don't know!" said Preston. "Good-bye. I shall be busy for a day or two."

"Then you cannot go to Fort Putnam this afternoon?"

"Fort Putnam? I should think not. It will be broiling to-day."

And he left me. Things had gone wrong with Preston lately, I thought. Before I had made up my mind to move, two other cadets came before me. One of them Mrs. Sandford knew, and I slightly.

"Miss Randolph, my friend Mr. Thorold has begged me to introduce him to you."

It was *my* friend of the omnibus. I think we liked each other at this very first moment. I looked up at a manly, well-featured face, just then lighted with a little smile of deference and recognition; but permanently lighted with the brightest and quickest hazel eyes that I ever saw. Something about the face pleased me on the instant. I believe it was the frankness.

"I have to apologize for my rudeness, in calling a gentleman away from you, Miss Randolph, in a very unceremonious manner, a little while ago."

"Oh, I know," I said. "I saw what you did with him."

"Did I do anything with him?"

"Only called him to his duty, I suppose."

"Precisely. He was very excusable for forgetting it; but it might have been inconvenient."

"Do you think it is ever excusable to forget duty?" I asked; and I was rewarded with a swift flash of fun in the hazel eyes, that came and went like forked lightning.

"It is not easily pardoned here," he answered.

"People don't make allowances?"

"Not officers," he said, with a smile. "Soldiers lose the character of men, when on duty; they are only reckoned machines."

"You do not mean that exactly, I suppose."

"Indeed I do!" he said, with another slighter coruscation. "Intelligent machines, of course, and with no more latitude of action. You would not like that life?"

"I should think you would not."

"Ah, but we hope to rise to the management of the machines, some day."

I thought I saw in his face that he did. I remarked that I thought the management of machines could not be very pleasant.

"Why not?"

"It is degrading to the machines--and so, I should think, it would not be very elevating to those that make them machines."

"That is exactly the use they propose them to serve, though," he said, looking amused; "the elevation of themselves."

"I know," I said, thinking that the end was ignoble too.

"You do not approve it?" he said.

I felt those brilliant eyes dancing all over me and, I fancied, over my thoughts too. I felt a little shy of going on to explain myself to one whom I knew so little. He turned the conversation, by asking me if I had seen all the lions yet.

I said I supposed not.

"Have you been up to the old fort?"

"I want to go there," I said; "but somebody told me to-day, there was nothing worth going for."

"Has his report taken away your desire to make the trial?"

"No, for I do not believe he is right."

"Might I offer myself as a guide? I can be disengaged this afternoon; and I know all the ways to the fort. It would give me great pleasure."

I felt it would give me great pleasure too, and so I told him. We arranged for the hour, and Mr. Thorold hastened away.



CHAPTER XV.

FORT PUTNAM.

I AM going to Fort Putnam this afternoon, with Mr. Thorold," I announced to Mrs. Sandford, after dinner.

"Who is Mr. Thorold?"

"One of the cadets."

"One of the cadets! So it has got hold of you at last, Daisy!"

"What, Mrs. Sandford?"

"But Fort Putnam? My dearest child, it is very hot!"

"Oh, yes, ma'am--I don't mind it."

"Well, I am very glad, if you don't," said Mrs. Sandford. "And I am very glad Grant has taken himself off to the White Lakes. He gave nobody else any chance. It will do you a world of good."

"What will?" I asked, wondering.

"Amusement, dear--amusement. Something a great deal better than Grant's 'elogies and 'ologies. Now this would never have happened if he had been at home."

I did not understand her, but then I knew she did not understand the pursuits she so slighted; and it was beyond my powers to enlighten her. So I did not try.

Mr. Thorold was punctual, and so was I; and we set forth at five o'clock, I at least was happy as it was possible to be. Warm it was, yet; we went slowly down the road, in shadow and sunshine; tasting the pleasantness, it seems to me, of every tree, and feeling the sweetness of each breath; in that slight exhilaration of spirits which loses nothing and forgets nothing. At least I have a good memory for such times. There was a little excitement, no doubt, about going this walk with a cadet and a stranger, which helped the whole effect.

I made use of my opportunity to gain a great deal of information which Dr. Sandford could not give. I wanted to understand the meaning and the use of many things I saw about the Point. Batteries and fortifications were a mysterious jumble to me; shells were a horrible novelty; the whole art and trade of a soldier, something well worth studying, but difficult to see as a reasonable whole. The adaptation of parts to an end, I could perceive; the end itself puzzled me.

"Yet there has always been fighting," said my companion.

"Yes," I assented.

"Then we must be ready for it."

But I was not prepared in this case with my answer.

"Suppose we were unjustly attacked?" said Mr. Thorold; and I thought every one of the gilt buttons on his grey jacket repelled the idea of a peaceable composition.

"I don't know," said I, pondering. "Why should the rule be different for nations and for individual people?"

"What is your rule for individual people?" he asked, laughing, and looking down at me, as he held the gate open. I can see the look and the attitude now.

"It is not *my* rule," I said.

"*The* rule, then. What should a man do, Miss Randolph, when he is unjustly attacked?"

I felt I was on very untenable ground, talking to a soldier. If I was right, what was the use of his grey coat, or of West Point itself? We were mounting the little steep pitch beyond the gate, where the road turns; and I waited till I got upon level footing. Then catching a bright inquisitive glance of the hazel eyes, I summoned up my courage and spoke.

"I have no rule but the Bible, Mr. Thorold."

"The Bible! What does the Bible say? It tells us of a great deal of fighting."

"Of bad men."

"Yes, but the Jews were commanded to fight, were they not?"

"To punish bad men. But we have got another rule since that."

"What is it?"

"If any man smite thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other also."

"Is it possible you think the Bible means that literally?" he said.

"Do you think it would say what it did not mean?"

"But try it by the moral effect; what sort of a fellow would a man be who did so, Miss Randolph?"

"I think he would be fine!" I said; for I was thinking of One who, "when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not." But I could not tell all my thought to Mr. Thorold; no more than I could to Dr. Sandford.

"And would you have him stand by and see another injured?" my companion asked. "Wouldn't you have him fight in such a case?"

I had not considered that question. I was silent.

"Suppose he sees wrong done; wrong that a few well-planted blows, or shots, if you like--shots are but well-directed blows," he said, smiling--"wrong that a few well-planted blows would prevent. Suppose somebody were to attack you now, for instance; ought I not to fight for it?"

"I should like to have you," I said.

"Come!" he said, laughing, and stretching out his hand to shake mine, "I see you will let me keep my profession, after all. And why should not a nation do, on a larger scale, what a man may do?"

"Why it may," I said.

"Then West Point is justified."

"But very few wars in the world are conducted on that principle," I said.

"Very few. In fact I do not at this moment recollect the instances. But you would allow a man, or a nation, to fight in self-defence, would not you?"

I pondered the matter. "I suppose he has a right to protect his life," I said. "But, 'if a man smite thee on the cheek,' *that* does not touch life."

"What would you think of a man," said my companion, gravely, "who should suffer some one to give him such a blow, without taking any notice of it?"

"If he did it because he was *afraid*," I said, "of course I shouldn't like that. But if he did it to obey the Bible, I should think it was noble. The Bible says, 'it is glory to pass by a transgression.'"

"But suppose he was afraid of being thought afraid?"

I looked at my companion, and felt instinctively sure that neither this nor my first supposed case would ever be true of him. Further, I felt sure that no one would ever be hardy enough to give the supposed occasion. I can hardly tell how I knew; it was by some of those indescribable natural signs. We were slowly mounting the hill; and in every powerful, lithe movement, in the very set of his shoulders and head, and as well in the sparkle of the bright eye which looked round at me, I read the tokens of a spirit which I thought neither had known nor ever would know the sort of indignity he had described. He was talking for talk's sake. But while I looked, the sparkle of the eye grew very merry.

"You are judging me, Miss Randolph," he said. "Judge me gently."

"No, indeed," I said. "I was thinking that you are not speaking from experience."

"I am not better than you think me," he said, laughing, and shaking his head. And the laugh was so full of merriment that it infected me. I saw he was very much amused; I thought he was a little interested, too. "You know," he went on, "my education has been unfavourable. I have fought for a smaller matter than that you judge insufficient."

"Did it do any good?" I asked.

He laughed again: picked up a stone and threw it into the midst of a thick tree to dislodge something--I did not see what; and finally looked round at me with the most genial amusement and good nature mixed. I knew he was interested now.

"I don't know how much good it did to anybody but myself," he said. "It comforted me--at the time. Afterwards I remember thinking it was hardly worth while. But if a fellow should suffer an insult, as you say, and not take any notice of it, what do you suppose would become of him in the corps--or in the world either?"

"He would be a noble man, all the same," I said.

"But people like to be well thought of by their friends and society."

"I know that."

"He would be sent to Coventry unmitigatedly."

"I cannot help it, Mr. Thorold," I said. "If anybody does wrong because he is afraid of the consequences of doing right, he is another sort of a coward--that is all."

Mr. Thorold laughed, and catching my hand as we came to a turn in the road where the woods fell away right and left, brought me quick round the angle, without letting me go to the edge of the bank to get the view.

"You must not look till you get to the top," he said.

"What an odd road!" I remarked. "It just goes by zigzags."

"The only way to get up at all, without travelling round the hill. That is, for horses."

It was steep enough for foot wayfarers, but the road was exceeding comfortable that day. We were under the shade of trees all the way; and talk never lagged. Mr. Thorold was infinitely pleasant to me; as well as unlike any one of all my former acquaintances. There was a wealth of life in him that delighted my quieter nature; an amount of animal spirits that were just a constant little impetus to me; and from the first I got an impression of strength, such as weakness loves to have near. Bodily strength he had also, in perfection; but I mean now the firm, self-reliant nature, quick at resources, ready to act as to decide, and full of the power that has its spring and magazine in character alone. So, enjoying each other, we went slowly up the zigzags of the hill, very steep in places, and very rough to the foot; but the last pitch was smoother, and there the grey old bulwarks of the ruined fortification faced down upon us, just above.

"Now," said Mr. Thorold, coming on the outside of me to prevent it, "don't look!"--and we turned into the entrance of the fort, between two outstanding walls. Going through, we hurried up a little steep rise, till we got to a smooth spread of grass, sloping gently to a level with the top of the wall. Where this slope reached its highest, where the parapet (as Mr. Thorold called it) commanded a clear view from the eastern side, there he brought me, and then permitted me to stand still. I do not know how long I stood quite still without speaking.

"Will you sit down?" said my companion; and I found he had spread a pocket-handkerchief on the bank for me. The turf in that place was about eighteen inches higher than the top of the wall, making a very convenient seat. I thought of Queen Elizabeth and Sir Walter Raleigh; but I also thought the most queenly thing I could do was to take the offered civility, and I sat down. My eyes were bewildered with the beauty; they turned from one point to another with a sort of wondering, insatiable enjoyment. There, beneath our feet, lay the little level green plain; its roads and trees all before us as in a map, with the lines of building enclosing it on the south and west. A cart and oxen were slowly travelling across the road between the library and the hotel, looking like minute ants dragging a crumb along. Beyond them was the stretch of brown earth, where the cavalry exercises forbade a blade of grass to show itself. And beyond that, at the farther edge of the plain, the little white camp; its straight rows of tents and the alleys between all clearly marked out. Round all this the river curved, making a promontory of it; a promontory with fringed banks, and levelled at top, as it seemed, just to receive the Military Academy. On the other side the river, a long sweep of gentle hills, coloured in the fair colours of the evening; curving towards the north-east into a beautiful circle of soft outlines back of the mountain which rose steep and bold at the water's edge. This mountain was the first of the group I had seen from my hotel window. Houses and churches nestled in the curve of tableland, under the mountain. Due north, the parapet of the fort rising sharply at its northern angle a few feet from where I sat, hindered my full view. Southerly, the hills swept down, marking the course of the river for many a mile; but again from where I sat I could not see how far. With a sigh of pleasure my eye came back to the plain and the white tents.

"Is guard duty very disagreeable?" I asked, thinking of Preston's talk in the morning.

"Why at mid-day, with the thermometer at 90deg, it is not exactly the amusement one would choose," said Mr. Thorold. "I like it at night well enough."

"What do you do?"

"Nothing, but walk up and down, two hours at a time."

"What is the use of it?"

"To keep order, and make sure that nothing goes in or out that has no business to do it."

"And they have to carry their guns," I said.

"Their muskets--yes."

"Are they very heavy?"

"No. Pretty heavy for an arm that is new to it. I never remember I have mine."

"Mr. Caxton said," (Mr. Caxton was the cadet who had introduced Mr. Thorold to me)--"Mr. Caxton told Mrs. Sandford that the new cadets are sometimes so exhausted with their tour of duty that they have to be carried off the ground."

Mr. Thorold looked at me, a very keen bright look of his hazel eyes; but he said nothing.

"And he said that the little white boxes at the corners of the camp, were monuments to those who had fallen on duty."

"Just four of them!" said Mr. Thorold, settling his cap down over his brows; but then he laughed, and I laughed; how we laughed!

"Don't you want to see the rest of it?" he said, jumping up. I did not know there was anything more to see. Now however he brought me up on the high angle of the parapet that had intercepted my view to the north. I could hardly get away from there. The full magnificence of the mountains in that quarter; the river's course between them, the blue hills of the distant Shawangunk range, and the woody chasm immediately at my feet, stretching from the height where I stood over to the crest of the Crow's Nest; it took away my breath. I sat down again, while Mr. Thorold pointed out localities; and did not move, till I had to make way for another party of visitors who were coming. Then Mr. Thorold took me all round the edge of the fort. At the south, we looked down into the woody gorge where Dr. Sandford and I had hunted for fossil infusoria. From here the long channel of the river running southerly, with its bordering ridge of hills, and above all, the wealth and glory of the woodland and the unheaved rocks before me, were almost as good as the eastern view. The path along the parapet in places was narrow and dizzy; but I did not care for it, and my companion went like a chamois. He helped me over the hard places; hand in hand we ran down the steep slopes; and as we went we got very well acquainted. At last we climbed up the crumbling masonry to a small platform which commanded the view both east and south.

"What is this place for?" I asked.

"To plant guns on."

"They could not reach to the river, could they?"

"Much further--the guns of nowadays."

"And the old vaults under here--I saw them as we passed by,--were they prisons, places for prisoners?"

"A sort of involuntary prisoners," said Mr. Thorold. "They are only casemates; prisons for our own men occasionally, when shot and shell might be flying too thick; hiding-places, in short. Would you like to go to the laboratory some day, where we learn to make different kinds of shot, and fire-works and such things?"

"Oh, very much! But, Mr. Thorold, Mr. Caxton told me that Andre was confined in one of these places under here; he said his name was written upon the stones in a dark corner, and that I would find it."

Mr. Thorold looked at me, with an expression of such contained fun that I understood it at once; and we had another laugh together. I began to wonder whether every one that wore a uniform of grey and white with gilt buttons made it his amusement to play upon the ignorance of uninitiated people; but on reflection I could not think Mr. Thorold had done so. I resolved to be careful how I trusted the rest of the cadets, even Preston; and indeed my companion remarked that I had better not believe anything I heard without asking him. We ran down and inspected the casemates; and then took our seats again for one last look on the eastern parapet. The river and hills were growing lovely in cooler lights; shadow was stealing over the plain.

"Shall I see you to-morrow evening?" my companion asked suddenly.

"To-morrow evening?" I said. "I don't know. I suppose we shall be at home."

"Then I shall *not* see you. I meant, at the hop."

"The hop?" I repeated. "What is that?"

"The cadets' hop. During the encampment we have a hop three times a week--a cotillion party. I hope you will be there. Haven't you received an invitation?"

"I think not," I said. "I have heard nothing about it."

"I will see that that is set right," Mr. Thorold remarked. "And now, do you know we must go down?--that is, *I* must; and I do not think I can leave you here."

"Oh, you have to be on parade!" I exclaimed, starting up; "and it is almost time!"

It was indeed, and though my companion put his own concerns in the background very politely, I would be hurried. We ran down the hill, Mr. Thorold's hand helping me over the rough way and securing me from stumbling. In very few minutes we were again at the gate and entered upon the post limits. And there were the band, in dark column, just coming up from below the hill.

We walked the rest of the way in orderly fashion enough, till we got to the hotel gate; there Mr. Thorold touched his cap and left me, on a run, for the camp. I watched till I saw he got there in time, and then went slowly in; feeling that a great piece of pleasure was over.

I had had a great many pieces of pleasure in my life, but rarely a *companion*. Dr. Sandford, Miss Cardigan, my dear Capt. Drummond, were all much in advance of my own age; my servants were my servants, at Magnolia; and Preston had never associated with me on just the footing of equality. I went upstairs thinking that I should like to see a great deal more of Mr. Thorold.

Mrs. Sandford was on the piazza when I came down, and alone; everybody was gone to parade. She gave me a little billet.

"Well, my dear Daisy!--are you walked to death? Certainly, West Point agrees with you! What a colour! And what a change! You are not the same creature that we brought away from New York. Well, was it worth going for, all the way to see that old ruin? My dear! I wish your father and mother could see you."

I stood still, wishing they could.

"There is more pleasure for you," Mrs. Sandford went on.

"What is this, ma'am?"

"An invitation. The cadets have little parties for dancing, it seems, three times a week, in summer; poor fellows! it is all the recreation they get, I suspect; and of course, they want all the ladies that can be drummed up, to help them to dance. It's quite a charity, they tell me. I expect I shall have to dance myself."

I looked at the note, and stood mute, thinking what I should do. Ever since Mr. Thorold had mentioned it, up on the hill, the question had been recurring to me. I had never been to a party in my life, since my childish days at Melbourne. Aunt Gary's parties at Magnolia had been of a different kind from this; not assemblies of young people. At Mme. Ricard's I had taken dancing lessons, at my mother's order; and in her drawing room I had danced quadrilles and waltzes with my schoolfellows; but Mme. Ricard was very particular, and nobody else was ever admitted. I hardly knew what it was to which I was now invited. To dance with the cadets! I knew only three of them; however, I supposed that I might dance with those three. I had an impression that amusements of this kind were rather found in the houses of the gay than the sober-minded; but this was peculiar, to help the cadets' dance, Mrs. Sandford said. I thought Mr. Thorold wished I would come. I wondered Preston had not mentioned it. He, I knew, was very fond of dancing. I mused till the people came back from parade and we were called to tea; but all my musings went no further. I did not decide *not* to go.

"Now, Daisy," said Mrs. Sandford the next morning, "if you are going to the hop to-night, I don't intend to have you out in the sun burning yourself up. It will be terribly hot; and you must keep quiet. I am so thankful Grant is away! he would have you all through the woods, hunting for nobody knows what, and bringing you home scorched."

"Dear Mrs. Sandford," I said, "I can dance just as well, if I *am* burnt."

"That's a delusion, Daisy. You are a woman, after all, my dear--or you will be; and you may as well submit to the

responsibility. And you may not know it, but you have a wonderfully fine skin, my dear; it always puts me in mind of fresh cream."

"Cream is yellow," I said.

"Not all the cream that ever *I* saw," said Mrs. Sandford. "Daisy, you need not laugh. You will be a queen, my dear, when you cease to be a child. What are you going to wear to-night?"

"I don't know, ma'am; anything cool, I suppose."

"It won't matter much," Mrs. Sandford repeated.

But yet I found she cared, and it did matter, when it came to the dressing-time. However she was satisfied with one of the embroidered muslins my mother had sent me from Paris.

I think I see myself now, seated in the omnibus and trundling over the plain to the cadets' dancing-rooms. The very hot, still July night seems round me again. Lights were twinkling in the camp, and across the plain in the houses of the professors and officers; lights above in the sky too, myriads of them, mocking the tapers that go out so soon. I was happy with a little flutter of expectation; quietly enjoying meanwhile the novel loveliness of all about me, along with the old familiar beauty of the abiding stars and dark blue sky. It was a five minutes of great enjoyment. But all natural beauty vanished from my thoughts when the omnibus drew up at the door of the Academic Building. I was entering on something untried.

At first sight, when we went into the room, it burst upon me that it was very pretty. The room was dressed with flags,--and evergreens,--and with uniforms; and undoubtedly there is charm in colour, and a gilt button and a gold strap do light up the otherwise sombre and heavy figures of our Western masculine costume. The white and rosy and blue draperies and scarfs that were floating around the forms of the ladies, were met and set off by the grey and white of the cadets and the heavier dark blue of the officers. I never anywhere else saw so pretty gatherings. I stood quite enchanted with the pleasure of the eye; till to my startled astonishment, Capt. Percival came up and asked me to dance with him. I had not expected to dance with anybody except Preston, and Mr. Thorold, and perhaps Mr. Caxton. Mr. Thorold came up before the dance began, and I presented him to Mrs. Sandford. He asked me for the first dance, then for the second. And there was no more time for anything, for the dancing began.

I had always liked dancing at school. Here the music was far better and the scene infinitely prettier; it was very pleasant, I thought. That is, when Capt. Percival did not talk; for he talked nothings. I did not know how to answer him. Of course it had been very hot to-day; and the rooms were very full; and there were a good many people at the hotel. I had nothing but an insipid affirmative to give to these propositions. Then said Capt. Percival insinuatingly--

"You are from the South?"

I had nothing but an insipid assent again.

"I was sure of it," he said. "I could not be mistaken."

I wondered how he knew, but it did not suit me to ask him; and we danced on again till the dance came to an end. I was glad when it did. In a minute more I was standing by Mrs. Sandford and introduced to Capt. Boulanger, who also asked me to dance, and engaged me for the next but one; and then Mr. Caxton brought up one of his brother cadets and presented him, and *he* asked me, and looked disappointed when for both the next dances I was obliged to refuse him. I was quite glad when Mr. Thorold came and carried me off. The second quadrille went better than the first; and I was enjoying myself unfeignedly, when in a pause of the dance I remarked to my partner that there seemed to be plenty of ladies here to-night.

"Plenty," he said. "It is very kind of them. What then?"

"Only--" I said--"so many people came and asked me to dance in the few minutes I stood by Mrs. Sandford, and one of them looked quite disappointed that he could not have me."

I was met by a look of the keenest inquiry, followed instantly and superseded by another flash of expression. I could not comprehend it at the time. The eyes, which had startled me by their steely gleam, softened wonderfully with what looked like nothing so much as reverence, along with some other expression which I could neither read at the moment nor fathom afterwards.

Both looks were gone before I could ask him what they meant, or perhaps I should have asked; for I was beginning to feel very much at my ease with Mr. Thorold. I trusted him.

"Did he want you for this dance?" was all he said.

"For this, and for the next," I answered.

"Both gone! Well, may I have the third, and so disappoint somebody else?" he said, laughing.

If I did not talk much with Mr. Thorold in intervals of dancing, at least we did not talk nonsense. In the next pause he remarked that he saw I was fond of this amusement.

"I think I like everything," I told him.

"Are the hills better than this?" he whispered.

"Oh, yes!" I said. "Don't you think so?"

He smiled, and said "truly he did." "You have been over the Flirtation walk, of course?" he added.

"I do not know which it is."

He smiled again, that quick illuminating smile, which seemed to sparkle in his hazel eyes; and nodded his head a little.

"I had the pleasure to see you there, very early one morning."

"Oh, is that it?" I said. "I have been down that way from the hotel very often."

"That way leads to it. You were upon it, where you were sitting. You have not been through it yet? May I show it to you some day? To-morrow?"

I agreed joyfully; and then asked who were certain of the cadets whom I saw about the room, with rosettes of ribbon and long streamers on the breast of their grey coats?

"Those are the Managers," said my companion. "You will see enough of them. It is their duty to introduce poor fellows who want partners."

I did not see much of them, however, that evening. As soon as I was released from that dance, Capt. Percival brought up Capt. Lascelles; and somebody else, Mr. Sandford, I believe, introduced Lt. Vaux, and Major Fairbairn; and Major Pitt was another, I believe. And Col. Walruss brought up his son, who was in the corps of cadets. They all wanted to dance with me; so it was lucky Mr. Thorold had secured his second dance, or I could not have given it to him. I went over and over again the same succession of topics, in the intervals of standing still. How the day had been warm, and the evening kept up its character; the hotels were full now; the cadets well off to have so many ladies; dancing a pleasant pastime, and West Point a nice place. I got so accustomed to the remarks I might expect, that my mouth was ready with an assenting "yes" before the speaker began. But the talking was a small part of the business, after all; and the evening went merrily for me, till on a sudden a shrill piercing summons of drum and fife, rolling as it were into our very ears, put a stop to proceedings. Midway in the movement the dancers stopped; there was a hurried bow and curtsy, and an instant scattering of all the grey-coated part of the assembly. The "hop" was over. We went home in the warm moonlight, I thinking that I had had a very nice time, and glad that Mr. Thorold was coming to take me to walk to-morrow.



CHAPTER XVI.

HOPS.

THE afternoon was very sultry; however, Mr. Thorold came, and we went for our walk. It was so sultry we went very leisurely and also met few people; and instead of looking very carefully at the beauties of nature and art we had come to see, we got into a great talk as we strolled along; indeed, sometimes we stopped and sat down to talk. Mr. Thorold told me about himself, or rather, about his home in Vermont and his old life there. He had no mother, and no brothers nor sisters; only his father. And he described to me the hills of his native country, and the farm his father cultivated, and the people, and the life on the mountains. Strong and free and fresh and independent and intelligent--that was the impression his talk made upon me, of the country and people and life alike. Sometimes my thoughts took a private turn of their own, branching off.

"Mr. Thorold," said I, "do you know Mr. Davis of Mississippi?"

"Davis? No, I don't know him," he said shortly.

"You have seen him?"

"Yes, I have seen him often enough; and his wife, too."

"Do you like his looks?"

"I do not."

"He looks to me like a bad man--" I said slowly. I said it to Mr. Thorold; I would hardly have made the remark to another at West Point.

"He is about bad business--" was my companion's answer. "And yet I do not know what he is about; but I distrust the man."

"Mr. Thorold," said I, beginning cautiously, "do you want to have slavery go into the territories?"

"No!" said he. "Do you?"

"No. What do you think would happen if a Northern President should be elected in the fall?"

"Then slavery would *not* go into the territories," he said, looking a little surprised at me. "The question would be settled."

"But do you know some people say--some people at the South say--that if a Northern President is elected, the Southern States will not submit to him?"

"Some people talk a great deal of nonsense," said Mr. Thorold. "How could they help submitting?"

"They say--it is said--that they would break off from the North and set up for themselves. It is not foolish people that say it, Mr. Thorold."

"Will you pardon me, Miss Randolph, but I think they would be very foolish people that would do it."

"Oh, I think so too," I said. "I mean, that some people who are not foolish believe that it might happen."

"Perhaps," said Mr. Thorold. "I never heard anything of it before. You are from the South yourself, Miss Randolph?" he added, looking at me.

"I was born there," I said. And a little silence fell between us. I was thinking. Some impression, got I suppose from my remembrance of father and mother, Preston, and others whom I had known, forbade me to dismiss quite so lightly, as too absurd to be true, the rumour I had heard. Moreover, I trusted Dr. Sandford's sources of information, living as he did in habits of close social intercourse with men of influence and position at Washington, both Southern and Northern.

"Mr. Thorold,"--I broke the silence,--"if the South should do such a thing, what would happen?"

"There would be trouble," he said.

"What sort of trouble?"

"Might be all sorts," said Mr. Thorold, laughing; "it would depend on how far people's folly would carry them."

"But suppose the Southern States should just do that;--say they would break off and govern themselves?"

"They would be like a bad boy that has to be made to take medicine."

"How could you *make* them?" I asked, feeling unreasonably grave about the question.

"You can see, Miss Randolph, that such a thing could not be permitted. A government that would let any part of its subjects break away at their pleasure from its rule, would deserve to go to pieces. If one part might go, another part might go. There would be no nation left."

"But how could you *help* it?" I asked.

"I don't know whether we could help it," he said; "but we would try."

"You do not mean that it would come to *fighting*?"

"I do not think they would be such fools. I hope we are supposing a very unlikely thing, Miss Randolph."

I hoped so. But that impression of Southern character troubled me yet. Fighting! I looked at the peaceful hills, feeling as if indeed "all the foundations of the earth" would be "out of course."

"What would *you* do in case it came to fighting?" said my neighbour. The words startled me out of my meditations.

"I could not do anything."

"I beg your pardon. Your favour--your countenance, would do much; on one side or the other. You would fight--in effect--as surely as I should."

I looked up. "Not against you," I said; for I could not bear to be misunderstood.

There was a strange sparkle in Mr. Thorold's eye; but those flashes of light came and went so like flashes, that I could not always tell what they meant. The tone of his voice, however, I knew expressed pleasure.

"How comes that?" he said. "You *are* Southern?"

"Do I look it?" I asked.

"Pardon me--yes."

"How, Mr. Thorold?"

"You must excuse me. I cannot tell you. But you *are* South?"

"Yes," I said. "At least, all my friends are Southern. I was born there."

"You have *one* Northern friend," said Mr. Thorold, as we rose up to go on. He said it with meaning. I looked up and smiled. There was a smile in his eyes, mixed with something more. I think our compact of friendship was made and settled then and at once.

He stretched out his hand, as if for a further ratification. I put mine in it, while he went on,--"How comes it, then, that you take such a view of such a question?"

There had sprung up a new tone in our intercourse, of more familiarity, and more intimate trust. It gave infinite content to me; and I went on to answer, telling him about my Northern life. Drawn on, from question to question, I detailed at length my Southern experience also, and put my new friend in possession not only of my opinions, but of the training under which they had been formed. My hand, I remember, remained in his while I talked, as if he had been my brother; till he suddenly put it down and plunged into the bushes for a bunch of wild roses. A party of walkers came round an angle a moment after; and waking up to a consciousness of our surroundings, we found, or *I* did, that we were just at the end of the rocky walk, where we must mount up and take to the plain.

The evening was falling very fair over plain and hill when we got to the upper level. Mr. Thorold proposed that I should go and see the camp, which I liked very much to do. So he took me all through it, and showed and explained all sorts of things about the tents and the manner of life they lived in them. He said he should like it very much, if he only had more room; but three or four in one little tent nine feet by nine, gave hardly, as he said, "a chance to a fellow." The tents and the camp alleys were full of cadets, loitering about, or talking, or busy with their accoutrements; here and there I saw an officer. Captain Percival bowed, Captain Lascelles spoke. I looked for Preston, but I could see him nowhere. Then Mr.

Thorold brought me into his own tent, introduced one or two cadets who were loitering there, and who immediately took themselves away; and made me sit down on what he called a "locker." The tent curtains were rolled tight up, as far as they would go, and so were the curtains of every other tent; most beautiful order prevailed everywhere and over every trifling detail.

"Well," said Mr. Thorold, sitting down opposite me on a candle-box--"how do you think you would like camp life?"

"The tents are too close together," I said.

He laughed, with a good deal of amusement.

"That will do!" he said. "You begin by knocking the camp to pieces."

"But it is beautiful," I went on.

"And not comfortable. Well, it is pretty comfortable," he said.

"How do you do when it storms very hard--at night?"

"Sleep."

"Don't you ever get wet?"

"*That* makes no difference."

"Sleep in the rain!" said I. And he laughed again at me. It was not banter. The whole look and air of the man testified to a thorough soldierly, manly contempt of little things--of all things that might come in the way of order and his duty. An intrinsic independence and withal control of circumstances, in so far as the mind can control them. I read the power to do it. But I wondered to myself if he never got homesick in that little tent and full camp. It would not do to touch the question.

"Do you know Preston Gary?" I asked. "He is a cadet."

"I know him."

I thought the tone of the words, careless as they were, signified little value for the knowledge.

"I have not seen him anywhere," I remarked.

"Do you want to see him? He has seen you."

"No, he cannot," I said, "or he would have come to speak to me."

"He would if he could," replied Mr. Thorold--"no doubt; but the liberty is wanting. He is on guard. We crossed his path as we came into the camp."

"On guard!" I said. "Is he? Why, he was on guard only a day or two ago. Does it come so often?"

"It comes pretty often in Gary's case," said my companion.

"Does it?" I said. "He does not like it."

"No," said Mr. Thorold, merrily. "It is not a favourite amusement in most cases."

"Then why does he have so much of it?"

"Gary is not fond of discipline."

I guessed this might be true. I knew enough of Preston for that. But it startled me.

"Does he not obey the regulations?" I asked presently, in a lowered tone.

Mr. Thorold smiled. "He is a friend of yours, Miss Randolph?"

"Yes," I said; "he is my mother's nephew."

"Then he is your cousin?" said my companion. Another of those penetrative glances fell on me. They were peculiar; they flashed upon me, or through me, as keen and clear as the flash of a sabre in the sun; and out of eyes in which a sunlight of merriment or benignity was even then glowing. Both glowed upon me just at this moment, so I did not mind the keen investigation. Indeed, I never minded it. I learned to know it as one of Mr. Thorold's peculiarities. Now, Dr.

Sandford had a good eye for reading people, but it never flashed, unless under strong excitement. Mr. Thorold's were dancing and flashing and sparkling with fifty things by turns; their fund of amusement and power of observation were the first things that struck me, and they attracted me too.

"Then he is your cousin?"

"Of course, he is my cousin."

I thought Mr. Thorold seemed a little bit grave and silent for a moment; then he rose up, with that benign look of his eyes glowing all over me, and told me there was the drum for parade. "Only the first drum," he added; so I need not be in a hurry. Would I go home before parade?

I thought I would. If Preston was pacing up and down the side of the camp ground, I thought I did not want to see him nor to have him see me, as he was there for what I called disgrace. Moreover, I had a secret presentiment of a breezy discussion with him the next time there was a chance.

And I was not disappointed. The next day in the afternoon he came to see us. Mrs. Sandford and I were sitting on the piazza, where the heat of an excessive sultry day was now relieved a little by a slender breeze coming out of the north-west. It was very hot still. Preston sat down and made conversation in an abstracted way for a little while.

"We did not see you at the hop the other night, Mr. Gary," Mrs. Sandford remarked.

"No. Were you there?" said Preston.

"Everybody was there--except you."

"And Daisy? Were *you* there, Daisy?"

"Certainly," Mrs. Sandford responded. "Everybody else could have been better missed."

"I did not know you went there," said Preston, in something so like a growl that Mrs. Sandford lifted her eyes to look at him.

"I do not wonder you are jealous," she said composedly.

"Jealous!" said Preston, with growl the second.

"You had more reason than you knew."

Preston grumbled something about the hops being "stupid places." I kept carefully still.

"Daisy, did *you* go?"

I looked up and said yes.

"Whom did you dance with?"

"With everybody," said Mrs. Sandford. "That is, so far as the length of the evening made it possible. Blue and grey, and all colours."

"I don't want you to dance with everybody," said Preston, in a more undertone growl.

"There is no way to prevent it," said Mrs. Sandford, "but to be there and ask her yourself."

I did not thank Mrs. Sandford privately for this suggestion; which Preston immediately followed up by inquiring "if we were going to the hop to-night?"

"Certainly," Mrs. Sandford said.

"It's too confounded hot!"

"Not for us who are accustomed to the climate," Mrs. Sandford said, with spirit.

"It's a bore altogether," muttered Preston. "Daisy, are you going to-night?"

"I suppose so."

"Well, if you must go, you may as well dance with me as with anybody. So tell anybody else that you are engaged. I will take care of you."

"Don't you wish to dance with anybody except me?"

"I do not," said Preston, slowly. "As I said, it is too hot. I consider the whole thing a bore."

"You shall not be bored for me," I said. "I refuse to dance with you. I hope I shall not see you there at all."

"Daisy!"

"Well?"

"Come down and take a little walk with me."

"You said it is too hot."

"But you will dance?"

"You will not dance."

"I want to speak to you, Daisy."

"You may speak," I said. I did not want to hear him, for there were no indications of anything agreeable in Preston's manner.

"Daisy!" he said, "I do not know you."

"You used to know her," said Mrs. Sandford; "that is all."

"Will you come and walk with me?" said Preston, almost angrily.

"I do not think it would be pleasant," I said.

"You were walking yesterday afternoon."

"Yes."

"Come and walk up and down the piazza, anyhow. You can do that."

I could, and did not refuse. He chose the sunny western side, because no one was there. However, the sun's rays were obscured under a thick haze and had been all day.

"Whom were you with?" Preston inquired, as soon as we were out of earshot.

"Do you mean yesterday?"

"Of course I mean yesterday! I saw you cross into the camp. With whom were you going there?"

"Why did you not come to speak to me?" I said.

"I was on duty. I could not."

"I did not see you anywhere."

"I was on guard. You crossed my path not ten feet off."

"Then you must know whom I was with, Preston," I said, looking at him.

"*You* don't know--that is the thing. It was that fellow Thorold."

"How came you to be on guard again so soon? You were on guard just a day or two before."

"That is all right enough. It is about military things that you do not understand. It is all right enough, except these confounded Yankees. And Thorold is another."

"Who is *one*!" I said, laughing. "You say he is *another*."

"Blunt is one."

"I like Major Blunt."

"Daisy," said Preston, stopping short, "you ought to be with your mother. There is nobody to take care of you here. How came you to know that Thorold?"

"He was introduced to me. What is the matter with him?"

"You ought not to be going about with him. He is a regular Yankee, I tell you."

"What does that mean?" I said. "You speak it as if you meant something very objectionable."

"I do. They are a cowardly set of tailors. They have no idea what a gentleman means, not one of them, unless they have caught the idea from a Southerner. I don't want you to have anything to do with them, Daisy. You *must* not dance with them, and you must not be seen with this Thorold. Promise me you will not."

"Dr. Sandford is another," I said.

"I can't help Dr. Sandford. He is your guardian. You must not go again with Thorold!"

"Did you ever know *him* cowardly?" I asked.

I was sure that Preston coloured; whether with any feeling beside anger I could not make out; but the anger was certain.

"What do you know about it?" he asked.

"What do you?" I rejoined. But Preston changed more and more.

"Daisy, promise me you will not have anything to do with these fellows. You are too good to dance with them. There are plenty of Southern people here now, and lots of Southern cadets."

"Mr. Caxton is one," I said. "I don't like him."

"He is of an excellent Georgia family," said Preston.

"I cannot help that. He is neither gentlemanly in his habits nor true in his speech."

Preston hereupon broke out into an untempered abuse of Northern things in general, and Northern cadets in particular, mingled with a repetition of his demands upon me. At length I turned from him.

"This is very tiresome, Preston," I said; "and this side of the house is very warm. Of course, I must dance with whoever asks me."

"Well, I have asked you for this evening," he said, following me.

"You are not to go," I said. "I shall not dance with you once," and I took my former place by Mrs. Sandford. Preston fumed; declared that I was just like a piece of marble; and went away. I did not feel quite so impassive as he said I looked.

"What are you going to wear to-night, Daisy?" Mrs. Sandford asked presently.

"I do not know, ma'am."

"But you must know soon, my dear. Have you agreed to give your cousin half the evening?"

"No, ma'am—I could not; I am engaged for every dance, and more."

"More!" said Mrs. Sandford.

"Yes, ma'am—for the next time."

"Preston has reason!" she said, laughing. "But I think, Daisy, Grant will be the most jealous of all. Do him good. What will become of his sciences and his microscope now?"

"Why, I shall be just as ready for them," I said.

Mrs. Sandford shook her head. "You will find the hops will take more than that," she said. "But now, Daisy, think what you will wear; for we must go soon and get ready."

I did not want to think about it. I expected, of course, to put on the same dress I had worn the last time. But Mrs. Sandford objected very strongly.

"You must not wear the same thing twice running," she said, "not if you can help it."

I could not imagine why not.

"It is quite nice enough," I urged. "It is scarcely the least tumbled in the world."

"People will think you have not another, my dear."

"What matter would that be?" I said, wholly puzzled.

"Now, my dear Daisy!" said Mrs. Sandford, half laughing--"you are the veriest Daisy in the world, and do not understand the world that you grow in. No matter; just oblige me, and put on something else to-night. What have you got?"

I had other dresses like the rejected one. I had another still, white like them, but the make and quality were different. I hardly knew what it was, for I had never worn it; to please Mrs. Sandford I took it out now. She was pleased. It was like the rest, out of the store my mother had sent me; a soft India muslin, of beautiful texture, made and trimmed as my mother and a Parisian artist could manage between them. But no Parisian artist could know better than my mother how a thing should be.

"That will do!" said Mrs. Sandford approvingly. "Dear me, what lace you Southern ladies do wear, to be sure! A blue sash, now, Daisy?"

"No, ma'am, I think not."

"Rose? It must be blue or rose."

But I thought differently, and kept it white.

"No colour?" said Mrs. Sandford. "None at all. Then let me just put this little bit of green in your hair."

As I stood before the glass and she tried various positions for some geranium leaves, I felt that would not do either. Any dressing of my head would commonize the whole thing. I watched her fingers and the geranium leaves going from one side of my head to the other, watched how every touch changed the tone of my costume, and felt that I could not suffer it; and then it suddenly occurred to me that I, who a little while before had not cared about my dress for the evening, now did care and that determinedly. I knew I would wear no geranium leaves, not even to please Mrs. Sandford. And for the first time a question stole into my mind, what was I, Daisy, doing? But then I said to myself, that the dress without this head adorning was perfect in its elegance; it suited me; and it was not wrong to like beauty, nor to dislike things in bad taste. Perhaps I was too handsomely dressed, but I could not change that now. Another time I would go back to my embroidered muslins, and stay there.

"I like it better without anything, Mrs. Sandford," I said, removing her green decorations and turning away from the glass. Mrs. Sandford sighed, but said "it would do without them," and then we started.

I can see it all again; I can almost feel the omnibus roll with me over the plain, that still sultry night. All those nights were sultry. Then, as we came near the Academic Building, I could see the lights in the upper windows; here and there an officer sitting in a window-sill, and the figures of cadets passing back and forth. Then we mounted to the hall above, filled with cadets in a little crowd, and words of recognition came, and Preston, meeting us almost before we got out of the dressing-room.

"Daisy, you dance with me?"

"I am engaged, Preston, for the first dance."

"Already! The second, then, and all the others?"

"I am engaged," I repeated, and left him, for Mr. Thorold was at my side.

I forgot Preston the next minute. It was easy to forget him, for all the first half of the evening I was honestly happy in dancing. In talking, too, whenever Thorold was my partner; other people's talk was very tiresome. They went over the platitudes of the day; or they started subjects of interest that were not interesting to me. Bits of gossip--discussions of fashionable amusements with which I could have nothing to do; frivolous badinage, which was of all things most distasteful to me. Yet, amid it, I believe there was a subtle incense of admiration which by degrees and insensibly found its way to my senses. But I had two dances with Thorold, and at those times I was myself and enjoyed unalloyed pleasure. And so I thought did he.

I saw Preston, when now and then I caught a glimpse of him, looking excessively glum. Midway in the evening it happened that I was standing beside him for a few moments, waiting for my next partner.

"You are dancing with nobody but that man whom I hate!" he grumbled. "Who is it now?"

"Captain Vaux."

"Will you dance with me after that?"

"I cannot, Preston. I must dance with Major Banks."

"You seem to like it pretty well," he growled.

"No wonder," said Mrs. Sandford. "You were quite right about the geranium leaves, Daisy; you do not want them. You do not want anything, my dear," she whispered.

At this instant a fresh party entered the room, just as my partner came up to claim me.

"There are some handsome girls," said the captain. "Two of them, really!"

"People from Cozzens's," said Mrs. Sandford, "who think the cadets keep New York hours."

It was Faustina St. Clair and Mary Lansing, with their friends and guardians, I don't know whom. And as I moved to take my place in the dance, I was presently confronted by my school adversary and the partner she had immediately found. The greeting was very slight and cool on her side.

"Excessively handsome," whispered the captain. "A friend of yours?"

"A schoolfellow," I said.

"Must be a pleasant thing, I declare, to have such handsome schoolfellows," said the captain. "Beauty is a great thing, isn't it? I wonder, sometimes, how the ladies can make up their minds to take up with such great rough ugly fellows as we are, for a set. How do you think it is?"

I thought it was wonderful, too, when they were like him. But I said nothing.

"Dress, too," said the captain. "Now look at our dress! Straight and square and stiff, and no variety in it. While our eyes are delighted, on the other side, with soft draperies and fine colours, and combinations of grace and elegance that are fit to put a man in Elysium!"

"Did you notice the colour of the haze in the west, this evening, at sunset?" I asked.

"Haze? No, really. I didn't know there was any haze, really, except in my head. I get hazy amidst these combinations. Seriously, Miss Randolph, what do you think of a soldier's life?"

"It depends on who the soldier is," I said.

"Cool, really!" said the captain. "Cool! Ha! ha!--"

And he laughed, till I wondered what I could have said to amuse him so much.

"Then you have learned to individualize soldiers already?" was his next question, put with a look which seemed to me inquisitive and impertinent. I did not know how to answer it, and left it unanswered; and the captain and I had the rest of our dance out in silence. Meanwhile, I could not help watching Faustina. She was so very handsome, with a marked, dashing sort of beauty that I saw was prodigiously admired. She took no notice of me, and barely touched the tips of my fingers with her glove as we passed in the dance.

As he was leading me back to Mrs. Sandford, the captain stooped his head to mine. "Forgive me," he whispered. "So much gentleness cannot bear revenge. I am only a soldier."

"Forgive you what, sir?" I asked. And he drew up his head again, half laughed, muttered that I was worse than grape or round shot, and handed me over to my guardian.

"My dear Daisy," said Mrs. Sandford, "if you were not so sweet as you are, you would be a queen. There, now, do not lift up your grey eyes at me like that, or I shall make you a reverence the first thing I do, and fancy that I am one of your *dames d'honneur*. Who is next? Major Banks? Take care, Daisy, or you'll do some mischief."

I had not time to think about her words; the dances went forward, and I took my part in them with great pleasure until the tattoo summons broke us up. Indeed, my pleasure lasted until we got home to the hotel, and I heard Mrs. Sandford saying, in an aside to her husband, amid some rejoicing over me--"I was dreadfully afraid she wouldn't go." The words, or something in them, gave me a check. However, I had too many exciting things to think of to take it up just then, and my brain was in a whirl of pleasure till I went to sleep.

CHAPTER XVII.

OBEYING ORDERS.

AS I shared Mrs. Sandford's room, of course I had very scant opportunities of being by myself. In the delightful early mornings I was accustomed to take my book, therefore, and go down where I had gone the first morning, to the rocks by the river's side. Nobody came by that way at so early an hour; I had been seen by nobody except that one time, when Thorold and his companion passed me; and I felt quite safe. It was pleasanter down there than can be told. However sultry the air on the heights above, so near the water there was always a savour of freshness; or else I fancied it, in the hearing of the soft liquid murmur of the little wavelets against the shore. But sometimes it was so still I could hear nothing of that; then birds and insects, or the faint notes of a bugle call, were the only things to break the absolute hush; and the light was my refreshment, on river and tree and rock and hill; one day sharp and clear, another day fairylandlike and dreamy through golden mist.

It was a good retiring place in any case, so early in the day. I could read and pray there better than in a room, I thought. The next morning after my second dancing party, I was there as usual. It was a sultry July morning, the yellow light in the haze on the hills threatening a very hot day. I was very happy, as usual; but somehow my thoughts went roaming off into the yellow haze, as if the landscape had been my life, and I were trying to pick out points of light here and there, and sporting on the gay surface. I danced my dances over again in the flow of the river; heard soft words of kindness or admiration in the song of the birds; wandered away in mazes of speculative fancy among the thickets of tree stems and underbrush. The sweet wonderful note of a wood-thrush, somewhere far out of sight, assured me, what everything conspired to assure me, that I was certainly in fairyland, not on the common earth. But I could not get on with my Bible at all. Again and again I began to read; then a bird or a bough or a ripple would catch my attention, and straightway I was off on a flight of fancy or memory, dancing over again my dances with Mr. Thorold, dwelling upon the impression of his figure and dress, and the fascination of his brilliant, changing hazel eyes; or recalling Captain Vaux's or somebody else's insipid words and looks, or Faustina St. Clair's manner of ill-will; or on the other hand giving a passing thought to the question how I should dress the next hop night. After a long wandering, I would come back and begin at my Bible again, but only for a little; my fancy could not be held to it; and a few scarcely read verses and a few half-uttered petitions were all I had accomplished before the clangour of the hotel gong, sounding down even to me, warned me that my time was gone. And the note of the wood-thrush, as I slowly mounted the path, struck reproachfully and rebukingly upon the ear of my conscience.

How had this come about? I mused as I went up the hill. What was the matter? What had bewitched me? No pleasure in my Bible; no time for prayer; and only the motion of feet moving to music, only the flutter of lace and muslin, and the flashing of hazel eyes, filling my brain. What was wrong? Nay, something. And why had Mrs. Sandford "feared" I would not go to the hops? Were they not places for Christians to go to? What earthly harm? Only pleasure. But what if pleasure that marred better pleasure--that interrupted duty? And why was I ruminating on styles and colours, and proposing to put on another dress that should be more becoming the next time? and thinking that it would be well it should be a contrast to Faustina St. Clair? What! entering the lists with her, on her own field? No, no; I could not think of it. But what then? And what was this little flutter at my heart about gentlemen's words and looks of homage and liking? What could it be to me, that such people as Captain Vaux or Captain Lascelles liked me? Captain Lascelles, who when he was not dancing or flirting was pleased to curl himself up on one of the window seats like a monkey, and take a grinning survey of what went on. Was I flattered by such admiration as his?--or *any* admiration? I liked to have Mr. Thorold like me; yes, I was not wrong to be pleased with that; besides, that was *liking*; not empty compliments. But for my lace and my India muslin and my "Southern elegance"--I knew Colonel Walrus meant me when he talked about that--was I thinking of admiration for such things as these, and thinking so much that my Bible reading had lost its charm? What was in fault? Not the hops? They were too pleasant. It could not be the hops.

I mounted the hill slowly and in a great maze, getting more and more troubled. I entering the lists with Faustina St. Clair, going in her ways? I knew these were her ways. I had heard scraps enough of conversation among the girls about these things, which I then did not understand. And another word came therewith into my mind, powerful once before, and powerful now to disentangle the false from the true. "The world knoweth us not." Did it not know me, last night? Would it not, if I went there again? But the hops were so pleasant!

It almost excites a smile in me now to think how pleasant they were. I was only sixteen. I had seen no dancing parties other than the little school assemblages at Mme. Ricard's; and I was fond of the amusement even there. Here, it seemed to me, then, as if all prettiness and pleasantness that could come together in such a gathering met in the dancing room of the cadets. I think not very differently now, as to that point. The pretty accompaniments of uniform; the simple style and hours; the hearty enjoyment of the occasion; were all a little unlike what is found at other places. And to me, and

to increase my difficulty, came a crowning pleasure; I met Thorold there. To have a good dance and talk with him was worth certainly all the rest. Must I give it up?

I could not bear to think so, but the difficulty helped to prick my conscience. There had been only two hops, and I was so enthralled already. How would it be if I had been to a dozen; and where might it end? And the word stands,--"The world knoweth us *not*."

It must not know me, Daisy Randolph, as in any sort belonging to it or mixed up with it; and therefore--Daisy Randolph must go to the hop no more. I felt the certainty of the decision growing over me, even while I was appalled by it. I staved off consideration all that day.

In the afternoon Mr. Thorold came and took me to see the laboratory, and explained for me a number of curious things. I should have had great enjoyment, if Preston had not taken it into his head, unasked, to go along; being unluckily with me when Thorold came. He was a thorough marplot; saying nothing of consequence himself, and only keeping a grim watch--I could take it as nothing else--of everything we said and did. Consequently, Mr. Thorold's lecture was very proper and grave, instead of being full of fun and amusement, as well as instruction. I took Preston to task about it when we got home.

"You hinder pleasure when you go in that mood," I told him.

"What mood?"

"You know. You never are pleasant when Mr. Thorold is present or when he is mentioned."

"He is a cowardly Yankee!" was Preston's rejoinder.

"*Cowardly*, Gary?"--said somebody near; and I saw a cadet whom I did not know, who came from behind us and passed by on the piazza. He did not look at us, and stayed not for any more words; but turning to Preston, I was surprised to see his face violently flushed.

"Who was that?"

"No matter--impertinence!" he muttered.

"But what *is* the matter? and what did he mean?"

"He is one of Thorold's set," said Preston; "and I tell you Daisy, you shall not have anything to do with them. Aunt Felicia would never allow it. She would not look at them herself. You shall not have anything more to do with them."

How could I, if I was going no more to the hops? How could I see Thorold, or anybody? The thought struck to my heart, and I made no answer. Company, however, kept me from considering the matter all the evening.

But the next day, early, I was in my usual place: near the river side, among the rocks, with my Bible; and I resolved to settle the question there as it ought to be settled. I was resolved; but to do what I had resolved was difficult. For I wanted to go to the hop that evening very much. Visions of it floated before me; snatches of music and gleams of light; figures moving in harmony; words and looks; and--my own white little person. All these made a kind of quaint mosaic with flashes of light on the river, and broad warm bands of sunshine on the hills, and the foliage of trees and bushes, and the grey lichened rocks at my foot. It was confusing; but I turned over the leaves of my Bible to see if I could find some undoubted direction as to what I ought to do, or perhaps rather some clear permission for what I wished to do. I could not remember that the Bible said anything about dancing, *pro* or *con*; dancing, I thought, could not be wrong; but this confusion in my mind was not right. I fluttered over my leaves a good while with no help; then I thought I might as well take a chapter somewhere and study it through. The whole chapter, it was the third of Colossians, did not seem to me to go favourably for my pleasure; but the seventeenth verse brought me to a point,--"Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."

There was no loophole here for excuses or getting off, "*Whatsoever ye do*." Did I wish it otherwise? No, I did not. I was content with the terms of service; but now about dancing, or rather, the dancing party? "In the name of the Lord Jesus." Could I go there in that name? as the servant of my Master, busy about His work, or taking pleasure that He had given me to take? That was the question. And all my visions of gay words and gay scenes, all the flutter of pleased vanity and the hope of it, rose up and answered me. By that thought of the pretty dress I would wear, I knew I should not wear it "in the name of the Lord Jesus;" for my thought was of honour to myself, not to Him. By the fear which darted into my head, that Mr. Thorold might dance with Faustina if I were not there, I knew I should not go "in the name of the Lord," if I went; but to gratify my own selfish pride and emulation. By the confusion which had reigned in my brain these two days, by the tastelessness of my Bible, by the unaptness for prayer, I knew I could not go in the name of my Lord, for it would be to unfit myself for His work.

The matter was settled in one way; but the pain of it took longer to come to an end. It is sorrowful to me to remember now how hard it was to get over. My vanity I was heartily ashamed of, and bade that show its head no more; my emulation of Faustina St. Clair gave me some horror; but the pleasure--the real honest pleasure, of the scene, and the music and the excitement and the dancing and the seeing people--all that I did not let go for ever without a hard time of sorrow and some tears. It was not a *struggle*, for I gave that up at once; only I had to fight pain. It was one of the hardest things I ever did in my life. And the worst of all and the most incurable was, I should miss seeing Mr. Thorold. One or two more walks, possibly, I might have with him; but those long, short evenings of seeing and talking and dancing!

Mrs. Sandford argued, coaxed, and rallied me; and then said, if I would not go, she should not; and she did not. That evening we spent at home together, and alone; for everybody else had drifted over to the hop. I suppose Mrs. Sandford found it dull; for the next hop night she changed her mind and left me. I had rather a sorrowful evening. Dr. Sandford had not come back from the mountains; indeed, I did not wish for him; and Thorold had not been near us for several days. My fairyland was getting disenchanted a little bit. But I was quite sure I had done right.

The next morning, I had hardly been three minutes on my rock by the river, when Mr. Thorold came round the turn of the walk and took a seat beside me.

"How do you do?" said he, stretching out his hand. I put mine in it.

"What has become of my friend, this seven years?"

"I am here--" I said.

"I see you. But why have I *not* seen you, all this while?"

"I suppose you have been busy," I answered.

"Busy! Of course I have, or I should have been here asking questions. I was not too busy to dance with you: and I was promised--how many dances? Where have you been?"

"I have been at home."

"Why?"

Would Mr. Thorold understand me? Mrs. Sandford did not. My own mother never did. I hesitated, and he repeated his question, and those hazel eyes were sparkling all sorts of queries around me.

"I have given up going to the hops," I said.

"Given up? Do you mean, you *don't* mean, that you are never coming any more?"

"I am not coming any more."

"Don't you sometimes change your decisions?"

"I suppose I do," I answered; "but not this one."

"I am in a great puzzle," he said. "And very sorry. Aren't you going to be so good as to give me some clue to this mystery? Did you find the hops so dull?"

And he looked very serious indeed.

"Oh no!" I said. "I liked them very much--I enjoyed them very much. I am sorry to stay away."

"Then you will not stay away very long."

"Yes--I shall."

"Why?" he asked again, with a little sort of imperative curiosity which was somehow very pleasant to me.

"I do not think it is right for me to go," I said. Then, seeing grave astonishment and great mystification in his face, I added, "I am a Christian, Mr. Thorold."

"A Christian!" he cried, with flashes of light and shadow crossing his brow. "Is *that* it?"

"That is it," I assented.

"But my dear Miss Randolph--you know we are friends?"

"Yes," I said, smiling, and glad that he had not forgotten it.

"Then we may talk about what we like. Christians go to hops."

I looked at him without answering.

"Don't you know they do?"

"I suppose they may--" I answered, slowly.

"But they *do*. There was our former colonel's wife--Mrs. Holt; she was a regular church-goer, and a member of the church; she was always at the hop, and her sister; they are both church members. Mrs. Lambkin, General Lambkin's wife, she is another. Major Banks' sisters--those pretty girls--they are always there; and it is the same with visitors. Everybody comes; their being Christians does not make any difference."

"Captain Thorold," said I--"I mean Mr. Thorold, don't you obey your orders?"

"Yes--general," he said. And he laughed.

"So must I."

"You are not a soldier."

"Yes--I am."

"Have you got orders not to come to our hop?"

"I think I have. You will not understand me, but this is what I mean, Mr. Thorold. I *am* a soldier, of another sort from you; and I have orders not to go anywhere that my Captain does not send me, or where I cannot be serving Him."

"I wish you would show those orders to me."

I gave him the open page which I had been studying, that same chapter of Colossians, and pointed out the words. He looked at them, and turned over the page, and turned it back.

"I don't see the orders," he said.

I was silent. I had not expected he would.

"And I was going to say, I never saw any Christians that were soldiers; but I have, one. And so you are another?" And he bent upon me a look so curiously considering, tender, and wondering, at once, that I could not help smiling.

"A soldier!" said he, again. "You? Have you ever been under fire?"

I smiled again, and then, I don't know what it was. I cannot tell what, in the question and in the look, touched some weak spot. The question called up such sharp answers; the look spoke so much sympathy. It was very odd for me to do, but I was taken unawares; my eyes fell and filled, and before I could help it were more than full. I do not know, to this day, how I came to cry before Thorold. It was very soon over, my weakness, whatever it was. It seemed to touch him amazingly. He got hold of my hand, put it to his lips, and kissed it over and over, outside and inside.

"I can see it all in your face," he said, tenderly: "the strength and the truth to do anything, and bear--whatever is necessary. But I am not so good as you. I cannot bear anything unless it *is* necessary; and this isn't."

"Oh no, nor I!" I said; "but this is necessary, Mr. Thorold."

"Prove it--come."

"You do not see the orders," I said; "but there they are. 'Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.' I cannot go to that place 'in His name.'"

"I do not think I understand what you mean," he said, gently. "A soldier, the best that ever lived, is his own man when he is off duty. We go to the hop to play--not to work."

"Ah, but a soldier of Christ is never 'off duty,'" I said. "See, Mr. Thorold--'*whatsoever* ye do'--'whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do.' That covers all; don't you see?"

"That would make it a very heavy thing to be a Christian," he said; "there would be no liberty at all."

"Oh, but it is all liberty!" I said,--"When you love Jesus."

He looked at me so inquiringly, so inquisitively, that I went on.

"You do not think it hard to do things for anybody you love?"

"No," said he. "I would like to do things for you."

I remember I smiled at that, for it seemed to me very pleasant to hear him say it; but I went on.

"Then you understand it, Mr. Thorold."

"No," said he, "I do not understand it; for there is this difficulty. I do not see what in the world such an innocent amusement as that we are talking of can have to do with Christian duty, one way or another. Every Christian woman that I know comes to it,—that is young enough; and some that aren't."

It was very hard to explain.

"Suppose they disobey orders," I said slowly;—"that would be another reason why I should obey them."

"Of course. But do they?"

"I should," I said. "I am not serving Christ when I am there. I am not doing the work He has given me to do. I cannot go."

"I came down here on purpose to persuade you," he said.

It was not necessary to answer that, otherwise than by a look.

"And you are unpersadable," he said; "unmanageable, of course, by me; strong as a giant, and gentle as a snowflake. But the snowflake melts; and you—you will go up to the hotel as good a crystal as when you came down."

This made me laugh, and we had a good laugh together, holding each other's hand.

"Do you know," said he, "I must go? There is a roll of a summons that reaches my ear, and I must be at the top of the bank in one minute and a quarter. I had no leave to be here."

"Hadn't you?" I said. "Oh, then, go, go directly, Mr. Thorold!"

But I could not immediately release my hand, and holding it and looking at me, Thorold laughed again; his hazel eyes sparkling and dancing and varying with what feelings I could not tell. They looked very steadily, too, till I remember mine went down, and then, lifting his cap, he turned suddenly and sprang away. I sat down to get breath and think.

I had come to my place rather sober and sorrowful; and what a pleasant morning I had had! I did not mind at all, now, my not going to the dances. I had explained myself to Mr. Thorold, and we were not any further apart for it, and I had had a chance to speak to him about other things too. And though he did not understand me, perhaps he would some day. The warning gong sounded before I had well got to my Bible reading. My Bible reading was very pleasant this morning, and I could not be balked of it; so I spent over it near the whole half hour that remained, and rushed up to the hotel in the last five minutes. Of course, I was rather late and quite out of breath; and having no voice and being a little excited, I suppose was the reason that I curtseyed to Dr. Sandford, whom I met at the head of the piazza steps. He looked at me like a man taken aback.

"Daisy!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, sir," I answered.

"Where have you come from?"

"From my study," I said. "I have a nice place down by the river which is my study."

"Rather a public situation for a private withdrawing place," said the doctor.

"Oh no!" said I. "At this hour—" But there I stopped and began again. "It is really very private. And it is the pleasantest study place I think I ever had."

"To study what?"

I held up my book.

"It agrees with you," said the doctor.

"What?" said I, laughing.

"Daisy!" said Dr. Sandford--"I left a quiet bud of a flower a few days ago--a little demure bit of a schoolgirl, learning geology; and I have got a young princess here, a full rose, prickles and all, I don't doubt. What has Mrs. Sandford done with you?"

"I do not know," said I, thinking I had better be demure again. "She took me to the hop."

"The hop?--how did you like that?"

"I liked it very much."

"You did? You liked it? I did not know that you would go, with your peculiar notions."

"I went," I said; "I did not know what it was. How could I help liking it? But I am not going again."

"Why not, if you like it?"

"I am not going again," I repeated. "Shall we have a walk to the hills to-day, Dr. Sandford?"

"Grant!" said his sister-in-law's voice, "don't you mean the child shall have any breakfast? What made you so late, Daisy? Come in, and talk afterwards. Grant is uneasy if he can't see at least your shadow all the while."

We went in to breakfast, and I took a delightful walk with Dr. Sandford afterward, back in the ravines of the hills; but I had got an odd little impression of two things. First, that he, like Preston, was glad to have me give up going to the hops. I was sure of it from his air and tone of voice, and it puzzled me; for he could not possibly have Preston's dislike of Northerners, nor be unwilling that I should know them. The other thing was, that he would not like my seeing Mr. Thorold. I don't know how I knew it, but I knew it. I thought--it was very odd--but I thought he was *jealous*; or rather, I felt he would be if he had any knowledge of our friendship for each other. So I resolved he should have no such knowledge.

Our life went on now as it had done at our first coming. Every day Dr. Sandford and I went to the woods and hills, on a regular naturalist's expedition; and nothing is so pleasant as such expeditions. At home, we were busy with microscopic examinations, preparations, and studies; delightful studies, and beautiful lessons, in which the doctor was the finest of instructors, as I have said, and I was at least the happiest of scholars. Mrs. Sandford fumed a little, and Mr. Sandford laughed; but that did no harm. Everybody went to the hops, except the doctor and me; and every morning and evening, at guardmounting and parade, I was on the ground behind the guard tents to watch the things done and listen to the music and enjoy all the various beauty. Sometimes I had a glimpse of Thorold; for many both of cadets and officers used to come and speak to me and rally me on my seclusion, and endeavour to tempt me out of it. Thorold did not that; he only looked at me, as if I were something to be a little wondered at but wholly approved of. It was not a disagreeable look to meet.

"I must have it out with you," he said one evening, when he had just a minute to speak to me. "There is a whole world of things I don't understand, and want to talk about. Let us go Saturday afternoon and take a long walk up to 'Number Four'--do you like hills?"

"Yes."

"Then let us go up there Saturday--will you?"

And when Saturday came, we went. Preston luckily was not there; and Dr. Sandford, also luckily, was gone to dine at the General's with his brother. There were no more shadows on earth than there were clouds in the sky, as we took our way across the plain and along the bank in front of the officers' quarters looking north, and went out at the gate. Then we left civilization and the world behind us, and plunged into a wild mountain region; going up, by a track which few feet ever used, the rough slope to "Number Four." Yet that a few feet used it was plain.

"Do people come here to walk much?" I asked, as we slowly made our way up.

"Nobody comes here--for anything."

"Somebody *goes* here," I said. "This is a beaten path."

"Oh, there is a poor woodcutter's family at the top; they do travel up and down occasionally."

"It is pretty," I said.

"It is pretty at the top; but we are a long way from that. Is it too rough for you?"

"Not at all," I said. "I like it."

"You are a good walker for a Southern girl."

"Oh, but I have lived at the North; I am only Southern born."

Soon, however, he made me stop to rest. There was a good grey rock under the shadow of the trees; Thorold placed me on that and threw himself on the moss at my feet. We were up so high in the world that the hills on the other side of the river rose beautifully before us through the trees, and a sunny bit of the lower ground of the plain looked like a bit of another world that we were leaving. It was a sunny afternoon and a little hazy; every line softened, every colour made richer, under the mellowing atmosphere.

"Now you can explain it all to me," said Thorold, as he threw himself down. "You have walked too fast. You are warm."

"And you do not look as if it was warm at all."

"! This is nothing to me," he said. "But perhaps it will warm me and cool you if we get into a talk. I want explanations."

"About what, Mr. Thorold?"

"Well--if you will excuse me--about you," he said, with a very pleasant look, frank and soft at once.

"I am quite ready to explain myself. But I am afraid, when I have done it, that you will not understand me, Mr. Thorold."

"Think I cannot?" said he.

"I am afraid not--without knowing what I know."

"Let us see," said Thorold. "I want to know why you judge so differently from other people about the right and the wrong of hops and such things. Somebody is mistaken--that is clear."

"But the difficulty is, I cannot give you my point of view."

"Please try," said Thorold, contentedly.

"Mr. Thorold, I told you, I am a soldier."

"Yes," he said, looking up at me, and little sparkles of light seeming to come out of his hazel eyes.

"I showed you my orders."

"But I did not understand them to be what you said."

"Suppose you were in an enemy's country," I said; "a rebel country; and your orders were, to do nothing which could be construed into encouraging the rebels, or which could help them to think that your king would hold friendship with them, or that there was not a perfect gulf of division between you and them."

"But this is not such a case?" said Thorold.

"That is only part," I said. "Suppose your orders were to keep constant watch and hold yourself at every minute ready for duty, and to go nowhere and do nothing that would unfit you for instant service, or put you off your watch?"

"But, Miss Randolph!" said Thorold, a little impatiently, "do these little dances unfit you for duty?"

"Yes," I said. "And put me off my watch."

"Your watch against what? Oh, pardon me, and *please* enlighten me. I do not mean to be impertinent."

"I mean my watch for orders--my watch against evil."

"Won't you explain?" said Thorold, gently and impatiently at once. "What sort of evil can *you* possibly fear, in connection with such an innocent recreation? What 'orders' are you expecting?"

I hesitated. Should I tell him; would he believe; was it best to unveil the working of my own heart to that degree? And how could I evade or shirk the question?

"I should not like to tell you," I said at length, "the thoughts and feelings I found stirring in myself, after the last time I went to the dance. I dare say they are something that belongs especially to a woman, and that a man would not know them."

Thorold turned on me again a wonderfully gentle look, for a gay, fiery young Vermonter, as I knew him to be.

"It wanted only that!" he said. "And the orders, Miss Randolph--what 'orders' are you expecting? You said orders."

"Orders may be given by a sign," I said. "They need not be in words."

He smiled. "I see, you have studied the subject."

"I mean, only, that whenever a duty is plainly put before me--something given me to do--I know I have 'orders' to do it. And then, Mr. Thorold, as the orders are not spoken, nor brought to me by a messenger, only made known to me by a sign of some sort--If I did not keep a good watch, I should be sure to miss the sign sometimes, don't you see?"

"This is soldiership!" said Thorold. And getting up, he stood before me in attitude like a soldier as he was, erect, still with arms folded, only not up to his chin, like Capt. Percival, but folded manfully. He had been watching me very intently; now he stood as intently looking off over the farther landscape. Methought I had a sort of pride in his fine appearance; and yet he did in no wise belong to me. Nevertheless, it was pleasant to see the firm, still attitude, the fine proportions, the military nicety of all his dress, which I had before noticed on the parade ground. For as there is a difference between one walk and another, though all trained, so there is a difference between one neatness and another, though all according to regulation: and Preston never looked like this.

He turned round at last, and smiled down at me.

"Are you rested?"

"O yes!" I said, rising. "I was not fatigued."

"Are you tired talking?"

"No, not at all. Have I talked so very much?"

He laughed at that, but went on.

"Will you be out of patience with my stupidity?"

I said no.

"Because I am not fully enlightened yet. I want to ask further questions; and asking questions is very impertinent."

"Not if you have leave," I said. "Ask what you like."

"I am afraid, nevertheless. But I can never know, if I do not ask. How is it--this is what puzzles me--that other people who call themselves Christians do not think as you do about this matter?"

"Soldiership?" I asked.

"Well, yes. It comes to that, I suppose."

"You know what soldiership ought to be," I said.

"But one little soldier cannot be all the rank and file of this army?" he said, looking down at me.

"O no!" I said, laughing--"there are a great many more--there are a great many more--only you do not happen to see them."

"And these others, that I do see, are not soldiers, then?"

"I do not know," I said, feeling sadly what a stumbling-block it was. "Perhaps they are. But you know yourself, Mr. Thorold, there is a difference between soldiers and soldiers."

He was silent a while, as we mounted the hill; then he continued--

"But it makes religion a slavery--a bondage--to be *all* the while under arms, on guard, watching orders. *Always* on the watch and expecting to be under fire--it is too much; it would make a gloomy, ugly life of it."

"But suppose you *are* under fire?" I said.

"What?" said he, looking and laughing again.

"If you are a good soldier in an enemy's country, always with work to do; will you wish to be off your guard, or off duty?"

"But what a life!" said Thorold.

"If you love your Captain?" said I.

He stopped and looked at me with one of the keenest looks of scrutiny I ever met. It seemed to scrutinize not me only, but the truth. I thought he was satisfied; for he turned away without adding anything more at that time. His mind was at work, however; for he broke down a small branch in his way and busied himself with it in sweeping the trunks of the trees as we went by; varying the occupation with a careful clearing away of all stones and sticks that would make my path rougher than it need be. Finally, giving me his hand to help me spring over a little rivulet that crossed our way.

"Here is an incongruity, now I think of it," said he, smiling. "How is it that you be on such good terms with a rebel? Ought you to have anything to do with me?"

"I may be friends with anybody in his private capacity," I answered in the same tone. "That does not compromise anything. It is only when--You know what I mean."

"When they are assembled for doubtful purposes."

"Or gathered in a place where the wrong colours are displayed," I added. "I must not go there."

"There was no false banner hung out on the Academic Building the other night," he said humorously.

But I knew my King's banner was not either. I knew people did not think of Him there, nor work for Him, and would have been very much surprised to hear any one speak of Him. Say it was innocent amusement; people did not want Him with them there; and where He was not, I did not wish to be. But I could not tell all this to Mr. Thorold. He was not contented, however, without an answer.

"How was it?" he asked.

"You cannot understand me and you may laugh at me," I said.

"Why may I not understand you?" he asked deferentially.

"I suppose, because you do not understand something else," I said; "and you cannot, Mr. Thorold, until you know what the love of Jesus is, and what it is to care for His honour and His service more than for anything else in the world."

"But are they compromised?" he asked. "That is the thing. You see, I want you back at the hop."

"I would like to come," said I; "but I must not."

"On the ground--?"

"I told you, Mr. Thorold. I do not find that my orders allow me to go. I must do nothing that I cannot do in my King's name."

"That is--"

"As His servant--on His errands--following where He leads me."

"I never heard it put so before," said Thorold. "It bears the stamp of perfection--only an impossible perfection."

"No--" said I.

"To ordinary mortals," he rejoined, with one of his quick, brilliant flashes of the eye. Then, as it softened and changed again--

"Miss Randolph, permit me to ask one question--Are you happy?"

And with the inquiry came the investigating look, keen as a razor or a rifle ball. I could meet it, though; and I told him it was *this* made me happy. For the first time his face was troubled. He turned it from me and dropped the conversation. I let it drop, too; and we walked side by side and silently the remainder of the steep way; neither of us, I believe, paying much attention to what there was to be seen below or around us. At the top, however, this changed. We found a good place to rest, and sat there a long time looking at the view; Thorold pointing out its different features, and telling me about them in detail; his visits to them, and exploration of the region generally. And we planned imaginary excursions together, one especially to the top of the Crow's Nest, with an imaginary party, to see the sun rise. We would have to go up, of course, overnight; we must carry a tent along for shelter, and camp-beds, and cooking utensils, at least a pot to boil coffee; and plenty of warm wraps and plenty of provisions, for people always eat terribly in cold regions,

Thorold said. And although the top of the Crow's Nest is not Arctic by any means, still, it is cool enough even in a warm day, and would be certainly cool at night. Also the members of our party we debated; they must be people of good tempers and travelling habits, not to be put out for a little; people with large tastes for enjoyment, to whom the glory of the morning would make amends for all the toil of the night; and good talkers, to keep up the tone of the whole thing. Meanwhile, Thorold and I heartily enjoyed Number Four; as also I did his explanations of fortifications, which I drew from him and made him apply to all the fortifications in sight or which I knew. And when the sun's westing told us it was time to go home, we went down all the way talking. I have but little remembrance of the path. I remember the cool, bright freshness of the light, and its brilliant gleam in the distance after it had left the hillside. I have an impression of the calm clear beauty that was underfoot and overhead that afternoon; but I saw it only as I could see it while giving my thought to something else. Sometimes, holding hands, we took runs down the mountain side; then walked demurely again when we got to easier going. We had come to the lower region at last, and were not far from the gate, talking earnestly and walking close together, when I saw Thorold touch his cap.

"Was that anybody I knew?" I asked.

"I believe it was your friend Dr. Sandford," he said, smiling into my face with a smile of peculiar expression and peculiar beauty. I saw something had pleased him, pleased him very much. It could not have been Dr. Sandford. I cannot say I was pleased, as I had an intuitive assurance the doctor was not. But Thorold's smile almost made amends.

That evening the doctor informed us he had got intelligence which obliged him to leave the Point immediately; and as he could go with us part of the way to Niagara, we had better all set off together. I had lost all my wish to go to Niagara; but I said nothing. Mrs. Sandford said there was nothing to be gained by staying at the Point any longer, as I would not go to the hops. So Monday morning we went away.



CHAPTER XVIII.

SOUTH AND NORTH.

WE made a round of pleasure after leaving West Point. That is, it was a round of pleasure to the rest of the party. I had left my best pleasure behind me. Certainly, I enjoyed Catskill, and Trenton Falls, and Niagara, after some sort; but there was nothing in them all like my walk to "Number Four." West Point had enough natural beauty to satisfy any one, I thought, even for all summer; and there I had besides what I had not elsewhere and never had before, a companion. All my earlier friends were far older than I, or beneath me in station. Preston was the single exception; and Preston and I were now widely apart in our sympathies; indeed, always had been. Mr. Thorold and I talked to each other on a level; we understood each other and suited each other. I could let out my thoughts to him with a freedom I never could use with anybody else.

It grieved me a little that I had been forced to come away so abruptly that I had no chance of letting him know. Courtesy, I thought, demanded of me that I should have done this; and I could not do it; and this was a constant subject of regret to me.

At the end of our journey I came back to school. Letters from my father and mother desired that I would do so, and appointed that I was to join them abroad next year. My mother had decided that it was best not to interfere with the regular course of my education; and my father renewed his promise that I should have any reward I chose to claim, to comfort me for the delay. So I bent myself to study with new energies and new hope.

I studied more things than school books that winter. The bits of political matter I had heard talked over at West Point were by no means forgotten; and once in a while, when I had time and a chance, I seized one of the papers from Mme. Ricard's library table and examined it. And every time I did so, something urged me to do it again. I was very ignorant. I had no clue to a great deal that was talked of in these prints: but I could perceive the low threatening growl of coming ill weather, which seemed to rise on the ear every time I listened. And a little anxiety began to grow up in my mind. Mme. Ricard, of course, never spoke on these subjects, and probably did not care about them. Dr. Sandford was safe in Washington. I once asked Miss Cardigan what she thought. "There are evil men abroad, dear," she said. "I don't know what they will be permitted to do."

"Who do you hope will be elected?" I asked.

"I don't vote myself," said Miss Cardigan; "so I do not fash myself much with what I can't help; but I hope the man will be elected that will do the right thing."

"And who is that?" I asked. "You do not want slavery to be allowed in the territories?"

"I? Not I!" said Miss Cardigan. "And if the people want to keep it out of them, I suppose they will elect Abraham Lincoln. I don't know if he is the right man or no; but he is on the right side. 'Break every yoke, and let the oppressed go free.' That is my maxim, Daisy."

I pondered this matter by turns more and more. By and by there began to be audible mutterings of a storm in the air around me. The first I heard was when we were all together in the evening with our work, the half hour before tea.

"Lincoln is elected," whispered one of the girls to another.

"Who cares?" the other said aloud.

"What if he is?" asked a third.

"Then," said a gentle, graceful-looking girl, spreading her embroidery out on her lap with her slim white fingers--"then there'll be fighting."

It was given, this announcement, with the coolest matter-of-fact assurance.

"Who is going to fight?" was the next question.

The former speaker gave a glance up to see if her audience was safe, and then replied, as coolly as before,--

"My brother, for one."

"What for, Sally?"

"Do you think we are going to have these vulgar Northerners rule over *us*? My cousin Marshall is coming back from Europe on purpose that he may be here and be ready. I know my aunt wrote him word that she would disinherit him if he did not."

"Daisy Randolph--you are a Southerner," said one of the girls.

"Of course, she is a Southerner," said Sally, going on with her embroidery. "She is safe."

But if I was safe, I was very uncomfortable. I hardly knew why I was so uncomfortable. Only, I wished ardently that troubles might not break out between the two quarters of the country. I had a sense that the storm would come near home. I could not recollect my mother and my father, without a dread that there would be opposing electricities between them and me.

I began to study the daily news more constantly and carefully. I had still the liberty of Madame's library, and the papers were always there. I could give to them only a few minutes now and then; but I felt that the growl of the storm was coming nearer and growing more threatening. Extracts from Southern papers seemed to my mind very violent and very wrong-headed; at the same time, I knew that my mother would endorse and Preston echo them. Then South Carolina passed the ordinance of secession. Six days after, Major Anderson took possession of Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbour, and immediately the fort he had left and Castle Pinckney were garrisoned by the South Carolinians in opposition. I could not tell how much all this signified; but my heart began to give a premonitory beat sometimes. Mississippi followed South Carolina; then United States' forts and arsenals were seized in North Carolina and Georgia and Alabama, one after the other. The tone of the press was very threatening, at least of the Southern press. And not less significant, to my ear, was the whisper I occasionally heard among a portion of our own little community. A secret whisper, intense in its sympathy with the seceding half of the nation, contemptuously hostile to the other part, among whom they were at that very moment receiving Northern education and Northern kindness. The girls even listened and gathered scraps of conversation that passed in their hearing, to retail them in letters sent home; "they did not know," they said, "what might be of use." Later, some of these letters were intercepted by the General Government, and sent back from Washington to Madame Ricard. All this told me much of the depth and breadth of feeling among the community of which these girls formed a part; and my knowledge of my father and mother, Aunt Gary and Preston, and others, told me more. I began to pray that God would not let war come upon the land.

Then there was a day, in January, I think, when a bit of public news was read out in presence of the whole family; a thing that rarely happened. It was evening, and we were all in the parlour with our work. I forget who was the reader, but I remember the words: "The steamer, *Star of the West* with two hundred and fifty United States troops on board for Fort Sumter, was fired into' (I forget the day) 'by the batteries near Charleston.' Young ladies, do you hear that? The steamer was fired into. That is the beginning."

We looked at each other, we girls; startled, sorry, awed, with a strange glance of defiance from some eyes, while some flowed over with tears, and some were eager with a feeling that was not displeasure. All were silent at first. Then whispers began.

"I told you so," said Sally.

"Well, *they* have begun it," said Macy, who was a native of New York.

"Of course. What business had the *Star of the West* to be carrying those troops there? South Carolina can take care of her own forts."

"Daisy Randolph, you look as solemn as a preacher," said another. "Which side are you on?"

"She is on the right side," said another.

"Of course," said Sally. "She is the daughter of a Southern gentleman."

"I am not on the side of those who fire the first shot," I said.

"There is no other way," said Sally, coolly. "If a rat comes in your way you must shoot him. I knew it had got to come. I have heard my uncle talk enough about that."

"But what will be the end of it?" said another.

"Pooh! It will end like smoke. The Yankees do not like fighting--they would rather be excused, if you please. Their *forte* is quite in another line--out of the way of powder."

I wondered if that was true. I thought of Thorold, and of Major Blunt. I was troubled; and when I went to see Miss

Cardigan, next day, I found she could give me little comfort.

"I don't know, my dear," she said, "what they may be left to do. They're just daft, down there; clean daft."

"If they fight, we shall be obliged to fight," I said, not liking to ask her about Northern courage; and, indeed, she was a Scotswoman, and what should she know?

"Aye, just that," she replied; "and fighting between the two parts of one land is just the worst fighting there can be. Pray it may not come, Daisy; but those people are quite daft."

The next letters from my mother spoke of my coming out to them as soon as the school year should be over. The country was likely to be disturbed, she said; and it would not suit with my father's health to come home just now. As soon as the school year should be over, and Dr. Sandford could find a proper opportunity for me to make the journey, I should come.

I was very glad; yet I was not all glad. I wished they had been able to come to me. I was not, I hardly knew why I was not quite ready to quit America while these troubles threatened. And as days went on, and the cloud grew blacker, my feeling of unwillingness increased. The daily prints were full of fresh instances of the seizure of United States property, of the secession of New States; then the Secession Congress met, and elected Jefferson Davis and Alexander Stephens their president and vice-president; and rebellion was duly organized.

Jefferson Davis! How the name took me back to the summer parade on the West Point plain, and my first view of that smooth, sinister, ill-conditioned face. Now *he* was heading rebellion. Where would Dr. Sandford, and Mr. Thorold, and Preston be? How far would the rebels carry their work? and what opposition would be made to it? Again I asked Miss Cardigan.

"It's beyond *me*, Daisy," she said. "I suppose it will depend very much on whether we've got the right man to head us or no; and that nobody can tell till we try. This man, Buchanan, that is over us at present, he is no better than a bit of cotton-wool. I am going to take a look at Mr. Lincoln as he comes through, and see what I think of him."

"When is he coming?"

"They say to-day," said Miss Cardigan. "There'll be an uncommon crowd, but I'll risk it."

A great desire seized me, that I might see him too. I consulted with Miss Cardigan. School hours were over at three; I could get away then, I thought; and by studying the programme of the day we found it possible that it would not be too late then for our object. So it proved; and I have always been glad of it ever since.

Miss Cardigan and I went forth and packed ourselves in the dense crowd which had gathered and filled all the way by which the President-elect was expected to pass. A quiet and orderly and most respectable crowd it was. Few Irish, few of the miserable of society, who come out only for a spectacle; there were the yeomanry and the middle classes, men of business, men of character and some substance, who were waiting, like us, to see what promise for the future there might be in the aspect of our new chief. Waiting patiently; and we could only wait patiently like them. I thought of Preston's indignation if he could have seen me, and Dr. Sandford's ready negative on my being there; but well were these thoughts put to flight when the little cavalcade for which we were looking hove in sight and drew near. Intense curiosity and then profound satisfaction seized me. The strong, grave, kindly lineaments of the future Head of the Country gave me instantly a feeling of confidence, which I never lost in all the time that followed. That was, confidence in his honesty and goodness; but another sort of trust was awakened by the keen, searching, shrewd glances of those dark eyes, which seemed to penetrate the masses of human intelligences surrounding him, and seek to know what manner of *material* he might find them at need. He was not thinking of himself, that was plain; and the homely, expressive features got a place in my heart from that time. The little cavalcade passed on from us; the crowd melted away, and Miss Cardigan and I came slowly again up Fifth Avenue.

"Yon's a mon!" quoth Miss Cardigan, speaking, as she did in moments of strong feeling, with a little reminder of her Scottish origin.

"Didn't you like him?" I rejoined.

"I always like a man when I see him," said my friend. "He had need be that, too, for he has got a man's work to do."

And it soon appeared that she spoke true. I watched every action, and weighed every word of Mr. Lincoln now, with a strange interest. I thought great things depended on him. I was glad when he determined to send supplies into Fort Sumter. I was sure that he was right; but I held my breath, as it were, to see what South Carolina would do. The twelfth of April told us.

"So they have done it, Daisy!" said Miss Cardigan, that evening. "They are doing it, rather. They have been firing at each other all day."

"Well, Major Anderson must defend his fort," I said. "That is his duty."

"No doubt," said Miss Cardigan; "but you look pale, Daisy, my bairn. You are from those quarters yourself. Is there anybody in that neighbourhood that is dear to you?"

I had the greatest difficulty not to burst into tears, by way of answer, and Miss Cardigan looked concerned at me. I told her there was nobody there I cared for, except some poor coloured people who were in no danger.

"There'll be many a sore heart in the country if this goes on," she said, with a sigh.

"But it will not go on, will it?" I asked. "They cannot take Fort Sumter; do you think so?"

"I know little about it," said my friend, soberly. "I am no soldier. And we never know what is best, Daisy. We must trust the Lord, my dear, to unravel these confusions."

And the next night the little news-boys in the streets were crying out the "Fall of Fort Sum-ter!" It rang ominously in my heart. The rebels had succeeded so far; and they would go on. Yes, they would go on now, I felt assured; unless some very serious check should be given them. Could the Yankees give that? I doubted it. Yet *their* cause was the cause of right, and justice, and humanity; but the right does *not* always at first triumph, whatever it may do in the end; and good swords, and good shots, and the spirit of a soldier, are things that are allowed to carry their force with them. I knew the South had these. What had the North?

Even in our school seclusion, we felt the breath of the tremendous excitement which swayed the public mind next day. Not bluster, nor even passion, but the stir of the people's heart. As we walked to church, we could hear it in half caught words of those we passed by, see it in the grave, intense air which characterised groups and faces; feel it in the atmosphere, which was heavy with indignation and gathering purpose. It was said no Sunday like that had been known in the city. Within our own little community, if parties ran high, they were like those outside, quiet; but when alone, the Southern girls testified an exultation that jarred painfully upon my ears.

"Daisy don't care."

"Yes, I care," I said.

"For shame not to be glad! You see, it is glorious. We have it all our own way. The impertinence of trying to hold our forts for us!"

"I don't see anything glorious in fighting," I said.

"Not when you are attacked?"

"We were not attacked," I said. "South Carolina fired the first guns."

"Good for her!" said Sally. "Brave little South Carolina! Nobody will meddle with her and come off without cutting his fingers."

"Nobody did meddle with her," I asserted. "It was *she* who meddled, to break the laws and fight against the government."

"What government?" said Sally. "Are we slaves, that we should be ruled by a government we don't choose? We will have our own. Do you think South Carolina and Virginia *gentlemen* are going to live under a rail-splitter for a President? and take orders from him?"

"What do you mean by a 'rail-splitter'?"

"I mean this Abe Lincoln the northern mudsills have picked up to make a President of. He used to get his living by splitting rails for a Western fence, Daisy Randolph."

"But if he is President, he is President," I said.

"For those that like him. *We* won't have him. Jefferson Davis is my President. And all I can do to help him I will. I can't fight; I wish I could. My brother and my cousins and my uncle will, though, that's one comfort; and what I can do I will."

"Then I think you are a traitor," I said.

I was hated among the Southern girls from that day. Hated with a bitter, violent hatred, which had indeed little chance to show itself, but was manifested in the scornful, intense avoidance of me. The bitterness of it is surprising to me even now. I cared not very much for it. I was too much engrossed with deeper interests of the time, both public and private. The very next day came the President's call for seventy-five thousand men; and the next, the answer of the governor of Kentucky, that "Kentucky would furnish no troops for the wicked purpose of subduing her sister Southern States." I saw this in the paper in the library; the other girls had no access to the general daily news, or I knew there would have been shoutings of triumph over Governor Magoffin. Other governors of other States followed his example. Jefferson Davis declared in a proclamation that letters of marque and reprisal would be issued. Everything wore the aspect of thickening strife.

My heart grew very heavy over these signs of evil, fearing I knew not what for those whom I cared about. Indeed, I would not stop to think what I feared. I tried to bury my fears in my work. Letters from my mother became very explicit now; she said that troublesome times were coming in the country, and she would like me to be out of it. After a little while, when the independence of the South should be assured, we would all come home and be happy together. Meantime, as soon after the close of the school year as Dr. Sandford could find a good chance for me, I was to come out to them at Lausanne, where my mother thought they would be by that time.

So I studied with all my strength, with the double motive of gaining all I could and of forgetting what was going on in the political world. Music and French, my mother particularly desired that I should excel in; and I gave many hours to my piano, as many as possible, and talked with Mlle. Genevieve, whenever she would let me. And she was very fond of me and fond of talking to me; it was she who kept for me my library privilege. And my voice was good, as it had promised to be. I had the pleasure of feeling that I was succeeding in what I most wished to attain. It was succeeding over the heads of my schoolfellows; and that earned me wages that were not pleasant among a portion of my companions. Faustina St. Clair was back among us; she would perhaps have forgiven if she could have forgotten me; but my headship had been declared ever since the time of the bronze standish, and even rivalry had been long out of the question. So the old feud was never healed; and now, between the unfriendliness of her party and the defection of all the Southern girls, I was left in a great minority of popular favour. It could not be helped. I studied the harder. I had unlimited favour with all my teachers, and every indulgence I asked for.

The news of the attack in Baltimore upon the Massachusetts troops passing through the city, and Governor Andrew's beautiful telegram, shook me out of my pre-occupation. It shook me out of all quiet for a day. Indignation, and fear, and sorrow rolled through my heart. The passions that were astir among men, the mad results to which they were leading, the possible involvement of several of those whom I loved, a general trembling of evil in the air, made study difficult for the moment. What signified the course and fate of nations hundreds of years ago? Our own course and fate filled the horizon. What signified the power or beauty of my voice, when I had not the heart to send it up and down like a bird any longer? Where was Preston, and Dr. Sandford, and Ransom, and what would become of Magnolia? In truth, I did not know what had become of Ransom. I had not heard from him or of him in a long time. But these thoughts would not do. I drove them away. I resolved to mind my work and not read the papers, if I could help it, and not think about politics or my friends' course in them. I could do nothing. And in a few months I should be away, out of the land.

I kept my resolve pretty well. Indeed, I think nothing very particular happened to disturb it for the next two or three weeks. I succeeded in filling my head with work and being very happy in it. That is, whenever I could forget more important things.



CHAPTER XIX.

ENTERED FOR THE WAR.

ONE evening, I think before the end of April, I asked permission to spend the evening at Miss Cardigan's. I had on hand a piece of study for which I wanted to consult certain books which I knew were in her library. Mlle. Genevieve gave me leave gladly.

"You do study too persevering, m'amie," she said. "Go, and stop to study for a little while. You are pale. I am afraid your doctor--ce bon Monsieur le docteur--will scold us all by and by. Go, and do not study."

But I determined to have my play and my study too.

As I passed through Miss Cardigan's hall, the parlour door, standing half open let me see that a gentleman was with her. Not wishing to interrupt any business that might be going on, and not caring also to be bored with it myself, I passed by and went into the inner room where the books were. I would study now, I thought, and take my pleasure with my dear old friend by and by, when she was at leisure. I had found my books, and had thrown myself down on the floor with one, when a laugh that came from the front room laid a spell upon my powers of study. The book fell from my hands; I sat bolt upright, every sense resolved into that of hearing. What, and who had that been? I listened. Another sound of a word spoken, another slight inarticulate suggestion of laughter; and I knew with an assured knowledge that my friend Cadet Thorold, and no other, was the gentleman in Miss Cardigan's parlour with whom she had business. I sat up and forgot my books. The first impulse was to go in immediately and show myself. I can hardly tell what restrained me. I remembered that Miss Cardigan must have business with him, and I had better not interrupt it. But those sounds of laughter had not been very business-like, either. Nor were they business words which came through the open door. I never thought or knew I was listening. I only thought it was Thorold, and held my breath to hear, or rather to feel. My ears seemed sharpened beyond all their usual faculty.

"And you haven't gone and fallen in love, callant, meanwhile, just to complicate affairs?" said the voice of Miss Cardigan.

"I shall never fall in love," said Thorold, with (I suppose) mock gravity. His voice sounded so.

"Why not?"

"I require too much."

"It's like your conceit!" said Miss Cardigan. "Now, what is it that you require? I would like to know; that is, if you know yourself. It appears that you have thought about it."

"I have thought, till I have got it all by heart," said Thorold. "The worst is, I shall never find it in this world."

"That's likely. Come, lad, paint your picture, and I'll tell you if I know where to look," said Miss Cardigan.

"And then you'll search for me?"

"I dinna ken if you deserve it," said Miss Cardigan.

"I don't deserve it, of course," said Thorold. "Well--I have painted the likeness a good many times. The first thing is a pair of eyes as deep and grey as our mountain lakes."

"I never heard that your Vermont lakes were *grey*," said Miss Cardigan.

"Oh, but they are! when the shadow of the mountains closes them in. It is not cold grey, but purple and brown, the shadow of light, as it were; the lake is in shadow. Only, if a bit of blue *does* show itself there, it is the very heaven."

"I hope that it is not going to be in poetry?" said Miss Cardigan's voice, sounding dry and amused. "What is the next thing? It is a very good picture of eyes."

"The next thing is a mouth that makes you think of nothing but kissing it; the lines are so sweet, and so mobile, and at the same time so curiously subdued. A mouth that has learned to smile when things don't go right; and that has learned the lesson so well, you cannot help thinking it must have often known things go wrong; to get the habit so well, you know."

"Eh?--Why, boy!"--cried Miss Cardigan.

"Do you know anybody like it?" said Thorold, laughing. "If you do, you are bound to let me know where, you understand."

"What lies between the eyes and mouth?" said Miss Cardigan. "There goes more to a picture."

"Between the eyes and mouth," said Thorold, "there is sense and dignity, and delicacy, and refinement to a fastidious point; and a world of strength of character in the little delicate chin."

"Character--*that* shows in the mouth," said Miss Cardigan, slowly.

"I told you so," said Thorold. "That is what I told you. Truth, and love, and gentleness, all sit within those little red lips; and a great strength of will, which you cannot help thinking has borne something to try it. The brow is like one of our snowy mountain tops with the sun shining on it."

"And the lady's figure is like a pine-tree, isn't it? It sounds gay, as if you'd fallen in love with Nature, and so personified and imaged her in human likeness. Is it real humanity?"

Thorold laughed his gay laugh. "The pine-tree will do excellently, Aunt Catherine," he said. "No better embodiment of stately grace could be found."

My ears tingled. "Aunt Catherine?" *Aunt!* Then Thorold must be her relation, her nephew; then he was not come on business; then he would stay to tea. I might as well show myself. But, I thought, if Thorold had some other lady so much in his mind (for I was sure his picture must be in a portrait), he would not care so very much about seeing me, as I had at first fancied he would. However, I could not go away; so I might as well go in; it would not do to wait longer. The evening had quite fallen now. It was April, as I said, but a cold, raw spring day, and had been like that for several days. Houses were chill; and in Miss Cardigan's grate a fine fire of Kennal coals were blazing, making its red illumination all over the room and the two figures who sat in front of it. She had had a grate put in this winter. There was no other light, only that soft red glow and gloom, under favour of which I went in and stood almost beside them before they perceived me. I did not speak to Miss Cardigan. I remember my words were, "How do you do, Mr. Thorold?"--in a very quiet kind of a voice; for I did not now expect him to be very glad. But I was surprised at the change my words made. He sprang up, his eyes flashing a sort of shower of sparks over me, gladness in every line of his face, and surprise, and a kind of inexpressible deference in his manner.

"Daisy!" he exclaimed. "Miss Randolph!"

"Daisy!" echoed Miss Cardigan. "My dear--do you two know each other? Where did you come from?"

I think I did not answer. I am sure Thorold did not. He was caring for me, placing his chair nearer his aunt, and putting me into it, before he let go the hand he had taken. Then, drawing up another chair on the other side of me, he sat down, looking at me (I thought afterwards, I only felt at the moment), as if I had been some precious wonder; the Koh-i-noor diamond, or anything of that sort.

"Where did you come from?" was his first question.

"I have been in the house a little while," I said. "I thought at first Miss Cardigan had somebody with her on business, so I would not come in."

"It is quite true, Daisy," said Miss Cardigan; "it is somebody on business."

"Nothing private about it, though," said Thorold, smiling at me. "But where in the world did you and Aunt Catherine come together?"

"And what call have ye to search into it?" said Miss Cardigan's good-humoured voice. "I know a great many bodies, callant, that you know not."

"I know this one, though," said Thorold. "Miss Randolph--won't you speak? for Aunt Catherine is in no mood to tell me--have you two known each other long?"

"It seems long," I said. "It is not very long."

"Since last summer?"

"Certainly!"

"If that's the date of *your* acquaintanceship," said Miss Cardigan, "we're auld friends to that. Is all well, Daisy?"

"All quite well, ma'am. I came to do a bit of study I wanted in your books, and to have a nice time with you, besides."

"And here is this fellow in the way. But we cannot turn him out, Daisy; he is going fast enough; on what errand, do you think, is he bent?"

I had not thought about it till that minute. Something, some thread of the serious, in Miss Cardigan's voice, made me look suddenly at Thorold. He had turned his eyes from me and had bent them upon the fire, all merriment gone out of his face, too. It was thoroughly grave.

"What are you going to do, Mr. Thorold?" I asked.

"Do you remember a talk we had down on Flirtation Walk one day last summer, when you asked me about possible political movements at the South, and I asked you what you would do?"

"Yes," I said, my heart sinking.

"The time has come," he said, facing round upon me.

"And you--?"

"I shall be on my way to Washington in a few days. Men are wanted now--all the men that have any knowledge to be useful. I may not be very useful. But I am going to try."

"I thought"--it was not quite easy to speak, for I was struggling with something which threatened to roughen my voice--"I thought you did not graduate till June?"

"Not regularly; not usually; but things are extraordinary this year. We graduate and go on to Washington at once."

I believe we were all silent a few minutes.

"Daisy," said Miss Cardigan, "you have nobody that is dear to *you* likely to be engaged in the fray--if there is one?"

"I don't know--" I said, rather faintly. I remember I said it; I cannot tell why, for I *did* know. I knew that Preston and Ransom were both likely to be in the struggle, even if Ransom had been at the moment at the opposite side of the world. But then Thorold roused up and began to talk. He talked to divert us, I think. He told us of things that concerned himself and his class personally, giving details to which we listened eagerly; and he went on from them to things and people in the public line, of which and of whom neither Miss Cardigan nor I had known the thousandth part so much before. We sat and listened, Miss Cardigan often putting in a question, while the warm still glow of the firelight shed over us and all the room its assurance of peace and quiet, woven and compounded of life-long associations. Thorold sat before us and talked, and we looked at him and listened in the fire-shine; and my thoughts made swift sideway flights every now and then from this peace and glow of comfort, and from Thorold's talk, to the changes of the camp and the possible coming strife; spectres of war, guns and swords, exposure and wounds--and sickness--and the battlefield--what could I tell? and Miss Cardigan's servant put another lump of coal on the fire, and Thorold presently broke it, and the jet of illumination sprang forth, mocking and yet revealing in its sweet home glow my visions of terror. They were but momentary visions; I could not bear, of course, to look steadily at them; they were spectres that came and went with a wave of a hand, in a jet of flame, or the shadow of an opening door; but they went and came; and I saw many things in Thorold's face that night besides the manly lines of determination and spirit, the look of thought and power, and the hover of light in his eye when it turned to me. I don't know what Miss Cardigan saw; but several times in the evening I heard her sigh; a thing very unusual and notable with her. Again and again I heard it, a soft long breath.

I gave it no heed at the time. My eyes and thoughts were fixed on the other member of the party; and I was like one in a dream. I walked in a dream; till we went into the other room to tea, and I heard Miss Cardigan say, addressing her nephew--

"Sit there, Christian."

I was like one in a dream, or I should have known what this meant. I did know two minutes afterwards. But at the moment, falling in with some of my thoughts, the word made me start and look at Thorold. I cannot tell what was in my look; I know what was in my heart; the surprised inquiry and the yearning wish. Thorold's face flushed. He met my eyes with an intense recognition and inquiry in his own, and then, I am almost sure, his were dim. He set my chair for me at the table, and took hold of me and put me in it with a very gentle touch that seemed to thank me.

"That is my name, Miss Randolph," he said, "the name given me by my parents."

"You'll earn it yet, boy," said Miss Cardigan. "But the sooner the better."

There was after that a very deep gravity upon us all for the first minutes at the table. I wondered to myself, how people

can go on drinking tea and eating bread and butter through everything; yet they must, and even I was doing it at the moment, and not willing to forego the occupation. By degrees the wonted course of things relieved our minds, which were upon too high a strain. It appeared that Thorold was very hungry, having missed his dinner somehow; and his aunt ordered up everything in the house for his comfort, in which I suppose she found her own. And then Thorold made me eat with him. I was sure I did not want it, but that made no difference. Things were prepared for me and put upon my plate, and a soft little command laid on me to do with them what I was expected to do. It was not like the way Dr. Sandford used to order me, nor in the least like Preston's imperiousness, which I could withstand well enough; there was something in it which nullified all my power and even will to resist, and I was as submissive as possible. Thorold grew very bright again as the meal went on, and began to talk in a somewhat livelier strain than he had been in before tea; and I believe he did wile both his aunt and me out of the sad or grave thoughts we had been indulging. I know that I was obliged to laugh, as I was obliged to eat. Thorold had his own way, and seemed to like it. Even his aunt was amused and interested, and grew lively, like herself. With all that, through the whole supper-time I had an odd feeling of her being on one side; it seemed to be only Thorold and I really there; and in all Thorold was doing and through all he was talking, I had a curious sense that he was occupied only with me. It was not that he said so much directly to me or looked so much at me; I do not know how I got the feeling. There was Miss Cardigan at the head of the table busy and talking as usual, clever and kind; yet the air seemed to be breathed only by Thorold and me.

"And how soon, lad," Miss Cardigan broke out suddenly, when a moment's lull in the talk had given her a chance, "how soon will ye be off to that region of disturbance whither ye are going?"

"Washington?" said Thorold. "Just as soon as our examination can be pushed through; in a very few days now."

"You'll come to me by the way, for another look at you, in your officer's uniform?"

"Uniform? nobody will have any uniform, I fancy," said Thorold; "nobody has any time to think of that. No, Aunt Catherine, and I shall not see you, either. I expect we shall rush through without the loss of a train. I can't stop. I don't care what clothes I wear to get there."

"How came you to be here now, if you are in such a hurry?"

"Nothing on earth would have brought me, but the thing that did bring me," said Thorold. "I was subpoenaed down, to give my evidence in a trial. I must get back again without loss of a minute; should have gone to-night, if there had been a train that stopped. I am very glad there was no train that stopped!"

We were all silent for a minute; till the door-bell rang, and the servant came, announcing Mr. Bunsen, to see Miss Cardigan about the tenant houses. Miss Cardigan went off through the open doors that led to the front parlour; and standing by the fire, I watched her figure diminishing in the long distance till it passed into Mr. Bunsen's presence and disappeared. Mr. Thorold and I stood silently on either side of the hearth, looking into the fire, while the servant was clearing the table. The cheerful, hospitable little table, round which we had been so cheerful at least for the moment, was dismantled already, and the wonted cold gleam of the mahogany seemed to tell me that cheer was all over. The talk of the uniform had overset me. All sorts of visions of what it signified, what it portended, where it would go, what it would be doing, were knocking at the door of my heart, and putting their heads in. Before tea these visions had come and vanished; often enough, to be sure; now they came and stayed. I was very quiet, I am certain of that; I was as certainly very sober, with a great and growing sadness at my heart. I think Thorold was grave, too, though I hardly looked at him. We did not speak to each other all the time the servant was busy in the room. We stood silent before the fire. The study I had come to do had all passed away out of my mind, though the books were within three feet of me. I was growing sadder and sadder every minute.

"Things have changed, since we talked so lightly last summer of what might be," Thorold said at last. And he said it in a meditative way, as if he were pondering something.

"Yes," I assented.

"The North does not wish for war. The South have brought it upon themselves."

"Yes," I said again, wondering a little what was coming.

"However disagreeable my duty may be, it is my duty; and there is no shirking it."

"No," I said. "Of course."

"And if your friends are on one side and I on the other,--it is not my fault, Miss Randolph."

"No," I said; "not at all."

"Then you do not blame me for taking the part I *must* take?"

"No," I said. "You must take it."

"Are you sorry I take it?" said Thorold with a change of tone, and coming a step nearer.

"Sorry?" I said, and I looked up for an instant. "No; how could I be sorry? it is your duty. It is right." But as I looked down again I had the greatest difficulty not to burst into tears. I felt as though my heart would break in two with its burden of pain. It cost a great effort to stand still and quiet, without showing anything.

"What is it, then?" said Thorold; and with the next words I knew he had come close to my side and was stooping his head down to my face, while his voice dropped. "What is it, Daisy?--Is it--O Daisy, I love you better than anything else in the world, except my duty! Daisy, do you love me?"

Nothing could have been more impossible to me, I think, than to answer a word; but, indeed, Thorold did not seem to want it. As he questioned me, he had put his arm round me and drawn me nearer and nearer, stooping his face to me, till his lips took their own answer at mine; indeed, took answer after answer, and then, in a sort of passion of mute joy, kissed my face all over. I could not forbid him; between excitement and sorrow and happiness and shame, I could do nothing. The best I could do was to hide my face; but the breast of that grey coat was a strange hiding-place for it. With that inconsistent mingling of small things with great in one's perceptions, which everybody knows, I remember the soft feel of the fine grey cloth along with the clasp of Thorold's arms and the touch of his cheek resting upon my hair. And we stood so, quite still, for what seemed both a long and a short time, in which I think happiness got the upper hand with me, and pain for the moment was bid into the background. At last Thorold raised his head and bade me lift up mine.

"Look up, darling," he said; "look up, Daisy! let me see your face. Look up, Daisy--we have only a minute, and everything in the world to say to each other. Daisy--I want to see you."

I think it was one of the most difficult little things I ever had in my life to do, to raise my face and let him look at it; but I knew it must be done, and I did it. One glance at his I ventured. He was smiling at me; there was a flush upon his cheek; his eye had a light in it, and with that a glow of tenderness which was different from anything I had ever seen; and it was glittering, too, I think, with another sort of suffusion. His hand came smoothing down my hair and then touching my cheek while he looked at me.

"What are you going to do with yourself now?" he said softly.

"I am going on with my studies for another month or two."

"And you belong to me, Daisy?"

"Yes."

He bent his head and kissed my brow. There is an odd difference of effect between a kiss on the lips and on the forehead, or else it was a difference in the manner. This seemed a sort of taking possession or setting a seal; and it gave me a new feeling of something almost like awe, which I had never associated with the grey coat or with its wearer before. Along with that came another impression that I suppose most women know, and know how sweet it is; the sense of an enveloping protection. Not that I had not been protected all my life; but my mother's had been the protection of authority; my father's also, in some measure; Dr. Sandford's was emphatically that of a *guardian*; he guarded me a little too well. But this new thing that was stealing into my heart, with its subtle delight, was the protection of a champion; of one who set me and mine above all other interests or claims in the world, and who would guard me as if he were a part of myself, only stronger. Altogether Thorold seemed to me different from what he had been the last summer; there was a gravity now in his face and air at times that was new and even stern; the gravity of a man taking stern life work upon him. I felt all this in a minute, while Thorold was smiling down into my face.

"And you will write to me?" he said.

"Yes."

"And I will write to you. And I belong to you, Daisy, and to no other. All I have is yours, and all that I am is yours--after my duty; you may dispose of me, pretty one, just as you like. *You* would not have that put second, Daisy."

A great yearning came over me, so great and strong that it almost took away my breath. I fancy it spoke in my eyes, for Thorold's face grew very grave, I remember, as he looked at me. But I must speak it more plainly than so, at any costs, breath or no breath, and I must not wait.

"Christian," I whispered, "won't you earn your right to your name?"

He pressed his lips upon mine by way of answer first, and then gave me a quick and firm "Yes." I certainly thought he had found a mouth he was talking of a little while ago. But at that instant the sound of the distant house door closing, and then of steps coming out from the parlour, made me know that Miss Cardigan's business was over, and that she was returning to us. I wanted to free myself from Thorold's arm, but he would not let me; on the contrary, held me closer, and half turned to meet Miss Cardigan as she came in. Certainly men are very different from women. There we stood, awaiting her; and I felt very much ashamed.

"Come on, Aunt Catherine," Thorold said, as she paused at the door,--"come in, come in, and kiss her--this little darling is mine."

Miss Cardigan came in slowly. I could not look up.

"Kiss her, Aunt Catherine," he repeated; "she is mine."

And to my great dismay he set her the example; but I think it was partly to reassure me, and cover my confusion, which he saw.

"I have kissed Daisy very often before now," said Miss Cardigan. I thought I discerned some concern in her voice.

"Then come, do it again," said Thorold, laughing. "You never kissed her as anything belonging to me, Aunt Catherine."

And he fairly laid me in Miss Cardigan's arms, till we kissed each other as he desired. But Miss Cardigan's gravity roused me out of my confusion. I was not ashamed before her; only before him.

"Now, Aunt Catherine," he said, pulling up a comfortable arm chair to the corner of the hearth, "sit there. And Daisy--come here!"

He put me into the fellow chair; and then built up the wood in the fireplace till we had a regular illumination. Then drew himself up before the fire, and looked at his aunt.

"It's like you!" broke out Miss Cardigan. "Ever since you were born, I think, you did what you liked, and had what you liked; and threw over everything to get at the best."

"On the contrary," said Thorold, "I was always of a very contented disposition."

"Contented with your own will, then," said his aunt. "And now, do you mean to tell me that you have got this prize--this prize--it's a first class, Christian--for good and for certain to yourself?"

I lifted my eyes one instant, to see the sparkles in Thorold's eyes; they were worth seeing.

"You don't think you deserve it?" Miss Cardigan went on.

"I do not think I deserve it," said Thorold. "But I think I will."

"I know what that means," said his aunt. "You will get worldly glory--just a bit or two more of gold on your coat--to match you with one of the Lord's jewels, that are to be 'all glorious within'; and you think that will fit you to own her."

"Aunt Catherine," said Thorold, "I do not precisely think that gold lace is glory. But I mean that I will do my duty. A man can do no more."

"Some would have said 'a man can do no less,'" said Miss Cardigan, turning to me. "But you are right, lad; more than our duty we can none of us do; where *all* is owing, less will not be overpay. But whatever do you think her father will say to you?"

"I will ask him when the time comes," said Thorold, contentedly. His tone was perfect, both modest and manly. Truth to say, I could not quite share his content in looking forward to the time he spoke of; but that was far ahead, and it was impossible not to share his confidence. My father and my mother had been practically not my guardians during six and a half long years; I had got out of the habit of looking first to them.

"And what are you going to do now in Washington?" said his aunt. "You may as well sit down and tell us."

"I don't know. Probably I shall be put to drill new recruits. All these seventy-five thousand men that the President has called for, won't know how to handle a gun or do anything else."

"And what is he going to do with these seventy-five thousand men, Christian?"

"Put down treason, if he can. Don't you realize yet that we have a civil war on our hands, Aunt Catherine? The Southern States are mustering and sending their forces; we must meet them, or give up the whole question; that is, give up the country."

"And what is it that *they* will try to do?" said Miss Cardigan. "It is a mystery to me what they want; but I suppose I know; only bad men are a mystery to me always."

"They will try to defy the laws," said Thorold. "We will try to see them executed."

"They seem very fierce," said Miss Cardigan; "to judge by what they say."

"And do," added Thorold. "I think there is a sort of madness in Southern blood."

He spoke with a manner of disgustful emphasis. I looked up at him to see an expression quite in keeping with his words. Miss Cardigan cried out--

"Hey, lad! ye're confident, surely, to venture your opinions so plainly and so soon!"

His face changed, as if sunlight had been suddenly poured over it. He came kneeling on one knee before me, taking my hand and kissing it, and laughing.

"And I see ye're not confident without reason!" added Miss Cardigan. "Daisy'll just let ye say your mind, and no punish you for it."

"But it is *true*, Miss Cardigan," I said, turning to her. I wished I had held my tongue the next minute, for the words were taken off my lips, as it were. It is something quite different from eating your own words, which I have heard of as not being pleasant; mine seemed to be devoured by somebody else.

"But is it true they are coming to attack Washington?" Miss Cardigan went on, when we had all done laughing. "I read it in the prints; and it seems to me I read every other thing there."

"I am afraid you read too many prints," said Thorold. "You are thinking of 'hear both sides,' Aunt Catherine? You must know there is but one side to this matter. There never are two sides to treason."

"That's true," said Miss Cardigan. "But about Washington, lad? I saw an extract from a letter written from that city, by a lady, and she said the place was in a terror; she said the President sleeps with a hundred men, armed, in the east room, to protect him from the Southern army; and keeps a sentinel before his bedroom door; and often goes clean out of the White House and sleeps somewhere else, in his fear."

I had never seen Thorold laugh as he did then. And he asked his aunt "where she had seen that extract?"

"It was in one of the papers--it was in an extract itself, I'm thinking."

"From a Southern paper," said Thorold.

"Well, I believe it was."

"I have seen extracts, too," said Thorold. "They say, Alexander H. Stephens is counselling the rebels to lay hold on Washington."

"Well, sit down and tell us what you do know, and how to understand things," said Miss Cardigan. "I don't talk to anybody, much, about politics."

So Thorold did as he was asked. He sat down on the other side of me, and with my hand in his, talked to us both. We went over the whole ground of the few months past, of the work then doing and preparing, of what might reasonably be looked for in both the South and the North. He said he was not very wise in the matter; but he was infinitely more informed than we; and we listened as to the most absorbing of all tales, till the night was far worn. A sense of the gravity and importance of the crisis; a consciousness that we were embarked in a contest of the most stubborn character, the end of which no man might foretell, pressed itself more and more on my mind as the night and the talk grew deeper. If I may judge from the changes in Miss Cardigan's face, it was the same with her. The conclusion was, the North was gathering and concentrating all her forces to meet the trial that was coming; and the young officers of the graduating class at the Military Academy had been ordered to the seat of war a little before their time of study was out, their help being urgently needed.

"And where is Preston?" said I, speaking for the first time in a long while.

"Preston?" echoed Thorold.

"My Cousin Preston--Gary; your classmate Gary."

"Gary! Oh, he is going to Washington, like the rest of us."

"Which side will he take?"

"You should know, perhaps, better than I," said Thorold. "He always *has* taken the Southern side, and very exclusively."

"*Has* taken?" said I. "Do you mean that among the cadets there has been a South and a North--until now, lately?"

"Aye, Daisy, always, since I have been in the Academy. The Southern clique and the Northern clique have been well defined; there is always an assumption of superiority on the one side, and some resenting of it on the other side. It was on that ground Gary and I split."

"Split!" I repeated.

But Thorold laughed and kissed me, and would give me no satisfaction. I began to put things together, though. I saw from Christian's eyes that *he* had nothing to be ashamed of, in looking back; I remembered Preston's virulence, and his sudden flush when somebody had repeated the word "coward," which he had applied to Thorold. I felt certain that more had been between them than mere words, and that Preston found the recollection not flattering, whatever it was; and having come to this settlement of the matter, I looked up at Thorold.

"My gentle little Daisy!" he said. "I will never quarrel with him again--if I can help it."

"You *must* quarrel with him, if he is on the wrong side," I answered. "And so must I."

"You say you must go immediately back to West Point," said Miss Cardigan. "Leave thanking Daisy's hand, and tell me *when* you are going; for the night is far past, children."

"I am gone when I bid you good-night," said Thorold. "I must set out with the dawn--to catch the train I must take."

"With the dawn!--*this* morning!" cried Miss Cardigan.

"Certainly. I should be there this minute, if the colonel had not given me something to do here that kept me."

"And when will ye do it?"

"Do it! It is done," said Thorold; "before I came here. But I must catch the first train in the morning."

"And you'll want some breakfast before that," she said, rising.

"No, I shall not," said Thorold, catching hold of her. "I want nothing. I *did* want my supper. Sit down, Aunt Catherine, and be quiet. I want nothing, I tell you, but more time."

"We may as well sit up the rest of the night," I said; "it is so far gone now."

"Yes, and what will you be good for to-morrow?" said Miss Cardigan. "You must lie down and take a bit of rest."

I felt no weariness; but I remember the grave, tender examination of Thorold's eyes, which seemed to touch me with their love, to find out whether I--and himself--might be indulged or not. It was a bit of the thoughtful, watchful affection which always surrounded me when he was near. I never had it just so from anybody else.

"It won't do, Daisy," said he gaily. "You would not have me go in company with self-reproaches all day to-morrow? You must lie down here on the sofa; and, sleep or not, we'll all be still for two hours. Aunt Catherine will thank me to stop talking for that length of time."

I was not sleepy, but Miss Cardigan and Thorold would not be resisted. Thorold wheeled up the sofa, piled the cushions, and made me lie down, with the understanding that nobody should speak for the time he had specified. Miss Cardigan, on her part, soon lost herself in her easy chair. Thorold walked perseveringly up and down the room. I closed my eyes and opened my eyes, and lay still and thought. It is all before me now. The firelight fading and brightening; Thorold took care of the fire; the gleam of the gaslight on the rows of books; Miss Cardigan's comfortable figure gone to sleep in the corner of her chair; and the figure which ever and anon came between me and the fire, piling or arranging the logs of wood, and then paced up and down just behind me. There was no sleep for my eyes, of course. How should there be? I seemed to pass all my life in review, and as I took the bearings of my present position I became calm.

I rose up the moment the two hours were over, for I could bear the silence no longer, nor the losing any more time. Thorold stopped his walk then, and we had along talk over the fire by ourselves, while Miss Cardigan slept on. Trust

her, though, for waking up when there was anything to be done. Long before dawn she roused herself and went to call her servants and order our breakfast.

"What are you going to do now, Daisy?" said Thorold, turning to me with a weight of earnestness in his eyes, and a flash of that keen inspection which they sometimes gave me.

"You know," I said, "I am going to study as hard as I can for a month or two more,--till my school closes."

"What then, Daisy? Perhaps you will find some way to come on and see me at Washington--if the rebels don't take it first?"

It must be told.

"No--I cannot.--My father and mother wish me to go out to them as soon as I get a chance."

"Where?"

"In Switzerland."

"Switzerland! To stay how long?"

"I don't know--till the war is over, I suppose. I do not think they would come back before."

"I shall come and fetch you then, Daisy."

But it seemed a long way off. And how much might be between. We were both silent.

"That is heavy for me," said Thorold at last. "Little Daisy, you do not know how heavy!"

He was caressing my hair, smoothing and stroking it as he spoke. I looked up and his eyes flashed fire instantly.

"Say that in words!" he exclaimed, taking me in his arms. "Say it, Daisy! say it. It will be worth so much to me."

But my lips had hardly a chance to speak.

"Say what?"

"Daisy, you *have* said it. Put it in words, that is all."

But his eyes were so full of flashing triumph that I thought he had got enough for the time.

"Daisy, those eyes of yours are like mountain lakes, deep and still. But when I look quite down to the bottom of them--sometimes I see something--I thought I did then."

"What?" I asked, very much amused.

"I see it there now, Daisy!"

I was afraid he did, for *his* eyes were like sunbeams, and I thought they went through everything at that minute. I don't know what moved me, the consciousness of this inspection or the consciousness of what it discovered; but I know that floods of shyness seemed to flush my face and brow, and even to the tips of my fingers. I would have escaped if I could, but I could not; and I think Thorold rather liked what he saw. There was no hiding it, unless I hid it on his shoulder, and that I was ashamed to do. I felt that his lips knew just as well as his eyes what state my cheeks were in, and took their own advantage. Though presently their tenderness soothed me too, and even nullified the soft little laugh with which he whispered, "Are you ashamed to show it to *me*, Daisy?"

"You know," said I, still keeping my eyes veiled, "you have me at advantage. If you were not going--away--so soon, I would not do a great many things."

"Daisy!" said he, laughing--"Daisy!"--And he touched my cheek as one who meant to keep his advantage. Then his voice changed, and he repeated, with a deeper and deepening tone with each word--"Daisy! my Daisy!"

I had very nearly burst out into great sobs upon his breast, with the meeting of opposite tides of feeling. Sweet and bitter struggled for the upper hand; struggled, while I was afraid he would feel the laboured breath which went and came, straining me. And the sweetness, for the moment, got the better. I knew he must go, in an hour or little more, away from me. I knew it was for uncertain and maybe dangerous duty. I knew it might at best be long before we could see each other again; and back of all, the thought of my father and mother was not reassuring. But his arms were round me and my head was on his shoulder; and that was but the outward symbol of the inward love and confidence which filled all my heart with its satisfying content. For the moment happiness was uppermost. Not all the clouds on the

horizon could dim the brightness of that one sun ray which reached me.

I do not know what Thorold thought, but he was as still for a while as I was.

"Daisy," he said at last, "my Daisy, you need not grudge any of your goodness to me. Don't you know, you are to be my light and my watchword in what lies before me?"

"Oh no!" I said, lifting my head; "Oh no, Christian!"

"Why no?" said he.

"I want you to have a better watchword and follow a better light. Not me. O Christian, won't you?"

"What shall my watchword be?" said he, looking into my eyes. But I was intent on something else then. I answered, "Whatsoever ye do, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."

"A soldier, Daisy?"

"A soldier more than anybody," I said; "for He calls us to be soldiers, and you know what it means."

"But you forget," said he, not taking his eyes from my face--"in my service I must obey as well as command: I am not my own master exactly."

"Let Christ be your Master," I said.

"How then with this other service?"

"Why it is very plain," I said. "Command in the love of God and obey in the fear of God; that covers all."

I did not see the natural sequence of what followed; for it was a succession of kisses that left no chance for a word to get out of my mouth. Then Thorold rose up, and I saw Miss Cardigan enter.

"I will not forget, Daisy," he said, in a tone as if we had been talking of business. I thought, neither should I. And then came Miss Cardigan, and the servant behind her bringing coffee and bread and eggs and marmalade--I don't know what beside--and we sat down again to the table, knowing that the next move would be a move apart. But the wave of happiness was at the flood with me, and it bore me over all the underlying roughness of the shore--for the time. I do not think anybody wanted to eat much; we played with cups of coffee and with each other, and dallied with the minutes till the last one was spent.

And then came the parting. That was short.

THE END.

Transcriber's Notes

The following items were considered to be typographical errors and have been changed. Other typographic, spelling, punctuation errors and parochial speech has been left as they appear in the book.

Page 17

Changed period into comma after the word "too" in the sentence
"But I think it is nice to know things too," said I.

Page 37

Corrected "awkward" from "awkard" in the sentence
They were giggling and grinning, hopping on one foot, and going into other awkward antics; not the less that most of them had their arms filled with little black babies.

Page 40

Changed question mark to period and deleted quotation mark in the sentence
I asked what they all were."

Page 51

Changed single quote to double quote after "light" in the sentence
"They must be very dark if they could not understand light," said my governess.

Page 56

Removed superfluous "n" from governess in
Then I remembered that my governess probably did care for some fruit

Page 87

Corrected "string" to read "sting" in the sentence
It has a sting of its own, for which there is neither salve nor remedy; and it had the aggravation, in
my case, of the sense of personal dishonour.

Page 91

Added apostrophe to "girls" in the sentence
I have a recollection of the girl's terrified face, but I heard nothing more.

Page 93

removed " from the start of the sentence
They had been gone half an hour, when Preston stole in and came to the side of my bed, between
me and the firelight.

Page 97

Added " after Melbourne in the sentence
"We shall have to let her do just as they did at Melbourne," said my aunt.

Page 110

Added " after the word "by" in the sentence
"Mass' Preston come last night," she went on; "so I reckon Miss Daisy'll want to wear it by and
by."

Page 163

Changed period to ? in the sentence
"Will that distress you very much?"

Page 178

Changed Mr. to Dr. in the sentence
"But, Dr. Sandford," I said, "nobody can belong to anybody--in that way."

Page 193

Changed 'be' to 'he' in the sentence starting
I believe I half wished he would make some objection;

Page 206

Added "le" to "aves" to make "leaves" in
"You wouldn't say so, if you knew the work it is to set those leaves round," said the mantua-maker.

Page 240

Changed "for" into "far" in
but I am afraid the rule of the Good Samaritan would put us far apart.

Page 249

Changed exclamation mark to question mark in
"Is there so much trouble everywhere in the world?"

Page 250

Changed "I" to "It" in

It was a good photograph, and had beauty enough besides to hold my eyes.

Page 257

Capitalised "W" in

Is it Daisy Randolph? What have you done to yourself?

Page 266

changed beside to bedside in

I heard no sound while I was undressing, nor while I knelt, as usual now, by my bedside.

Page 283

Changed rapidly to rapidly in

I watched him rapidly walking into the library;

Page 285

Added question mark instead of period to

"Are you tired?"

Page 316

Changed immediately to immediately in

and placed himself immediately beside his summoner,

Page 349

Changed "not" to "nor" in

"I cannot help that. He is neither gentlemanly in his habits nor true in his speech."

Page 350

Added comma after "said" in

"You must not wear the same thing twice running," she said, "not if you can help it."

Page 355

Changed period to question mark after "next" in

Who is next? Major Banks? Take care, Daisy, or you'll do some mischief."

Page 374

Deleted comma after "see" in

Nevertheless, it was pleasant to see the firm, still attitude, the fine proportions, the military nicety of all his dress, which I had before noticed on the parade ground.

Page 386

Changed substance to substance in

men of business, men of character and some substance,

Page 407

Changed "weel" to "well" in

"You may as well sit down and tell us."