

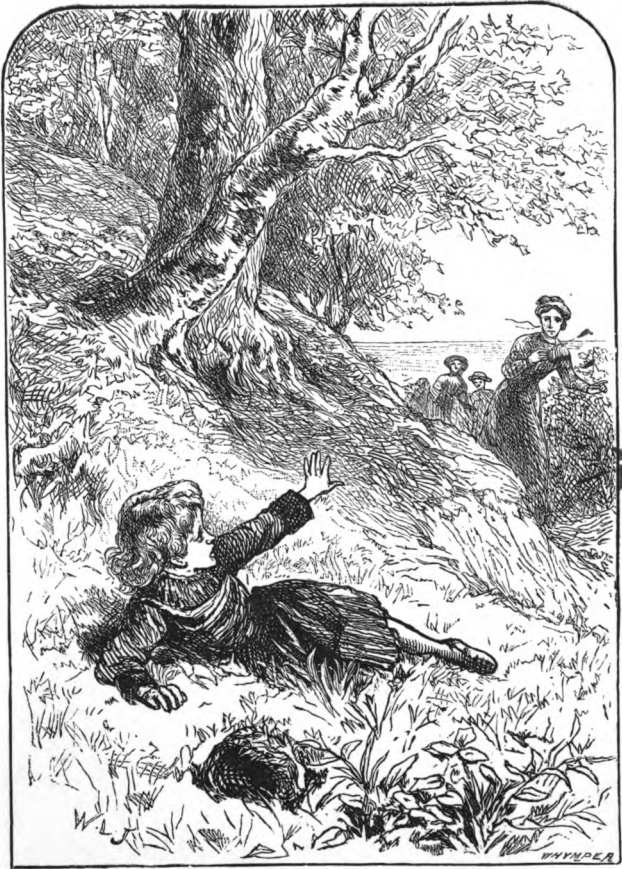


PANSY

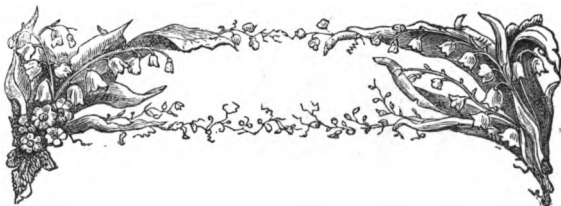


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AN ACCIDENT,



PANSY.

A Story for Little Girls.

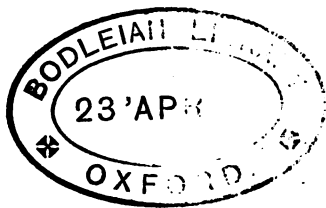
By the Author of

“WILLIE RUSSELL’S TEMPTATION,” “LOST AND RESCUED,”
ETC.



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PANSY.



CHAPTER I.

“HOME, SWEET HOME!”

I WILL begin my story in the old fashion of stories of long ago, and say, “Once upon a time” a little girl was born into this world who was afterwards called Pansy by the friends who loved her best, but who, I think, would have been puzzled

to say how this pretty name had sprung from "Marian," which certainly was written down in the big book which registered her birth.

Pansy was born on an island ; not a large island, such as Great Britain may seem to little people, but so small an island that men who could walk a long way have been across it in a summer day without feeling any unpleasant consequences afterwards. As Pansy grew old enough to understand what beauty is, she used to say that no little girl in all the wide world could have a home so beautiful !

There was one large town and several smaller ones in this pretty island, but Pansy's home was not in the busy streets or near the bustling market, but half-way up a very high hill, from which you saw the glittering, sparkling sea, and the steamer coming into harbour with its letters from England, and many other pleasant sights.

Some of the people on the island spoke French, and more spoke English, and a good many spoke something which was neither French nor English, but perhaps contained a little bit of both. Now, I wonder if you can guess where Pansy's home could be !

However, if I am going to begin at the very beginning I must tell you she was born on a

Christmas Day, and it seems to me that no child could desire a nicer birthday. Not only because it is a day when nearly every one is happy, and when so many people try to lighten the troubles of the sad, but because it is the day when Christ came to earth in the form of a little infant; and surely a child born on *His* birthday must think very much of Him, and pray and strive to get more like Him as each year comes round.

How often we wake up on Christmas Day and find the ground covered with snow, or the hard frost on the window-pane, and icicles hanging from the water-spouts; but on Pansy's birthday there was no snow—why, if it began to snow even for five minutes, people would come out of their houses on that little island and gaze up at the sky as if they could not imagine what was going to happen!

But you would not find such holly-trees in any of your gardens as there were in the garden of Pansy's home. So tall, so bushy, so bright with berries, and oh, such glossy leaves! There were something like decorations in the houses on that little island, I can assure you, for you could have as much greenery as you liked, without missing it when you next walked in the garden; and as for mistletoe, you might go to the market, and for a

penny buy a bunch the carrying of which would make your arms ache.

So in the old house on the hill where Pansy was born, the pictures on the walls were wreathed with holly and ivy and sweet-scented bay that happy 25th December when her parents thanked God for their little Christmas child.

When the next December came Pansy was old enough to stretch out her tiny hands to the flowers in the garden—yes, flowers at Christmas time! Camellias blooming out of doors as we see them in gay conservatories, myrtles too, and late roses, and violets, which I scarcely know whether to call very late or very early, coming as they did between the autumn and the spring. But two or three Christmas-times had passed before Pansy cared very much either for the flowers or her island home. *Then* how she loved all the beauty around her I have tried to tell you.

So we bring the little girl to the day which makes her three years old, and show you the room where she is being curled, and brushed, and dressed after waking from her long night's sleep. The two windows look towards the sea, and though Pansy is so young she has learned to know that when the wind wails and moans, and the waves toss and

foam against the rocks, there are some poor creatures in danger of their lives, and at her prayers she has been taught to say, "Please God, take care of those at sea."

But on this, Pansy's third birthday, there were no dark clouds and no wild, tossing waves; the sky was as calm as if the time were summer, and the sun peeped in at the window and tinged the little curly brown head with gold just as nurse pronounced her "ready."

Down she ran to the breakfast-room, where her father caught his child in his arms, and said, "God bless my Pansy!" and mamma held out her hands and folded her head with all its curls quite close against her bosom; and though she did not say anything, Pansy knew that her heart was full of love for her.

But of course on birthday mornings little folks look for presents, nor did Pansy look in vain. There on the low, broad window-seat was a smart doll and a perambulator, just like Pansy's own, a box of bricks, a farmyard, and a large ball. That was a nice birthday discovery for a little three-year-old girl, was it not? But, strangely enough, Miss Pansy did not like dolls, and had already shown a decided fancy for wooden horses, drums,

nine-pins, and toys which we always choose for little boys ; and, when her eyes lighted upon the doll, there was a gleam more of mischief than delight. Already she had been given an "indestructible" baby, but her active brain had found an easy way of making an end of it, for, when nurse was not looking, she had tossed it on the fire, and sat contentedly down on the rug watching with a smile its gradual disappearance. I dare say she would hardly have had a doll among her birthday presents if her mamma had not hoped that, now she was three years old, she would treat it better than the first.

But even on birthday mornings every one wants some breakfast, and Pansy was quite ready for hers, though now and then she turned her curly head round to look at her treasures grouped upon the window-seat. You may be sure that she was down from her high chair as soon as she was allowed to move ; and first of all the farmyard was set out, with its green trees and pens in which to keep the sheep and cattle ; and when Pansy was wearied with them, out came the bricks, and then, with papa's help, a castle was raised of magnificent height, which came clattering in ruins around the little girl's feet, causing as much pleasure in its fall

as in its erection. Thus passed the morning happily enough, and the sun shone brilliantly, though here and there a cloud came over the sky which seemed to promise a change of weather, so the wise grown-up people said. And now, the reason why I have told you of this day at all, is to describe to you how towards evening the sea rose up in big, strong waves, and the wind wailed and shrieked almost like some human voice of misery; and down by the shore people were crowding to watch some vessel making for the harbour, which it seemed would surely be dashed to pieces upon the rocks. Pansy knew nothing of this, of course; she only knew that when, after her happy Christmas Day, she went up to bed, the noise of the wind made her cry; and presently her mother came to hear her little prayers, and bade her ask God to protect those at sea, and then sat by her and told the story so often heard before, yet always new and welcome, of Christ stilling the waves and bidding the wind cease; while Pansy, listening, began to close her weary eyes in sweet, dreamless sleep.

Next morning the sun shone brightly enough; it was just rousing up Pansy in her little white-curtained bed, when her mother came in and bent down to kiss her.

"Who has come in the night?" she said.
"Guess, little one."

But Pansy could not guess, for she had forgotten that Aunt Celia and little Eugene were expected from France; and of course she did not know that they were among the passengers on board the ship which had tossed about outside the harbour on Christmas night, but which had come in safely after all.

Now perhaps little readers will think this was a charming surprise for Pansy; but I must tell you that, though she was only three years old, she knew what it was to feel that ugly thing we call "jealousy;" not to like to see mamma or nurse speak lovingly to any one but her, to cry if any friend's baby should be taken in their arms, and other such feelings, which I fear many other little "only" children get.

It was no pleasure, then, to this foolish little girl to have a playfellow in her nursery; if ever such a thing happened only for a few short hours, Pansy would not share her toys kindly and sweetly, as a child should do; and if her mother or nurse forced her to give up anything she liked, there were tears and cries, or at least some very ugly "black" looks indeed. Neither did she wish to be taken to houses

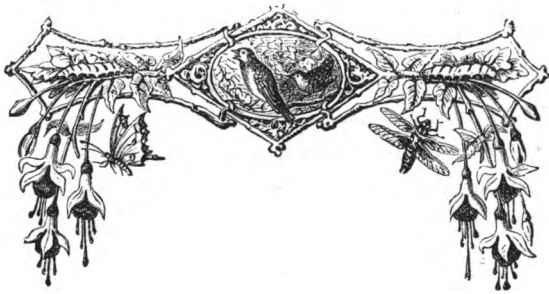
where other tiny folks lived, and in such a case she was never ready to return a kiss and a smile of welcome; it was far more likely that she would turn round and hide her cross face in mamma's dress, and never even look up again until it was time to go home. Do you fancy this was very strange in a little child like Pansy Harland? But then, perhaps, you do not yet understand that even a baby heart has evil feelings and passions lying within it, which are sure to grow stronger and stronger and stronger as days, and weeks, and months pass by, unless they are checked by the care of kind parents and friends, and by the prayer to God which the youngest boy or girl must make for help to be good and holy, loving others for the dear Saviour's sake.

When, therefore, Pansy heard the news of her cousin's arrival, she frowned, and the smile she had given her mother died quite out of her eyes, and she gave herself a little shake and said, in her baby way, "Pansy don't want boy."

Finding that nothing she could say made her dear little girl feel more kind or happy, her mother went away; but Pansy's temper did *not* go away, and when nurse came she was cross at being washed, still more cross at being dressed, and so

cross when she was told to kneel down and say her prayers, that she had to be shut up a few minutes all by herself ; and even when she had said she was sorry, and had repeated the simple words which asked God to bless and take care of her and all she loved, her face was not the happy, smiling face of the morning before, when she trotted so joyously downstairs to get her birthday kisses and presents.





CHAPTER II.

NOT GOOD NEWS!

AWAY in the country which is called France, and which most children who are old enough to have lessons in geography know by looking on the map, there is the beautiful bright city of Paris, which is, perhaps, more gay and cheerful than any city in the world. The air is clear and light, the sky is bluer than you see it in England, and though in winter the weather may be very cold, there are none of the thick yellow fogs which make the London streets so dangerous, and which keep tiny folks shut up within doors on so many long, dark days.

Pansy Harland's Aunt Celia came from this gay city of Paris, where she had been living many years with her French husband; so little Eugene,

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who was two years older than his cousin Pansy, could say very few English words indeed. This mattered very little on the island, for, as I told you at first, people spoke French almost as often as they spoke English; but it mattered a great deal to Pansy, for it made her cross when they began to play together, and upon the very first day she gave Eugene a push and called him "stupid."

Now this little child knew very well that she was naughty, and before any one had time to tell her so, she ran away and hid herself in a great cupboard, where her mamma's dresses hung in a row.

"She is better alone until she gets over her naughty temper," said mamma, as the little girl disappeared; so Eugene went on playing with the bricks by himself, and Aunt Celia talked, and no one went to see after Pansy.

But this was not at all what Pansy had expected. She meant, indeed, to hide in the cupboard, yet she quite intended mamma and nurse to come and seek her, and coax her into good temper; and when no one appeared she grew tired of being there, and began to understand that it would be wiser to come out.

Eugene did not make a very long visit to his friends in the island ; but while he did stay, Pansy's mother had seen through so many of her fits of temper the signs of that ugly "jealousy" we have spoken of, that she grew very anxious about her one little daughter, fearing that she was getting spoiled because there were no other brothers and sisters to share her toys and pleasures, and teach her lessons of unselfishness.

So, often when Pansy was lying asleep in her pretty bed, her parents were talking of her and saying, "Where can we find a little girl to be a companion to our child?" and when Pansy said she was glad her cousin had gone away to his French home, her mamma felt more than ever sure that it would not do for her to grow up alone in her home, where every one made much of her, and scarcely saw how self-will was getting stronger each day.

But Pansy knew nothing of these thoughts and fears concerning her ; she played and chattered, laughed and cried by turns, as the days passed on, like any other merry little child of three years, and so the winter went by, and it was spring-time. Very sweet and fair that island looks in the early season of the year. Daisies spring up in the green

grass, and hyacinths are beginning to bud ; the lilacs are just ready to burst into flower, and the hawthorn buds are forming, and the air is balmy, and there is that pleasant salt smell of the waves which mingles with the fragrance of flowers. It was on one of these spring days that Pansy was gardening. You may suppose she was not very clever in tending her little bit of ground, but it gave her a great deal of pleasure to dig with her wooden spade, and sow seeds which she never left undisturbed long enough to come to any good result, and when she was busy there "messaging," as nurse called it, she was perfectly content. Well then, Pansy was gardening, when, to her very great surprise, mamma came out and began marking off another little piece of ground with a border of large stones, just like that which was round Pansy's domain, and you may guess how widely her eyes opened, and how curiously she watched until the last stone was placed. Then she gave a little cry of delight—"For me!" and running forward with her spade, would have set to work on it directly, had not her mamma checked her.

"No, no, Pansy ; not for you, dear," she said, taking the tiny hand in hers. "You have your own

nice garden, but this is for another little girl who is coming to live here and play with you, just like a sister for my Pansy."

For a moment Pansy stood silent with surprise; then she threw herself down on the garden-path, spade in hand, and screamed her loudest, just because she could not bear the thought of another child coming to share her garden, her play, and her pleasures. "No, no, *no!*"—so the cries went up, and her mamma was obliged to carry her into the house and put her in her own little bed (though it was not evening, but bright, sunny day) until she got over her fit of passion.

It seemed a long time to Pansy, and a long time to mamma, who did not like to punish her dear little child; but she knew that God would be displeased if she did not try to check that dreadful temper. At last Pansy ceased crying and screaming, and, with little sobs, called out that she was sorry, *quite* sorry; and you may be very sure then that her mother readily came to kiss and pardon her, and to try and lead her to feel sorrow for having grieved her Father in heaven.

Though Pansy was such a young child, she already understood quite well how God looks down upon His little ones on earth, seeing every angry look,

hearing every cross word. As her mother reminded her again of all this, which she had been told so often, tears came into her eyes, and she promised that she would try hard to be good.

I feel sure, too, that this little girl meant every word ; but many children who are much older than Pansy find it so hard to keep their good resolves, that I dare say they will not be at all surprised if I say that she found it almost impossible to keep down her passion and anger when anything provoked it.

Older children are able to understand that it is this battle, this fighting against the temptations of our own evil nature, which shows that our will is right, that we really love God and desire to keep His commandments. However, little Pansy Harland could not quite take in all this. What she did know was that God in heaven was watching her by night and by day, taking care of her, and giving her all the joys and blessings of her little life, and that He was pleased when she was a good, obedient child, and that He was grieved when she gave way to wilfulness and passion.

On this particular day, when Pansy's mother had forgiven her, she went quite by herself, and said a few little simple words to God, asking pardon for

Christ's sake, and then she was very quiet and gentle until bedtime.

But when she lay beneath the pretty muslin curtains, and Mrs. Harland, bending down to kiss her, said, "To-morrow there will be two little girls wanting a 'good-night' visit," the dark shadow came back again. Oh, what a wretched, unhappy thing is this jealousy; and yet—just like an ugly weed—it grows up and gets so strong, even in very young hearts, that nothing can root it out but prayer and a great many efforts. But then we have not to try alone—God will help us if we ask Him, not with words only, but from our hearts. The great thing is not to grow weary and leave off because, perhaps, it seems that we are no better, no kinder, no more gentle and loving, than we were before we began to pray. Be quite sure that little by little, if slowly, we shall become the holier and the happier for our prayers to God in heaven.





CHAPTER III.

A LITTLE TROUBLE WHICH SEEMED GREAT.

I MUST now take you away from the pretty island and Pansy Harland's home, and show you the town of Southampton and a dark-eyed little girl, who was looking round her with great surprise, for all was so different from India, where she had spent the six years of her life. Perhaps some children who read this book may know that India is a very bad place for little folks to live in. The great heat makes them so thin and pale and listless that their parents have to send them to their friends in cooler countries, like England or Scotland or the north of France, until they grow much older and much stronger. There is another reason which causes English people in India to part with their children for so many years

—it is that they may be taught all those useful things which we have to learn while we are young.

It was for her health and for her “education,” then, that little Lina Carey had made this long journey from India, and found herself in the strange English town of Southampton, after she had said good-bye to the captain of the ship and the ladies and gentlemen who had made the voyage also. It was very sad to Lina when she was clasped in her mother’s arms for the last time; when her father kissed her, and she saw the tears shining in his eyes; when she left her *ayah*, or Indian nurse, and her two baby brothers, and came away in the ship with the lady who had promised to take care of her until she was safely lodged in her new home.

But now that was some time past, and Lina did not cry, though she knew Calcutta was so very far away, and she talked to Mrs. Ellerton of all that she expected to do when she had “Pansy” to play with, “for she is littler than me,” said Lina, whose grammar was not yet quite perfect. So you will not need me to tell you that this Indian-born child was not going to stay at Southampton, but waited there a few days until Mrs. Ellerton could leave her

own little ones, and take another steamer to carry her to the pretty rock-girt island where Mr. and Mrs. Harland were ready to receive their new charge.

Mrs. Harland and Mrs. Carey had played together and loved each other when they were as young as their children, Pansy and Lina ; so of course they hoped that the little girls would feel almost like sisters, and live happily together, and by-and-by share all their lessons and amusements. It gave Mrs. Harland much pleasure to know that her friend was willing to trust her child to her care, and she was all the more glad because—as I have told you—she saw that it was not good for Pansy to have no one to share her home ; that she was growing selfish, and unwilling to see another receive any sign of love.

“To-morrow I am going to Pansy,” was little Lina’s last thought the night before she left Southampton ; but at that very time we have shown you Pansy with pouting red lips, and an angry frown on her face, as *she* thought of the morrow ; nor would she perhaps have kept back the burst of angry crying which was so near breaking out, only that she was a little humbled by her passion and its punishment that morning.

It was a very happy thing that Lina Carey had not this ugly jealousy in her heart. Of course, she had other faults, which you will find out if you read my story to its end ; but as she was not an only child, she had early learned to be quite willing to see her mother's love and care given to others besides herself ; and indeed she was so very fond of little two-year-old Frank and baby Charlie, that she would have begged for them to be nursed and made much of, had she thought they were crying or unhappy.

Lina had grown used to the sea during her voyage to England ; she had not been the least sick, like most of the ladies, even in rough weather, so the passage to her new home in the island seemed very short, for she slept from the moment she was placed in her berth till morning came and the sun shone brightly, and Mrs. Ellerton roused her, saying, " Lina, Lina ! you must open your eyes now ; we are within sight of the island."

I do not know if this little stranger expected to see an Indian *bungalow* for a home, but she looked surprised and half frightened as Mrs. Harland led her into the pretty rooms, with their broad, low windows, and in a trembling voice she said, " Shall I live *here* ?"

“Yes, this is your new home—your home as well as Pansy’s,” said Mrs. Harland, kindly; and taking her on her knee, “We shall all love you very much, and try to make you happy; for, Lina, do you know that your own dear mamma was my friend when she was only six years old?”

“Yes, I know; she has told me,” was the reply, given in a quaint, grave manner, which Lina had learned from being among grown-up people so much during her voyage. “But where is Pansy?”

Ah, that was the question—where was Pansy?—and no one could answer it just then, for Pansy had hidden herself.

Nurse had curled her hair and washed her face, and made her, as she said, “fit to be seen;” and then Mrs. Harland had led her into the garden, so that at the sound of carriage wheels they might go together to the gate and give Lina a welcome. But Pansy had quietly trotted out of sight, and when Mrs. Ellerton appeared with the little charge she was about to give into new keeping, Mrs. Harland’s was the only face which Lina’s dark eyes rested on, and she was disappointed, for the thought of Pansy had been uppermost in her mind for several days.

“Are you tired? Shall we come and look for

this little runaway?" And Lina took Mrs. Harland's hand, saying she was not tired. So they went from room to room quite through all the part of the house where Pansy was likely to be found, yet there was no sign of her—not even the end of her sash, or a glimpse of her blue-and-white frock.

Nurse searched in the garden, peeping under every bush and glancing into shady corners, but she came back at last to say she could not find the child; and then every one looked half dismayed lest Pansy might possibly have gone out at the gate and strayed away.

But though she was very little, she had been told so often that she must never do this, that—though she was not always good, as you know—her mamma felt almost certain that Pansy would not have disobeyed her command so sadly. The only way was to search again; so while the travellers had a late breakfast, nurse and the other servants went round the house and garden, returning at length with Pansy captured, and hiding her red little face with her fat hands.

Where do you think she had been hiding? As I ask you, I can almost hear you guessing—her mamma's wardrobe, where we have seen her before

rolling her curls among the long dresses; or behind a door, or under some bed. But no; nor was it either under the drooping ash-tree on the lawn, nor in the arbour, nor even in the shed where the gardener kept his empty flower-pots, and spades, and rakes, and the big garden-roller. So I must suppose you have "given it up," and I must tell you that Pansy, being so very small, had found it quite easy to hide in the hen-house, and if the cocks and hens had not been out on a ramble in the field that morning, they would have been sadly frightened to see so large a kind of bird in a blue dress coming among them without an invitation. But how they came to look for her in such a place I really cannot tell you, though I guess that the reason Pansy seems to wish to keep her hot face hidden from her mother is because she knows that it was not a little bit of fun and trickyness, which made her hide away, but because she did not want to see this new child loved and made welcome—did not want to have to take Lina's hand and lead her into her own home! Do you think such a very little girl must have been too young to know such feelings? Ah, then you understand very little of how early the evil nature within us can be seen.

Yes, little children are full of faults, and these

faults even lead them into sin. What a happy thought it is that Jesus has died to save them from the consequences of sin, and that His blood can wash away every stain, and make them pure and white!

Perhaps some of you know that pretty hymn which speaks of the death of the dear Saviour, and those who do not know it may like to read just a verse or two here, and so when they hear it sung they will remember the book in which Pansy's story was written :—

“ He died that we might be forgiven,
He died to make us good,
That we might go at last to heaven,
Saved by His precious blood.
There was no other good enough
To pay the price of sin ;
He only could unlock the gate
Of heaven, and let us in.
Oh, dearly, dearly has He loved,
And we must love Him too,
And trust in His redeeming blood,
And try His works to do.”

Well, we come back to the room where Mrs. Ellerton and little Lina were taking breakfast after their journey, though it was quite late in the morning ; and Mrs. Harland, sitting behind the

large urn, looked up with surprise to see Pansy led in with an appearance of being very much ashamed of herself.

“She was hiding in the fowls’ roosting-place,” said nurse, rather crossly, for she had been obliged to change Pansy’s soiled dress, because you know that a hen-house is not suited to blue-and-white frocks and pretty muslin pinafores !

“My Pansy !” and at the sound of that voice the little girl ran into her mother’s arms with a deep sob, and it was quite five minutes before she could look up when she was bidden.

It was, however, not difficult to persuade Pansy (when her tears were dried) to speak to Mrs. Ellerton, for she was used to grown-up people, and liked them to notice her ; but it was a very reluctant kiss which was bestowed on poor Lina, and that, I think, would have been refused but for a warning look from mamma.

Poor little Pansy Harland ! It was the beginning of her childish trials—the beginning, too, of a fight against passion and other evils in her heart, when Lina Carey came to share her home ; to have a white-curtained bed like hers, to play in the nursery and garden as she did, to get up and go to rest at the same time ; indeed, to be just what

a little sister would have been, had God given her one.

“Why, how nice for her,” perhaps some little girl may say ; and Pansy would have found it very “nice” too if she had not been so greedy of love that she could not bear another child to share the least bit !

But this selfish desire to be the one object of every one’s care and thought made her a very unhappy little creature in her own happy home for many and many a day—days which were marked by tears and sobs, and fits of angry temper which cast a deep, dark shadow over the faces of all who dearly loved Pansy, and who were grieved to see her so unlike God’s little child, so unlike her own small self when she was as good as she *could* be-sometimes.

Try, children, as you read of this, to make a firm resolve that the first unloving thought, the first jealous feeling for others, shall be turned quickly out of *your* hearts !





CHAPTER IV.

LESSONS OF LOVE.

LINA CAREY soon grew quite happy in her new home, though she still talked constantly of her papa and mamma and the two little brothers so far away ; but I am afraid I must say that her happiness was not of Pansy's making, for this silly child still felt a dislike to her young companion. At times they would play nicely together, but the least notice of Lina, the very smallest sign of love to her from either Mr. or Mrs. Harland or nurse, was enough to make Pansy naughty and passionate, and it seemed as if it was impossible to cure her of this fault.

Now Lina did not get angry, and stamp on the ground and scream, as Pansy sometimes did ; but she used to grow very sullen, and creep away

by herself if she was vexed, and refuse to speak ; and this is as bad in its way as passion. So Mrs. Harland had both these little girls to train as God's children ; to teach them that when they were baptized the promise was made for them to "renounce the works of the devil," which meant all the naughty things to which they were specially tempted ; and, hard as it was, they must try, otherwise they might lose the blessings God's mercy had given. And then she would make them repeat the familiar words, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth," and pointing to the blue sky and the green grass and fragrant flowers, would explain to Lina and to Pansy that the great God who created the world made us to love, and serve, and glorify Him, and that we are doing this when we fight against sin, and strive to copy the example of Christ in His own blessed childhood.

So these little girls had not the excuse that they knew no better when they gave way to passion or sullenness ; they were taught and trained with the greatest love and care, only they found—as we older people find also—that we have many a stumble, many a fall, many a hard rough place to get over as we make our way along the path to

the heavenly kingdom, fighting against whatever may be our greatest fault.

I dare say you have not forgotten that I told you how much better Pansy liked bricks and wooden horses to play with than dolls, which most little girls are so fond of; but Lina was very different. She had brought two dolls home from India, and one of these was her special favourite, and it went to bed with her at night, and was in her arms a great part of each day.

It was a black doll, like a little "nigger," and perhaps many children would not have thought it a nice bedfellow and companion; but, I suppose because Lina had been used to dark-skinned people, she loved her black doll far more than the other, which had been sent out to Calcutta from England, and had fair hair and blue eyes. So "Chloe" was rocked to sleep, and fed, and dressed as tenderly as Lina had seen her Indian *ayah* treat her own baby brother; while Pansy drove her horse and cart or cracked a whip like a little boy. As for *her* doll, it had been broken to pieces very soon after it had been given her on her third birthday.

It was October, just six months after Lina came to the island, the month when the red and yellow leaves come fluttering down from the trees at every

puff of wind, when the ferns are turning brown, and the days grow chilly and tell by many a sign that winter is coming near.

If you had walked into the nursery of Mrs. Harland's home one of these mornings, your ear would have caught no happy sounds. Let us see what was the matter!

Well, Pansy and Lina had been cross to one another. It was not *all* the fault of either child, for one had been angry, and the other had refused to "make it up;" so nurse had seated them in their high chairs, saying that when they were quite good they might get down, but not before.

Pansy, being of a hasty temper, soon felt better, while Lina, who was sullen, sat pouting in her chair and refusing still the offered kiss of peace. Pansy did not like to see that angry frown when she went over to Lina to put up her lips as a sign that she was sorry for her share of the quarrel, neither did she like the voice which bade her "go away." Whether some thought of revenging herself came into that little head I cannot tell you, for it is not possible to know *all* the ideas which pass in and out of such busy brains; however, Pansy trotted off to the night nursery, and seeing Lina's

treasured Chloe lying in its curtained cradle, conveyed her quietly downstairs and out into the garden, where she buried it in a large heap of fallen leaves which the gardener had gathered together. She had but just finished her task when nurse came into the nursery, and finding one little girl gone, went in search of her; but of course she did not guess what Pansy had been about, nor was Chloe's loss discovered until Lina, having come out of her sullen fit, ran to the doll's cradle.

Can you not guess her distress, and how she cried and sobbed, and refused to be comforted, till her black baby was found? Yet, strange to say, neither Lina nor the nurse guessed that Pansy had any hand in the business. It was Mrs. Harland who thought of that, when the sound of loud crying brought her to the nursery; and though Pansy seemed absorbed in building one of her favourite brick castles—such as she proposed living in when she grew older—her mamma took her away to her own room, and asked her what she had done with Lina's doll.

At first the little girl hung down her head and grew red all over her face, but presently she owned to having taken Chloe from her snug



CHLOE'S BURIAL-PLACE,

cradle. "I buried her, and she's quite dead," she added.

Then Mrs. Harland tried to make Pansy see how unkind this was to Lina—just as unkind as if some one had hidden away her own horse and cart ; and next they went downstairs together, and out into the garden, where, amid the fading yellow leaves, Chloe's black face appeared, quite uninjured. How pleased Lina was ! How she nursed and fondled her treasure you will not want me to tell you ; but I am sorry to say she struck Pansy with all the force of her little hand, and as a punishment the doll was taken off to Mrs. Harland's wardrobe until its owner had recovered herself.

You will not wonder that in the evening, when they came downstairs before bedtime, Mrs. Harland refused to tell these little children one of the stories they liked best to hear. Instead of that, she talked to them about some words she had written on a large card to pin against the nursery wall, so that looking at them might perhaps check Pansy when she felt angry with Lina, or keep Lina from growing cross or sullen with Pansy. I dare say you can almost guess that the words on this card, written in large, plain letters, were these: "Little children, love one another ;" and Mrs. Harland told them of the

Apostle John, who had spoken thus, and whose heart had been so full of love to God, and to every creature for His sake. In easy words she told them, too, that Jesus, before He died, gave one new commandment—that we should “love one another ;” and when little children were unkind and spiteful, jealous, selfish, or sullen towards each other, they broke this commandment, which Jesus asks us to keep. I really do think that the sight of that large card fastened against the wall of the nursery did help both these children to be more kind to each other ; at any rate, *nurse* said so, and she would be a very good judge, I am sure.

If I were to tell you all that happened that first winter which Lina and Pansy spent together, my story would be quite too long for the little ones it is meant for ; so I must pass on to the next spring, when the trees were bursting into leaf and the early flowers bloomed in the gardens, and the wild wind was hushed into a gentle breeze, and the little island looked its fairest and sweetest.

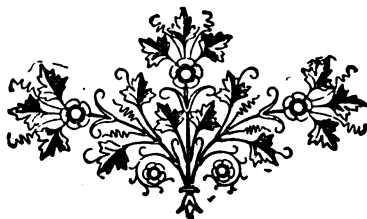
Pansy and Lina used to play in the garden a great deal, believing that they were quite busy with their small spades and water-cans, and so proud when a flower would bloom from one of the roots which they found it so hard to leave alone, as nurse

bade them. But better even than gardening was it when they were taken down to the seashore to spend a whole long morning. As it was some distance from their home, Mrs. Harland would drive the nurse and the two children down to the coast, and there leave them to amuse themselves while she attended to all her business in the town, and I can assure you that Lina as well as Pansy was quite sorry when the fun was over.

Perhaps you have seen little ragged children of the street perfectly happy in the making of "mud-pies." Though they have wretched homes and not enough to eat, and very likely parents who are not kind and gentle to them, they forget all their sorrows and their sharp hunger as they amuse themselves thus in some dirty court or back street.

Well, though Lina and Pansy would never have been allowed to make "mud-pies" in the street, they found just the same pleasure in making pies of sand when they went down to the shore on some long morning of early summer. If you have been to Brighton and some other places by the coast of England, you will remember that there is very little sand and a great deal of "shingle;" but in this island the sand is firm and dry, and you may walk

a long distance on it, so of course on warm, bright days many children are there while their nurses or mothers sit on the rocks close by to keep guard over them. Here, would Pansy and Lina set to work plastering and flattening the smooth sand which they had mixed first into lumps and balls, with water from the sea, fetched in the tiny pails they always carried with them; and then they would be placed in rows upon a sunny rock there, and supposed to be baking, like pies in the oven of the kitchen at home. These two little girls were always more apt to agree in their play by the sea-shore than in their nursery or garden games. How this was I can hardly tell. Perhaps the little quiet waves creeping up to the shore, or the sunshine, or the fresh breeze, calmed their tempers, or brought a whisper of the words, "Little children, love one another."





CHAPTER V.

THE PIC-NIC PARTY.

WHEN Lina Carey had been just a little more than three years in Mrs. Harland's charge, her ninth birthday came, and there were a great many plans as to how it should be spent.

Those three years had not all been given to nursing Chloe, or gardening, or making sand-pies on the seashore, and other pleasant amusements; both little girls had been growing older, and—as, of course, it was necessary they should try and grow wiser also—they had their regular lessons in reading and writing, and doing sums, besides being taught about some of the countries of the world, and learning to find out their own island on one of the maps in the atlas. It was because they had daily lessons that Lina and Pansy thought the

word "holiday" very delightful ; when children are too small to learn anything, of course it is all holiday. So the coming birthday was to be given up to pleasure, and not one single lesson-book to be opened upon it, nor on the day after. But besides this holiday and the usual presents which little folks naturally expect on such days, Mrs. Harland said that if the weather was quite fine and sunny they should have a pic-nic ; and when Lina and Pansy heard this they danced round the room with delight.

If you chanced to know the island on which these little girls lived, you would know, too, how many places there are for pic-nic parties—it is quite difficult to choose which you will go to. And it was because of this that Mrs. Harland found it would not do to listen to either Lina or Pansy, but the shortest plan was to decide herself.

So on that sunny birthday morning, when the September breeze was fresh and pleasant, but not at all too cool, Mr. and Mrs. Harland, with about a dozen little people, and nurse and another servant in attendance, went to a pleasant hollow below one of the hills, and there arranged the pic-nic dinner.

I should like to take all my little readers and

show them that pretty spot, where you are so nicely sheltered from the wind, and can look across to the sea, which is so blue and gleaming, while here and there you see the white sails of the ships. It was here the cloth was spread, while the young folks played hide-and-seek and other games, until the bell rang which called them to sit down to their dinner.

But I am not going to tell you all that happened during that day, nor how greatly they enjoyed themselves, nor even how the breeze, and the fun, and the exercise sharpened their appetites.

As I have to describe to you a trouble which came upon Pansy, I must pass on to the afternoon, when preparations were being made for tea before they all went home. To make it more like a real pic-nic, the kettle was boiled over a gipsy fire ; and fine fun the children thought it to run and collect sticks and fir-cones to keep the little flame crackling and sparkling, and growing brighter.

“Lina is the birthday queen, she must pour out the tea,” said Mrs. Harland ; and Pansy heard, and all the happy smiles faded from her face, and a dark look came there just like a cloud spreads over the face of the sun sometimes, and makes everything gloomy. If her mother had been

presiding as usual, or Agatha Leeson, who was twelve years old, or even Clara North, who was nearly eleven, Pansy would not have been vexed at all. She did not expect to be chosen for this post herself, for she knew that she could never hold the teapot with her little hand ; but that Lina should be put forward seemed quite too hard, even though it *was* her birthday !

A few minutes before, she had believed she was very hungry, and, indeed, the sight of so many plates of cake, the long, crisp loaves and the golden butter, was enough to make any little girl think the prospect of tea-time most pleasant. But now the old, old jealousy was springing up and conquering every other feeling, and Pansy believed herself the most unhappy child the world contained.

Every one else was busy or amused, and so it was easy for her to steal off quite unobserved ; yet, though this was her own doing, it added to her uneasy feelings, and she said to herself, " No one cares for me ; they all love Lina best." Sitting down in a little sheltered nook, some way removed from the noisy, happy party, Pansy listened to the ringing of the tea-bell, and in a few minutes the sound of her own name echoed far and near, yet

she did not stir. I am afraid it was almost a pleasure to the naughty child to feel it was in her power to make the others uncomfortable. But *how* uncomfortable she did not know, for she could not see her mother's anxious face, nor how her father started up in search of her, nor hear her little friends saying, "Oh, where can Pansy be?"

Somehow a shade had come over the birthday party; even the cutting of the iced and ornamented cake went off quietly, and the children seemed glad to get up and disperse about in search of the only one of their party who was missing. Conscience had not been silent all this time, it was reproaching Pansy sharply; and yet she lingered in her hiding-place, and gave way to the unloving spirit which had taken her there. Only that morning had she begged God for Christ's sake to make her a good child, yet before night fell she was grieving that kind Heavenly Father who saw all her actions as well as her most secret thoughts. But I must tell you what I think was the reason that Pansy gave way like this to a fault she had really been striving with all a little girl's might to overcome, so that for many months her mother had been thinking, "Surely my child is conquering

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her great temptation ; how glad I am, and how I thank God for helping her."

There is so much pride in our hearts that one of the hardest things in this world is to be humble ; yet we must try, because our Blessed Lord has said so much about it in Holy Scripture, and He tells us, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart."

Now, little Pansy Harland knew quite well that if we do any good or right thing, it is by the help of the Holy Spirit which God gives us, and not by ourselves, for of ourselves we can do nothing but evil. Yet she had begun to be rather pleased and proud because she did not become so angry when Lina was noticed ; did not mind so *very* much when she got before herself with lessons, nor when Mrs. Harland spoke of her "*two* dear little girls." Even on that birthday morning Pansy had kept down the jealous feelings which were trying to show themselves at the sight of Lina's presents, and so her thoughts that day and many other days had been a little like this:—"I am sure I am a much better child than I used to be, though I am not quite seven years old. I am not sulky like Lina is sometimes, and I don't mind so much when people love her as well as me. I think I am

not so naughty as a great many other children, and I don't think I need try so hard to be good, for I *am* rather good."

What silly thoughts!—what wrong thoughts, too, for a child who, though yet so young, knew quite well that if she had learned to conquer herself ever so little, she must still ask God to help her, or she would soon fall.

However, Pansy had been feeling pleased with herself all day, and so, when a little temptation came, she was not ready to fight against it—just like some child, perhaps, runs quickly along the slippery pathway in winter time, crying, "Oh, I shan't fall; I never fall now like I used when I was so little;" and then in a moment she is on the ground, and perhaps badly hurt, just for want of taking care.

So, if Pansy Harland had been "taking care" when she heard that Lina was to be trusted to pour out tea for her little friends, she would have driven off the cross feeling by saying to herself, "Yes, it is quite right, for Lina is nearly three years older than me; besides, it is her birthday treat."

However, you see the foolish, unhappy child sitting on the hillside quite away from the rest

of the party, feeling very much ashamed as she hears herself called ; very hungry too, and yet too proud to get up and run to her mamma and say out, "I hid myself because I was cross, but I am quite sorry now."

Presently the voices of some of the children seemed drawing nearer, and, as Pansy did not want to be seen, she thought the best thing would be to go down the little bit of hill she had climbed, and make her way round to the hollow, where they were all ready to start for home.

Whether she was careless or hurried I do not know, but as Pansy set about doing what she purposed, her foot slipped and she fell, rolling over and over till she reached the level grass beneath the hill. It had not been a bad fall, nor was Pansy the kind of child to cry if she was hurt a little, yet when she did try to get up the tears sprang to her eyes, for there was such a bad pain in one foot, and she could not stand at all.

Then it was *her* turn to call, and the trembling little voice rose higher and higher, till her mother, the nurse, and a great many of the children, came running to the spot where Pansy was lying with a sprained ankle.



CHAPTER VI.

GOING AWAY.

MRS. HARLAND, in the first moment of surprise, thought that her poor little girl had been lying there in pain during the children's tea-time, and Pansy could not tell her the truth until they were alone together, so all the way home she had to bear being pitied and made much of, with the miserable consciousness that she had no right to such fond words, and that she had met with this accident through her own naughty temper.

"Is the pain very bad, my darling?" said Mrs. Harland, as she saw the tears streaming down the now pale face; and Pansy could answer "Yes" with perfect truth, and yet it seemed that a sharper pain still was in her heart as she thought of how she had been acting. Mrs. Harland nursed

her little girl all the way, holding the poor ankle steadily in her hand to prevent some of the shaking and jolting which one expects in a carriage; and Lina was by her side, looking as sorry as if she herself had been hurt, for it seemed a sad ending of the happy birthday.

“How did it happen, and how long had you been calling to us?” asked Clara North, who was very fond of Pansy; but to every inquiry the little girl only shed fresh tears and hid her face against her mother. But when all the young visitors had gone to their own homes to talk over the events of the day; when Lina had sunk to sleep, wishing her papa and mamma could have come over from India to complete the pleasure of the pic-nic; when the poor sprained ankle had been bathed and bandaged by nurse’s clever fingers, and Pansy was lying comfortably in her bed, she told out the whole truth to her mamma; and I am glad to say she did not hide one of the naughty feelings which had raged like a fierce storm in her little heart. I am sure all children know that when they confess their faults and are sorry, they are sure to be forgiven, both by their earthly parents, and the still more loving, pitiful Father in heaven; and so Pansy found, that though her mother was indeed

grieved by so sad a story, she saw that her little girl was truly repenting, and therefore she kissed and pardoned her. But she reminded Pansy that there was God's pardon to be sought before she could feel happy, and kneeling by the bed, she told her child to repeat after her some simple words of prayer for forgiveness through Christ Jesus, and grace to become more loving, gentle, and unselfish day by day.

When Mrs. Harland went downstairs, Pansy made a very good resolution, and I will tell you what it was: She felt as if that sprained ankle was like a punishment for the jealousy and temper which she had felt, and though mamma told her she would have to lie quite still for a whole week, if not longer, and not run about the garden with Lina, Pansy determined to try to be patient, and not cry or complain. It seems to me that was the very best plan to make, and was a real proof that she meant to try more than before to be a good child.

However, though she tried to be still, it was hard to this little girl, for she was always such a romp. Lina would sit for hours quietly playing with her doll, but nurse used to say that Pansy was like a bit of quicksilver—always in motion!

“Oh dear, I want something to do,” she would say, during those long days spent on the sofa in Mrs. Harland’s bedroom ; but, happily, a new play came into Lina’s head, and one which could be quite easily managed with a sprained ankle. They pretended to make boxes of pills and little powders for all the smartly-dressed ladies in the doll’s house, who were supposed to be ill. Perhaps you would like to know that the pills were made of bread, and the powders of pounded sugar and grated biscuit, folded up in nice little bits of white paper, just as they are when the real doctor sends them ; and this became a very favourite amusement with these two little girls, even when Pansy was running about as actively as ever.

Though I have told you that Pansy did not care for many of the toys which usually please little girls, she was very fond of books ; and as she had learned to read nicely before she was six years old, she could amuse herself for a long time with an amusing story during those days she was laid by with her sprained ankle. Still you may be sure she was delighted when she could move about as usual ; and I think she tried to show more love to Lina, to make up a little for feeling so very unkindly to her on her birthday.

It was just after Pansy got well that her mamma came in to hear the lessons with a very grave face, so that both little girls felt quite sure something was the matter.

“Mamma, is your head bad?” said Pansy ; but Mrs. Harland answered,

“No, my dear little girl.”

Presently Lina looked up. “Auntie” (for so she had learned to call Mrs. Harland), “are you vexed?”

“No, dear, not vexed. I am sorry about something, which I shall tell you when all the lessons are finished.”

It was the morning to say poetry, and as Lina went through that piece, “Oh, call my brother back to me,” she made one or two mistakes, because she could not help wondering what was the news they were going to hear ; while Pansy could not keep her mind at all upon the little cottage girl who would answer, “We are seven.” Then came the history, and both the children found it very hard to keep their minds fixed on the manners and customs of the Ancient Britons while so many thoughts concerning Mrs. Harland’s news *would* keep crowding in. Geography was almost worse, and Pansy made such careless answers that she

was told that unless she began at once to take more pains she must certainly wait to hear everything until another day. This was such a terrible prospect that it had the effect of rousing both little girls to greater interest and effort; still, all their studies seemed sadly long, and they could almost have imagined that the hands of the clock stood still, until, at last—oh, joyful sound!—it struck one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, TWELVE times, and then the books were neatly put away, and Pansy cried,

“Now, mamma, make haste and tell us;” and then she got on Mrs. Harland’s lap, while the quieter Lina stood close by ready to hear what was coming.

“Should you like to go away from this pretty house?” said Pansy’s mother; and the little girl answered,

“No, no, indeed, mamma; but I know I never shall. Please don’t talk about that, but tell us the news which makes you sad.”

Mrs. Harland could not help smiling, but before she had time to say another word Lina had guessed the secret; perhaps because she was older and more thoughtful than Pansy.

“I think you are sad because you *are* going

away," said this little girl. "Is that the news, auntie?" and Mrs. Harland said that Lina was right.

But how can I describe to you Pansy's grief, how she sobbed and cried and lamented? I really am not sure that her mother would have told her so soon, had she imagined that her little girl would be so very, very sorry to leave her home on this sweet island where she had been born.

However, though children's griefs are very bitter and very hard for them—so hard that no *kind* grown-up person will ever laugh at sorrows which seem so deep to little people—they do not last long, and in a few hours Pansy was busily thinking of all she had to do before she went to the new house in England. You will say perhaps that neither Lina nor Pansy could help in the business of moving, and this is very true; but one had to pack up her dolls, and the other her bricks and nine-pins, and such-like toys, while both were really very anxious to accomplish one piece of business which you will never guess, unless, indeed, you have been like these children yourselves.

When dolls and wooden horses "died" (by which of course we mean being broken and spoiled), Lina and Pansy always buried them

in the garden, and the pleasure of the funeral helped them to get over the sorrow of losing their favourites.

The same idea then came to both these children when they heard they were to leave the island in just three short weeks—they must dig up their buried darlings and take them to England with the other treasures. Fortunately nurse caught them in the act of opening one doll's grave, and she made them understand at last that they must leave the remains of their favourites undisturbed, though Pansy long declared it was cruel to let them lie where no one would ever come and plant flowers or think of those who had been laid under the ground.

Though it was—as I have already told you—October, autumn comes later to that little island than it does to us, so the sun shone brightly, and nurse was able to take the children for a last play on the sands, and a last look at many other of the places where they had spent many happy days ; and then the pretty house was shut up, and the flowers left blooming in the garden where Pansy's little tripping feet would run no more. "Dear home, good-bye," she said, putting her head out of the carriage which was to drive them

all down to the quay, where the steamer would be waiting ; but five minutes afterwards she was as gay as usual, listening to what Lina could remember of crossing the sea.

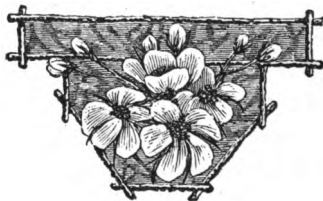
“ You won’t be sick, Pansy,” she said ; but this proved a mistake, for though the sea was calm when they left the island, a strong breeze got up afterwards, and these little girls, as well as Mrs. Harland and nurse, and a great many of the other passengers, suffered very much from that disagreeable illness which is caused by the motion of the sea ; and very glad were they all when they landed safely at Southampton.

Besides being poorly, Pansy had also been very frightened, for she knew sometimes that vessels would sink beneath the tossing waves, and men and women and little children were sometimes drowned. Yet she tried to check her fears when her mamma talked to her of God’s great care over all His creatures, and reminded her of what the Bible says about the hairs of our head being numbered, which means that not the very least harm could be done to us without God knowing of it. As the ship rolled from side to side, and the wind blew high, Pansy said over and over again to herself a little verse she had learned in her own dear old

home, and which seemed to help her to be brave during that long dark night :—

“ Thou hast walked the heaving wave !
Thou art mighty still to save ;
With one gentle word of peace
Thou canst bid the tempest cease.”

This was a very good plan, and one which all of us may follow when we are afraid of any danger, whether on land or on sea. God is always watching over us, no matter where we may be, but He loves to hear us cry to Him, and in return He will give us that happy consciousness of His presence which helps us to say, “I need fear nothing, for the great God is my keeper.”





CHAPTER VII.

THE SHIP WHICH CAME HOME.

THE new house which Mr. and Mrs. Harland had taken was in a pretty country town many long miles from London ; but do not suppose by this that there was no garden for the little girls to play in ; if there had not been one, it would have been most unfortunate for Lina and Pansy.

But though there was a pretty shady garden, it was late in the autumn, so that for many months the little girls scarcely ever went out in it, because the air was cold after that which they had been used to, and nurse said it was better to have a good brisk walk in the town than to stand about gardening and "messaging," as she called it.

At first neither Lina nor Pansy liked the new house, but after a few weeks they grew more accustomed to the change, and by the time Christmas came it was quite possible to keep a very happy birthday.

Pansy, when she grew older, used to say there was one reason which made her sorry she was born on the 25th of December, and that was because she could never have a party of children on the "proper" day. Of course we all know that little boys and girls spend Christmas with their parents and friends in their own dear homes; but I am quite sure they enjoyed Pansy's birthday treat just as much, though it came three or four days after date.

But it was of the first birthday in England I meant to tell you, because Mrs. Harland had made ready a new kind of pleasure to surprise the little people. Christmas trees are very pretty, but we are quite used to them; bran-pies are as common, and the newer "Christmas ladder" is not so much a favourite with children. But Mrs. Harland had prepared a Christmas ship, which was freighted with the most delightful presents. It was, perhaps, rather a roughly-made vessel, but then it was very large, and it had been fully "rigged," as sailors say,

and pretty flags floated from the masts, while here and there toy sailors were supposed to be busy. Gifts were everywhere from stem to stern—tied to the masts, hanging over the sides, crowded into the hold; and I can assure you the shout which the little folks gave proved the success of the Christmas ship. Perhaps you may have heard grown-up people say they will do something or buy something “when their ship comes home,” by which they mean when some good fortune happens to them. But ah! some of our ships I fear get wrecked, for so many hopes and plans meet with disappointment. However, here was a ship come into port on Pansy Harland’s birthday which brought a splendid fortune to those who had a share in her.

After the new year there followed a season of very cold weather, and both Pansy and Lina had bad coughs, and were shut up in the nursery for several weeks together. I need not tell you how dull this was, nor how difficult it was not to quarrel with themselves, each other, and all the world.

“Oh, I wish we were back in the island; there was no frost and snow *there*,” Pansy would say; while Lina added, “And I wish my papa and

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mamma would send for me back to India, it is so miserable here."

Of course it was rather hard for two little girls to lose all their walks and outdoor pleasures, but I really think it was more hard for poor nurse, who had to bear with their ill-humours; indeed, I do not believe children imagine how unhappy they can make other people by their discontented, cross faces.

I wish I could make all my little friends think of this for a few minutes. One cross child almost always makes more cross children, for good temper and bad temper are alike "catching."

It is quite certain that both old and young people spread happiness or unhappiness everywhere around them; and who would not choose to be cheering, and welcome, and bright, like the sunshine, making others glad to see us, glad to have us near?

Even if you little ones do not make older people ill-humoured like yourselves, it is certain that you make them sad; and if only you knew how sorry you will be some day for every shadow you have brought to a kind and loving face, I am sure you would try earnestly not to do it, for want of such a little effort to manage your uncomfortable

feelings. Now listen to Pansy and her friend Lina Carey.

“I want something to do,” was the cry every day, and many times in the day; yet, if nurse suggested an amusement, she almost always had some such answer as this: “Oh, that is a stupid game,” or “I’m quite tired of *that*,” so it was little use trying to please these children, who seemed resolved to find pleasure in nothing.

One day, when the snow fell fast and a bitter wind was blowing, Mrs. Harland came into the nursery to find Lina with a sullen face, sitting on one high chair; Pansy, in a passion of tears, occupying another.

“Why, what has happened?” asked Mrs. Harland; and nurse answered,

“Really, ma’am, I never saw such children. They have been grumbling and scolding ever since they got up, and at last they began to quarrel, so I thought they had better sit there till they know how to behave.”

Of course Mrs. Harland was sorry to hear such an account, but she also pitied the two unhappy children, for she knew they must be quite conscious that they were displeasing God by their ill-temper

and discontent, so she tried to talk to them and put them in a better state of mind ; and I am glad to say that very soon Pansy and Lina kissed each other and promised nurse to try not to be cross all the rest of the day.

Then Mrs. Harland said she had come on purpose to tell them a short story, and ask them if they would like to do a little easy work for God ; and at the prospect of the story, the little frowning faces were covered with smiles, and both Pansy and Lina shouted, "Please, please begin."

So, sitting down in the big nursery rocking-chair, Mrs. Harland said, "Yesterday I saw a sight which I should have liked my two dear little girls to see, for I am sure it would have helped them to think—not of their small troubles and disappointments ; not of being kept indoors by the keen wind and falling snow ; not even of coughs and medicine,—but of how many good things, how many blessings, God gives them every day."

Here Pansy blushed a little and Lina drooped her head, and after looking at them a moment, Mrs. Harland went on with her story.

"I do not think that either of my little girls



A PLEASANT SIGHT.

could imagine such a miserable, dark, dirty kitchen as I went into yesterday. There was not a bit of fire in the grate, there was no furniture in the room except two broken chairs and an old box which served for a table, yet two dear little children were sitting on the floor, and as I opened the door I heard them—not quarrelling, not even crying because they were so cold and hungry—but singing a little hymn which I dare say they had heard in some Sunday school, and which you little girls know quite well.”

“ I think it was, ‘ There is a happy land,’ ” said Lina ; but Mrs. Harland shook her head, and after they had guessed several more hymns which were their chief favourites, she told them that what she had heard as she stood at the door of the wretched kitchen was the one which I think all little children know and love,—

“ Here we suffer grief and pain,
Here we meet to part again,
In heaven we part no more.”

“ It made the tears come in my eyes to hear those sweet childish voices singing so happily in the midst of their suffering,” said Mrs. Harland, “ and I thought, surely they love to think of the

bright world where they will never be cold and hungry any more ; so I went in and began to talk to them. The little boy told me his name was Mark, and he was seven years old, while Grace was only four, and they were waiting for mother to come home and give them some breakfast. Presently she came, and if my little Pansy and Lina had seen how eagerly poor Mark and Grace took the broken pieces and hard crusts which this poor woman had in her basket, I do not think there would ever be another complaint of 'bread-and-milk *again!*'"

Here both little girls looked extremely uneasy, for I must tell you that they *did* murmur sometimes when breakfast came, and want something quite different from what had been provided for them.

"Oh, mamma, didn't you give the mother some money to buy the poor children a nice dinner?" said Pansy.

Then Mrs. Harland said, "I heard all their story and found that this woman with her children had come to our town only three days before, hoping to find work. Her husband is dead, and she cannot afford a better lodging until she has earned a little by her sewing, so I have promised to pay for a

clean, neat room in a better street, until she can help herself, and I thought perhaps my little Pansy and Lina could give something out of their money-boxes to buy Mark and Grace some bread and butter, and a little milk to drink."

"They may have all out of mine," cried Pansy, quickly; "and oh, mamma, *can't* they have some pudding? For bread-and-butter is not very nice."

Mrs. Harland smiled at her little girl.

"These children will think bread-and-butter very, *very* nice, Pansy; but now, my darling, don't say you will give all your money in that hasty way. Try and think like this: 'God is going to let me do a little thing for Him. Only a *very* little, so I need not feel proud, but yet it is for God, because He has said that what we give to the poor we are really giving to Him. But He "loveth a cheerful giver," so I must not be sorry afterwards, and wish I had my money back.'"

Pansy looked serious, for she remembered that once when she had put sixpence into a box where money was collected to send good men to teach little heathen children about the Lord Jesus Christ, she had cried afterwards, because she saw a paint-box which would cost only sixpence, and she

wished so much she had kept her money, and then she could have bought it.

"Well, I'll give not *quite* all," she answered. "Because, mamma, I don't want to be sorry afterwards ; but I do want to let God have something for those two poor children."

"And what do you say, Lina?" asked Mrs. Harland, for Lina had not spoken one word as yet, and now she blushed very deeply.

"I want to buy a new cradle for my doll, auntie," she answered. "I have been saving up ever so many weeks, for I saw such *beauties* in Perring's shop ; but I dare say I can spare a penny or two if you will open the money-box," she added.

Now you see that Lina was not a generous child, indeed one of her chief faults was that she did not like to give away the least thing. Mrs. Harland looked rather sorry as the little girl made this answer, but she only said,

"Suppose you think of it till after dinner, and then we will decide what you are both able to give to God. But try, dear children, to ask yourselves, 'What would Jesus do if He was here?'"

"Oh, *He* wouldn't buy paint-boxes or cradles," said Pansy, quickly.

“No, but He does not mind little children having amusements and pleasures, for He wishes them to be happy,” said Mrs. Harland. “What Jesus *does* mind, is to see us selfish, wishing to keep everything for ourselves, and caring not for His poor who are without almost all they need;” and then she went away, leaving Pansy and Lina to talk over the story of the poor little children in the cold, fireless kitchen.

But though they talked long and earnestly, it is quite certain that Lina did not grow generous and ready for self-denial, as we shall discover when we read the following chapter.





CHAPTER VIII.

TWO MONEY-BOXES.

WHEN dinner was quite over, and the two little girls were allowed to move from the table, Pansy, with her usual eagerness, said,

“Now, dear mamma, please look in the money-boxes. We think they are rather rich boxes just now, because papa’s half-crown went in on New Year’s Day.”

Accordingly the two little boxes were brought, and very pretty they were to look at, for they were made of polished wood. Pansy’s was of a light colour like oak, while Lina’s was the shade of rose-wood, and to each one there was a lock and key.

Lina, being the eldest, had her little store opened first, and I must tell you of what it consisted. Five farthings, nine halfpence, four penny pieces, three

little threepenny pieces, two sixpences, two shillings, and Mr. Harland's bright half-crown, which had been a New Year's gift.

"Oh, what a great deal that will buy!" cried Pansy, delightedly. "If I have as much, we can keep Mark and little Grace from being hungry this great while."

Mrs. Harland saw that there was a cloud on the other little face, and she said, "Now, my dear Lina, you are not obliged to give away any of this money. If you feel that it will make you very happy to spend part of it on these poor children, I am sure God will bless you; but He will not care for any gift that is not made freely."

Lina turned her little hoard over and over with her fingers, looking very uneasy.

"I do want a cradle; Mary Ellen is too tall to sleep well in the one I have, and I want to keep the half-crown Uncle Harland gave me, and—"

Here she stopped short, and then pushed the farthings and halfpence and pence, with the threepenny pieces, over to Mrs. Harland, saying, "I am sure, auntie, I can't spare any more."

"Can you spare so much?" said Mrs. Harland, gravely, for she saw Lina was not giving with a generous spirit; and then the little girl put out her

hand and took back one of the tiny silver coins, though she blushed very much in doing it.

“Well, this will be very useful,” remarked Mrs. Harland. “It will buy a loaf of bread for several days. Now, Pansy, we will open your box.”

Pansy had, it seemed, been putting in other things besides money, for there came out a little bead ring of her own making, a tiny button, and a very small tin knife, which was one of the doll’s-house set, and which Lina seized with a cry of delight. However, she possessed three bright farthings, four halfpence, six penny pieces, a fourpenny piece with a hole in it, five sixpences, and two shillings, besides the half-crown of her papa’s giving. I wonder who can tell which little girl had the most money in her box, for *I* am not going to add it up for you! I shall only say that Pansy cried out,

“Please, mamma, take it all, except my three dear little farthings and that fourpenny piece which nurse gave me because it had a hole in it.”

Do you not think that God was pleased with this willing gift? Ah, dear children, do try to remember that it is not the greatness, the value of our offerings, but the spirit in which we make them, which is acceptable to our dear Heavenly Father,

who has said that for every kind, good deed done for His sake we shall in no wise lose our reward.

You may be quite sure that the next time Mrs. Harland paid a visit to poor Mrs. Smithson and her little children she was able to take them some nourishing food as a present from Pansy and Lina, who she promised should accompany her some day when their coughs were quite gone, and the sun shone out again.

I have been so pleased to tell you this kind action of Pansy's, because in her story I have been obliged to show you so many of her faults. This makes me sorry to let you hear how she spoiled all the fresh, loving spirit with which she had made her little gift by thinking and talking about it. In the Bible we are told not to let our left hand know what our right hand doeth, by which we are taught that we are not to speak of any good we do. God knows, and, if He approves, we do not need the approval of any earthly creature.

However, Pansy Harland made the great mistake of being very much pleased with herself; and thus it was that she told every one in the house that she had given all the money in her box to two poor little children, except the farthings and the treasured fourpenny piece.

“And Lina gave only a very little of hers,” she added, as a sort of conclusion to the story, which of course made the fault greater, because when we speak of other people’s errors without need, it shows we are well pleased with ourselves, and have not got that sweet spirit of charity of which the great Apostle Paul speaks in his Epistle to the Corinthians.

Lina too felt vexed with herself, and vexed with Pansy for letting every one know her selfishness, and so these little girls began to disagree and act more unkindly to each other than they had been doing for a long time, thereby grieving Mrs. Harland much, because her most earnest wish was to see them living as the dear children of God, and lately she had hoped that both Lina and Pansy were trying to be among those who early give their hearts to the gentle Saviour.

“I shan’t!” “Do it yourself!” “You are a cross thing!” How bad such words sound in a home where children are taught the love and fear of God, where they know so well what is displeasing to Him! Yet I must own that about this time such words were often spoken in the house where Pansy Harland and Lina Carey were dwelling; and though the card with its motto, “Little children

love one another," still hung on the wall of the nursery, as it had hung in the nursery of their island home when they were much younger and smaller, they seldom felt it a check upon their unkind words and looks and thoughts.

But, happily for these little girls, and for all of us, our Father above loves and pities us though we so often grieve Him, and if He sees that we need some sorrow to bring us nearer to Him, to make us more watchful over ourselves, more loving and humble, He will surely send it because it is for our good.

Naturally, we all love to be happy, and to have everything go well and brightly with us; and it seems very hard when a cloud comes over all our joy, just as a cloud now and then comes over the summer sky, and changes all to gloom. But it is with people as with the flowers of the garden and the fruit in the orchard, rain does its work as well as sunshine, and neither we, nor the blossoms, nor the fruit, could ever become what we ought to be if we had nothing but brightness shining over and around us.

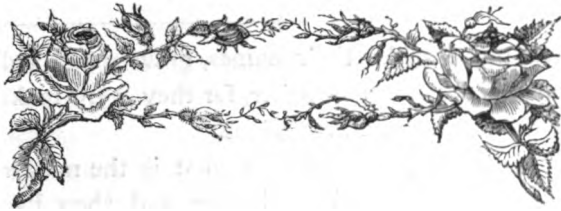
Do you understand, little ones, that the "grey" days make the flowers grow, and that in the same way grief very often helps our souls to grow, our

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characters to become more perfect than they would if we were always full of joy?

So a sorrow was coming to Lina and to Pansy, which should make them cling to each other with a love they had never before known ; but I must tell you of it in my next chapter, for it would make this one quite too long, and perhaps weary the little girls who, I hope, will one day read it.





CHAPTER IX.

SORROWFUL DAYS.

AS nurse came into the children's bedroom one cold March morning, she heard both the little voices raised high, as if some quarrel was beginning.

“I'll tell mamma!” this from Pansy.

“I don't care if you do!” this from Lina.

Was it not a bad way of commencing a new day? for you know, I am sure, that every day is a fresh gift from God to us, which we must use in trying to please Him and grow more like Jesus, and by-and-by we shall have to stand before Him and account for all the hours and minutes of our lives. But, as you see, Lina and Pansy were quarrelling instead of giving their first waking thoughts to God.

As nurse spoke their names, gravely and sadly, they did not even hear her, for they were making far too much noise themselves.

“Miss Pansy, Miss Lina ; what is the matter ?” she asked again, a little louder, and then Pansy said, in a fretful, half-crying voice,

“It’s not *my* fault, Lina is so unkind !”

“I wish my papa and mamma would come and take me away,” said Lina. “Pansy is *so* cross, and I am so tired of being always with her !”

Nurse did not answer either of the little girls at once ; she stood quite still, with a look upon her face which almost frightened them, for it was so sad, not in the very least *angry*.

“I am so sorry to find such naughty children,” she said, after what seemed a long silence, during which Lina and Pansy had felt exceedingly ashamed and uncomfortable. “There is sorrow enough in the house without you little girls adding to it by such bad behaviour.”

They looked at nurse with wondering, frightened eyes, but neither of them spoke a word.

“Yes, we are all very unhappy this morning,” nurse went on. “Your mamma, Miss Pansy, won’t be able to see you to-day, for she is very ill, and the doctor says she must not be disturbed

by any noise. I hope she has not heard you quarrelling, for that, I am sure, would make her worse."

"Mamma ill?" cried Pansy. "But she was well yesterday; she heard our lessons, and fixed a fresh piece of hemming for me and for Lina;" but her face turned very pale, for the thought of being kept away from her mamma was terrible.

"She was not *well* yesterday, nor for a good many yesterdays," replied the nurse, gravely. "It is certain, however, that she is very ill this morning, and it would be better if you little girls asked God to cure her, than begin the day by such naughty doings. How often have you promised your poor mamma you would be a better child, Miss Pansy? And think what pains she has taken to teach you and Miss Lina how to be trying to please God."

Ah! how often? Conscience put the same question to Pansy Harland, and she knew that over and over again she had made that promise, yet so little had come of it. Tears filled her eyes and ran down her cheeks, while Lina sobbed aloud. Dressing and hair-curling was accomplished very quietly that morning, there were no complaints and no fretful words. When the two children knelt to say their usual prayer, I am quite sure that their cry for help

to be good, for pardon for all they had done amiss, came quite from their hearts.

That done, Pansy looked at Lina, and Lina looked at Pansy, and then they kissed each other and made friends, saying, "Perhaps if we try to be good, God will make her well;" for the thought of Mrs. Harland's illness was first in their minds.

"Oh, nurse, do let me see her, do let me just tell her I am going to be *so* good," pleaded Pansy; but nurse shook her head, and only bade them go downstairs as "quietly as mice."

If any of you little ones know what it is to have mamma ill, I need not tell you what a sorrowful breakfast-table it was that morning in Pansy's home. Mr. Harland looked pale and anxious, and the kind face was missing which always smiled from behind the urn, and there was no pleasant talk about the lessons or the amusements of the day. Pansy had tried hard not to cry, but presently her sorrow grew too heavy a burden, and laying down the spoon with which she had been striving to eat the bread-and-milk so often murmured over in past days, she burst into a fit of sobbing, and Lina followed her example.

Mr. Harland felt very sorry for the poor children, and he gave them all the comfort he could, and said that if they were good and quiet, and tried to be no trouble, that would be the very best proof of their love. But he had to go to his office as usual, and nurse was busy in Mrs. Harland's room, so that Lina and Pansy were left by themselves in the nursery, with no lessons to say and with perfect freedom to do whatever they thought would amuse them. Only a week before, the thought of a holiday, and "nothing to do," would have seemed delightful, for like other little girls, Pansy and Lina often found sums and poetry, and other studies, very tiresome, and would think how pleasant it was for grown-up people who did what they chose; for I think all children really believe that is what we who are older do!

However, now they were left to themselves, these little folks found that it is not perfect happiness to have nothing you are obliged to do; older and wiser people than they often discover that liberty to do as you like grows very wearisome, and that the following of our own will can never give us peace, never make us truly happy.

So, both Pansy and Lina were wishing that Mrs. Harland was with them to give them their

lessons, to say, "Now, do your work," or, "Now, do your sums." Even nurse (whom they had so often called cross and unkind) would have been welcome, notwithstanding her resolve to have toy-cupboards kept tidily, and books neatly replaced on the shelf.

They played a little; but all amusements seemed impossible, and after awhile they left off any such attempt, and stood with their sorrowful faces pressed against the window-pane looking into the garden, where the pretty golden and lilac crocuses were blooming, and where the strong March wind made the yellow daffodils nod their heads; but for a long time neither of them spoke, and tears were gathering in Pansy's eyes and rolling slowly down her cheeks.

At last Lina broke the silence. "Oh, Pansy, how I wish we had not been so often naughty, and made dear auntie sorry and anxious. If God will but get her well, I do believe I never can be so bad any more."

"I wish I had tried harder when mamma talked to me so about being good," answered Pansy. "She said so often that when the first angry feeling came I must beg God help me in driving it away; it would never do to wait till it got into a great

strong passion. Yet, what a quarrelsome, wicked child I have been. Do you think, Lina, that God will let mamma die, as a punishment of all my sinful temper and wilfulness?"

Lina hesitated and seemed considering earnestly, before she answered that question; presently her face brightened as she turned it upon Pansy.

"I don't think that would be quite God's way, dear," she said, gently. "Auntie has told us how much God pities us, and how, even if He sends great troubles, He loves us, and knows they will do us good, and make us really happier and better in the end. I do believe God will make auntie quite well, something in my heart seems to make me sure of it; but even if He does not, it will not be because of His anger, but because in some way it will be best for us, and for her."

Then they cried together, for their hearts were so heavy, but after a little while Pansy wiped her eyes and said,

"I *don't* think mamma will die, for I shall ask God so very much to make her well, and I shall keep on asking. Don't you remember that only last Sunday I had for my text those words, 'Ask and ye shall receive'?"

"And mine was, 'God is love,'" said Lina. "So,

Pansy, we must believe in His love, and that He means to forgive us all the naughty things which make us so sorry now."

Those last words were heard by some one else, of whom I have never yet told you—a lady with a bright, sweet voice, and a bright, sweet face also. She often visited Mrs. Harland, and now she had been sent for in the time of sickness and trouble. "Aunty Rose," the children called her, although she was not related to either of them. I cannot tell you the change which came into each young face when she was seen standing in the doorway—all the tears and all the sorrow were lost in little cries of delight and surprise.

"Gently, gently!" said Aunty Rose, when she had endured a wonderful amount of kissing and fondling. "We are all to be very quiet, as quiet as three mice, or nurse and the doctor will scold us and send us out of the house, I fear! What are my two dear little girls doing to amuse themselves?"

"Nothing," said Lina; and Pansy added,

"It is *so* miserable, aunty dear! There are no lessons, no nurse, no mamma, and we can't find anything to do, except talk."

"But I think I heard some very wise kind of talking as I opened the door," said Miss Rose (that

was her real name). "Was not Lina speaking of God's willingness to forgive us all we do amiss, if we repent and ask pardon?"

"Yes," said Pansy. "But does God get tired of forgiving when we are naughty very often?"

Miss Rose sat down and drew both little girls close to her, for she wanted to talk to them and make clear all which seemed puzzling. She told them that God's love is a father's love, constant, unwavering, and true. She told them too that with all and *more* than the love of a father, He forgives us again and again; nor does He only forgive, but gives us grace to strive against temptation and to overcome all evil by the gift of the Holy Spirit. She made them understand also that even the good desires of our hearts, the longing to be God's children, the resolve to conquer sin, do not come from our poor weak hearts, but from the work of this Holy Spirit of God within them, and she begged both Lina and Pansy to listen to its whispering and never resist its blessed inspirations. Then this kind friend suggested that the little girls should try each night to look back through the hours of the day, and try to remember how often and in what way they had offended God, and this would be a sort of preparation for the day to come.

“Pray,” “try,” “watch”—those were the three short words which summed up the little lesson they learnt from “Aunty Rose” that morning; and I think they both saw more clearly than before, that when they fell into any sin or fault they must quickly ask pardon of the Father in heaven through Christ His dear Son, and then begin afresh. Indeed, they saw that all through life we must be ever striving, ever beginning, ever resisting evil but that we are not left alone in our efforts—God’s Holy Spirit will dwell in our hearts to guide us and strengthen us, at all times and in all places.

“Always try!” said Lina, after listening very thoughtfully to all this from the lips of her good friend. “But we shall get tired of it!”

Miss Rose smiled a little. The child’s thought did not surprise her, for well indeed she knew that to people much older and much wiser than Lina and Pansy there seems something almost “tiring” in the thought of an effort that must last all our lives.

“Listen to this, my darlings,” she said. “If I were to tell you that all your lives long you must every day eat a piece of bread, you would cry out, ‘We shall get so tired of it;’ and yet, I dare say, this is what you most likely *will* do. If I told you

that every day of your lives (from now until—if you are spared—you are old, grey-haired, feeble women) you would move your hands, your feet, your eyes, and use your mind and memory, the prospect would seem wearying to think of; and yet this is what is sure to happen. But in all we do by habit, we do day by day without looking on to the years to come; and it must be just the same in our prayers and in our efforts to become holy. ‘My God, show me how to please Thee, and how to avoid sin *to-day*,’ must be our petition; and every morning we must try till night, and begin again when a fresh day dawns; and so time will pass on, and good habits will be growing almost without our knowing it, and bad habits and temptations will be weakened gradually, so that what is hard seems almost easy. ‘Help me *to-day*!’—let that be what you ask God, dear Lina and Pansy, and do not fear that He will leave you to fight alone, and so get tired.”

“That sounds easy,” said both the little girls, as Miss Rose sent them off to their play.





CHAPTER X.

“GOOD-BYE.”

WEEEKS passed by, and still Mrs. Harland was upstairs in her room, and the little girls went quietly about the house lest their laughter and noisy footsteps might disturb her; but they were happy, because they felt that God had heard their many prayers and spared the dear life, even though it took so long to recover strength.

Now and then both Pansy and Lina were allowed in the sick-room, and I need not tell you what a pleasure this was, and how proud the little girls were if any small service was required of them. Kind Aunty Rose had stayed to help everybody, and she took good reports to Mrs. Harland of Pansy and Lina's industry at their

lessons, and, better still, of their kind and loving behaviour to each other. For all the good resolves, and the prayers and promises they had made to God, were not any longer mere words ; in the time of their great sorrow they had learned to speak to their Father in heaven, not only with their lips, but with their hearts, and these earnest prayers were bringing forth fruit at last.

It was indeed a happy time when Mrs. Harland came downstairs again, and found the little ones gentle and forbearing to each other ; jealousy and temper were conquered, or, if they rose, were struggled with and bravely beaten down ; and thus the house was made pleasanter for every one.

It was on one of the sweet summer days that Indian letters came in, and, after reading them, Mrs. Harland's eyes kept turning towards Lina, and at last she said,

" Mamma sends you her dear love, and she had not time to put in a little letter for you by this mail, my darling."

Lina sighed. " What a long time it is since I saw mamma ; I was only six—quite a little thing ; and I suppose it will be years and years before I go back to India."

“Perhaps you will never go back,” said Mr. Harland, laughing, for he did not suppose his words would frighten Lina.

“Never go back!” she repeated, and her face grew pale. “Oh, uncle, I *must* see mamma again,” and she began to cry.

“Lina, my dear little girl, we cannot have tears,” said Mrs. Harland, drawing the child to her. “There must be nothing but smiles to-day, for the mail has brought good news. You will not go back to India, because they are all coming home to live in England—your papa and mamma and the two little brothers.”

“Oh, how delightful!” cried Lina, with smiles lighting up her face; but they faded when she glanced at Pansy, who exclaimed,

“I didn’t think you would be so glad to leave us all.”

“But I am not. I would like to live with Uncle and Aunt Harland and you, Pansy, always, if I had mamma too; but of course I want her.”

“Of course you do,” said Mrs. Harland. “I should be very sorry if you were not happy at the thought of mamma’s return. But, Pansy, listen to this little sentence;” and, turning to the Indian letter, she read that both Mr. and Mrs. Carey

hoped to make a home so near their friends that the little girls could meet very often.

"Oh, Lina," said Pansy that afternoon, "I am so sorry your mamma is coming home for good; I can't help it, though perhaps it seems unkind. A year ago I should have been rather pleased; but we love each other now, don't we?"

"Yes," said Lina. "And, Pansy, I think—I really *do* think—that we have learned to try and please God. I don't believe we ever quite began in earnest till Auntie Harland was ill."

"Well, I mean to try always, but it is very hard," answered the other little girl. "Don't you wish it was as easy to be good as it is to be naughty?"

Lina thought a moment before she answered, and then she owned that her wish was the same as her little friend's, "only I suppose God is more pleased with us for trying when it is difficult," she added.

After that day, Lina never opened her eyes without thinking, "Will mamma be here by this evening?" for Mrs. Harland had told her they were on their way, and she felt quite impatient for their coming.

One morning Pansy's mamma came in with a smile on her face and a thin paper in her hand; but neither of the children had ever seen a telegram, so they did not guess that there was any special news.

"What do you think, children! The travellers will be here to-night," said Mrs. Harland; and then there were eager questions and exclamations of delight from both little girls, for Pansy was striving to be unselfish and to rejoice in the happiness of Lina.

But evening came, and bed-time, and still there was no arrival. Mrs. Harland had granted so many petitions for an extension of time before going to bed, that at length she would grant no more, and the disappointed children were sent upstairs.

"I think, perhaps, they will not arrive till the morning," said Mrs. Harland. "So, dear Lina, you must exercise your patience a little longer, and try to sleep, that you may wake up able to enjoy all the happiness that is coming."

How glad I am to show you the change which had passed over both these little girls, when I can tell you that there was not a sullen look from Lina, and not a cross word from Pansy, as

they went up to prepare for rest that night. I am quite sure there would have been murmuring and complaining had they not both been trying to practise obedience.

When the June sun crept in through the white blind and half-drawn curtains, Lina opened her eyes to find some one sitting by her bed, waiting, evidently, for her to wake. It was not nurse, nor was it Mrs. Harland, nor even "Aunty Rose," but a sweet, kind face that was both strange and familiar to Lina; strange, because it belonged to no one she had ever seen in that house before; familiar, because it was just as if she had seen it in some other place—perhaps in a dream! But next minute Lina seemed to remember the old home in India; seemed again a little child of six years, and with a glad cry she held out her arms, "Mamma! mamma!"

Of course she was right; it was, indeed, her dear mother who now held her so fondly in her arms and thanked God for keeping her dear little Lina safely for her during their long separation.

"But when did you come?" asked Pansy, who had roused and sat up in bed with a very sleepy and bewildered air, as if she did not know if she was really awake; and then Mrs. Carey

had to go round to kiss her and tell her that they had all arrived the night before, but so late that they did not expect any little girls to welcome them.

The Careys stayed three weeks with Mr. and Mrs. Harland, and then went away to live in a neighbouring town, taking Lina with them, to Pansy's great regret. Yes, indeed! so changed was this little girl by God's grace, that all the old jealous nature seemed gone, so that she was able to love Lina as herself, and to be willing that others should love her too; thus she was very sorry to part with her playmate.

"But I shall see you very often, Lina," she said the last evening they walked about the garden together, talking rather sadly of the coming separation.

"Yes, Auntie Harland has promised to bring you to stay as soon as our new home is quite in order."

There was a little silence, and then Pansy stretched out her hand for one of the red roses, and began pulling out its petals one by one, as people often do when they are thinking of something it is not quite easy to say.

"Lina," she exclaimed at last, "when you first

came to live with us, and afterwards—a great many times—I was jealous and unkind. Will you forgive me for it all?”

Lina’s eyes filled with tears, and putting her arms round her little friend she answered, “ Oh, Pansy, I think I was far more unkind to you, for I was so sullen and unforgiving ; besides, I am older. We must forget it all, and only love each other and ask God to make us good children.”

“ I shall miss you so at lessons and on Sundays, and—” But here Mrs. Harland’s pleasant face was seen at the garden-door, and both the little girls sprang forward to meet her, begging that she would take “ just one turn ” with them.

So in the garden, with nothing to disturb them but the quivering leaves and the good-night song of the birds, Mrs. Harland had a long talk with her “ two children,” as she called them.

“ And to-morrow I shall have but Pansy,” she added, smiling ; “ for Lina will not be mine any more ; she will belong all to her own mother again.”

“ But I shall never forget all you have taught me,” said Lina, earnestly. “ At least I *hope* I shall not,” she added ; “ and on Sunday I shall fancy what you are all doing, and how you and Pansy

are having a nice talk—" And here Lina quite broke down, and cried very sorrowfully ; not because she was really unhappy, but because, if we have loved any friends and any home much, it must give us real pain to go away.

" But, my little Lina, you will have your mother," said Mrs. Harland, soothing her as best she could. " And though you are not to live with us we shall, I hope, see you very often, and I am sure you know quite well that we could not forget our dear Lina, nor forget to ask God to bless and watch over her. Indeed, dear child, you must dry these tears, and think only of happiness now mamma has come back to you."

" You always give us a text on Sunday, and Lina will not be here then," said Pansy, after a little silence. " Can't you give it us now, mamma?"

Mrs. Harland thought for a moment. " Yes, I have a text for you," she said, presently ; " not for one day, nor even for a week or a month, but what I would like both my dear little girls to remember always, however long God may spare their lives."

" Do we know it already ?" asked Lina, who by this time had ceased crying and returned to her usual happy little self.

“ Yes, I think you know it ; but it is a text we cannot know too well nor keep in our minds too much, for they are words which Christ spoke when He was living in this world of ours : ‘ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them and they follow Me.’ ”

“ You mean that we are to listen to Christ’s voice, and try to follow Him ? ” said Pansy, with a very serious look upon her face ; yet not a sad look, for she knew quite well that the *real* following of the Saviour is the very greatest happiness.

“ Yes, darling, that is what I mean, and what I wish for you and for Lina, ” answered Mrs. Harland. “ I want you to be listening for the voice of Jesus at all times, and then it will warn you when you are ready to do wrong, it will bid you resist the temptation, and it will teach you how you can live like true children of a Heavenly Father. Oh, my little girls, try to be, in deed and in truth, lambs of Christ’s flock, and so to follow Him that, at the last great day, He will acknowledge you as His own, and admit you to the joy of the home He has prepared for all who love and serve Him. ”

Very thoughtfully did Pansy and Lina go to rest upon that last night of their life together, and very earnest had been the prayers they offered to God,

begging Him to show them how to follow Him as sheep follow a good shepherd.

When Mrs. Carey came to bid her little daughter good night, she was not so very much surprised to find some tears upon her face; she would have indeed been sorry had not Lina felt a little pain in the thought that she was leaving a home which had been very happy, and dear friends who had been as kind as the best father and mother. She tried, however, to say a few cheering words which should help the little girl to turn her thoughts to the pleasure of future meetings with Pansy and good Mr. and Mrs. Harland, and had the happiness of seeing smiles upon the little face as it was held up for a kiss.

Early next morning Pansy and Lina were awake and talking; they seemed to have so very much to say to each other now there was little time left. The actual parting was a sad one, and we will pass it over, merely saying that there were promises of "writing soon" on one side, and "answering directly" on the other.



CHAPTER XI.

LUBIN.

AS soon as Lina had made herself familiar with her new home, both inside and out, she began a long letter to her friend Pansy Harland—so long that it took her several days to get it finished, for of course she could not spend all the time in this pleasant occupation. When it was really ended, and the envelope fastened down and neatly addressed, Mrs. Carey took her little girl out to post it; and from that moment I believe Lina's chief thought was of how soon she could possibly *begin* to expect an answer. Shall I tell you what she said? I think that you will agree with me in considering it a nice letter for a child of her age to accomplish all by herself, and without those con-

stant cries of "Do tell me what to say" which may be heard sometimes in similar cases.

"Fern Lodge,

"Thursday Morning.

"MY DEAR, DEAR PANSY,—I wanted to write to you the first morning after I reached my new home, but mamma was busy, and she said I could help her in many little things; so I ran up and down stairs and put some of my clothes in my chest of drawers, and my story-books on a little shelf just the size I wanted, and my lesson-books underneath. I know now why this house is called Fern Lodge. It is not because there are a great many ferns here, for there are only a very few growing by the gate; it is because a *Mr. Fern* built the house, and lived in it until his only little boy died, and then he did not want to stay here any more. There is a nice lawn in front of the windows, and a tall beech-tree shades the drawing-room. The door is in the middle, and the rooms are on each side; I cannot tell you what they are like, so you must wait until you come to pay us a visit. I have such a pretty little room to sleep in, which opens out of mamma's. When you are here there is to be a bed put up just like mine, so that we may be together. The breakfast-room is where

I am to have lessons, and a lady is coming to teach me every day, but I shall have a week's holiday before I begin to learn with her. I wish you lived near enough to do lessons with me. The garden is very large and very pretty; a hedge of evergreens is between the flower and the fruit garden. I have a tiny piece for myself in both— isn't that nice? In one I have two rose-trees, a geranium, some mignonette, and a root of pansies; and in the other I have three strawberry plants and a red-currant bush. Now I must tell you a great piece of news. Papa wants me to learn to ride, and he is going to buy me a little pony; I wonder what colour it will be; but even if I might choose I should hardly know whether to have it white or grey. When you come, I hope you will not be afraid to get on his back and ride round the field behind Fern Lodge. There are so many things I should like to tell you, but the paper is full, and mamma says I had better leave all the rest until my next letter. Give my love to dear Uncle and Aunt Harland, and many, many kisses. Give my love too to nurse and Emma and Cook, and now good-bye, dear Pansy.

“Your very loving friend,

“LINA CAREY.”

When this letter reached Mrs. Harland's house, Pansy had not seen the postman coming up to the door, or I am sure she would have run to meet him, in the hope that he had something for her; it was dropped into the letter-box with other letters, and the little girl first saw it lying on her plate when she took her seat at the breakfast table. I need not try to describe her delight, because, as little people are supposed to be the readers of my story, they will all understand perfectly well the pleasure it is to get a letter; it is when we get a great deal older that letters are not always so welcome, because they very often bring us sad news, or cause us many an anxious thought.

As Lina wrote in rather a large-sized hand, Pansy could make out every word quite easily, and it pleased her very much to hear what kind of place Fern Lodge was, and that already her little friend had begun to make plans for the time when she was to go on a visit. As for the news about the pony, it quite excited her; she could talk of little else than of what its colour would be and what name Lina would choose for it; and after a while she asked her papa to buy *her* a pony, but he shook his head and said it could not be thought of until she was older. Does it come into your

mind that perhaps Pansy will feel envious of her little friend? Ah! so she would have done at one time. I am sure that there would have been no pleasure in talking about Lina's pony at the time when the little girl used to give way to her jealous nature; but the prayers and resolves I have spoken of had not been in vain, and our little Pansy had so far conquered herself that she could truly rejoice in Lina's pleasure as much as in something quite her own. Mr. and Mrs. Harland noticed this, and spoke of it to each other; they did not tell their dear child how pleased and thankful they were to mark so great a difference in her, because they well knew how easily our hearts begin to fill with pride in ourselves, and therefore it would be safer not to utter words of praise which might spoil the growth of the good feelings and desires which they hoped God's Holy Spirit had implanted within little Pansy's soul.

"She is too young to have a pony, certainly," said Mrs. Harland to her husband in the evening after Lina's letter had been received, and when Pansy had gone to bed to dream over it; "but could we manage to give her something else as a proof that we have been made so happy by watching how she tries to be a good child?"

“I was thinking much the same,” was the reply, “and whether, if we bought the pretty white donkey which poor Jacob Turner has to sell, it might not be very amusing to Pansy, and do her good too to ride about the lanes on its back. It is such a quiet, gentle creature that there could be no fear of any accident ; if you think it a good idea I will speak to Turner about it to-morrow morning.”

You may suppose what Mrs. Harland's reply was when I tell you that on the next afternoon, at about five o'clock, when Pansy was standing at one of the windows which looked towards the road, she saw the familiar figure of Jacob Turner at the gate, leading in his hand a pretty white donkey.

Now she had seen the donkey many and many a time, and often stopped it as its master drove it by, on purpose to give it a piece of bread. On these occasions she would say, “What are you going to do with this pretty fellow?” and Turner always answered, “I'm looking out for a chance to sell him, missie ; he ought to fetch a tidy bit of money now he's old enough to ride or drive. Two years ago I bought him, a little one, for a matter of five shillings.”

Now Pansy had certainly thought how nice it would be to own such a very handsome white donkey, but it never entered her mind to picture such wonderful good fortune for herself; even when she saw Turner and his four-footed companion at the gate she fancied the man was only the bearer of some message to her papa or mamma.

"Here is Turner!" she exclaimed, therefore; "shall I go out and bring in his message, mother dear?"

"We will both go," said Mrs. Harland, putting down her work and rising quickly. "Jacob is very punctual; he promised to be here at five o'clock."

"And here comes papa too!" cried Pansy. "He has met Jacob at the gate, and he is coming in too. Oh, what a dear donkey Neddy is, mamma! I wish he had a prettier name."

"Suppose you think of one," answered Mrs. Harland. "But come quickly, for papa is beckoning."

Pansy did not need a second bidding to call her out upon the gravel path before the door, where the white donkey was now quietly standing.

"Oh you beauty!" she said, rubbing his soft nose with her little hands. "Shall I fetch you a piece of bread, Neddy? for I believe you know it is I who always give it you."

"That will do presently," exclaimed Mr. Harland. "I want to see if your weight is too heavy for Neddy's back." And as she was lifted up, Pansy noticed that the donkey had on a smart little saddle and a new bridle, and blue ribbon rosettes to ornament the sides of his sleek, long ears.

"Is he going to be sold?" she cried.

"He *is* sold, missie," said Turner, with such a well-pleased, chuckling sort of laugh, that the little girl for the first time thought him a very heartless, unkind sort of master.

"I should have thought you would be sorry," she said, gravely. "*I* am very sorry, for perhaps poor Neddy will not be treated well in his new home."

"I can answer for that," remarked Mr. Harland, with an odd sort of smile on his face. "He is going to a house where he will belong to a young lady I know very well, and who I am sure will make a pet of him. I only hope Neddy will not be 'killed with kindness,' as the saying is."

"And I hope the young lady will not tire poor Neddy," said Pansy. "Do I know her too, papa?"

"Yes, you have known her some time."

"Is it Minnie Ellis? or Kattie Leigh?" exclaimed Pansy; but both Mr. and Mrs. Harland were

laughing and saying "No," so she said she could not possibly guess, and would like to be told.

"I am going to write the address," said papa then, and taking a card from his pocket he pencilled a few words on it and handed it to Pansy, who still sat on Neddy's back.

For just one moment she looked very puzzled, and then a bright crimson flush came over her little face, as often happens when we are very much surprised; and next she threw out both her arms, and seizing Mr. Harland round the neck, kissed him over and over again. I need scarcely tell you that the words he had written were just three—"Miss Pansy Harland."

"Oh, papa! oh, mamma! how delightful!" she cried. "My dear, dear white donkey, how I *shall* love you! And you shall not be Neddy any more; you shall have the prettiest name I can possibly think of."

When the first excitement was over, and Turner had gone away, after putting the donkey comfortably into his new stable, Pansy heard that this present was the mark of her parents' satisfaction with her conduct; and you may be sure this made her very, very happy, and also encouraged her to try more and more to be a good, obedient, loving

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child. That evening, after tea, she began a letter in answer to Lina's, and a description of her white donkey took up a great part of the sheet of paper; but she also spoke of the pleasure it would give her to pay a visit to Fern Lodge, and to have a ride on the pony round the field. "I hope, as soon as it comes, you will give it a pretty name," she added. "I am going to call my dear donkey *Lubin!* Mamma says it is rather a strange name, but I like it because it is so uncommon."

Our young readers will no doubt agree in this, for *Lubin* is certainly not a name we hear every day. *Pansy*, however, had seen it in some old book of verses, and was quite determined to bestow it on her pet in place of the well-worn and familiar title of *Neddy*.

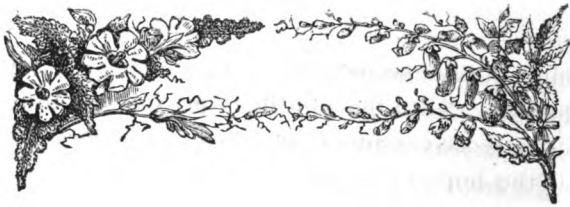
I have given you a specimen of the letters which these little friends wrote to each other directly after their separation. I need only add that regularly once a fortnight an envelope was addressed to "Fern Lodge," which contained within it all the news about Lina's old home (as she called it), and that an answer was sure to come back quickly enough to satisfy even *Pansy*. So time went by, and it was a whole year since they had met; for though visits had often been talked about, some-

thing always seemed to happen to interfere with the plan. On Lina's birthday Mrs. Carey was too ill to receive visitors, and when December came all the hope of spending Christmas together was dashed to the ground by Pansy being in bed with scarlet fever. Then followed the weeks in which she got well, but very, very slowly, and it would not have been safe for Lina to be there; when Mrs. Harland had to be the letter-writer instead of her poor suffering little girl, and send tidings as often as it was possible.

So there had been many disappointments for these two children, and a long trial of patience, before the happy day when a carriage drew up at Mrs. Harland's door, out of which sprang Lina Carey, followed (more quietly) by her father and mother.

"Oh, I *am* so happy, so glad!" cried Pansy, dancing for joy, after the first embraces were over. "But come at once and see Lubin."





CHAPTER XII.

“HAPPY EVER AFTER.”

DO you all fancy that as I began this little book with “Once upon a time,” I am going to end it like the fairy stories because I have chosen this title for its last chapter? Ah, no! for there would be no truth and all fancy in a tale which represented either children or grown people without any shadow to fall across their path of life.

If we had no real troubles we should have what are called “imaginary” ones, which means that we should fancy things were hard and difficult which other more sensible people would see to be perfectly pleasant and easy; it would be the old story of the “crumpled roseleaf,” which no doubt you can get some one to tell you, as there is no space for me to say more about it here.

I was thinking of what Lina Carey and Pansy Harland were saying to each other one day during the visit I have told you was made a year after they parted.

There had been a merry garden-party that afternoon for all the friends of both little girls who lived within easy reach, and it was in talking over all the fun that some idea came into Pansy's mind which caused her to exclaim, "How I wish we should be happy ever after, like children in fairy stories. Sometimes, when I lie in bed, I wonder so, Lina, about all the years to come, and I think of what terrible sorrows I might have, till I am ready to cry. For instance, if papa died, or mamma; or if we got so poor that we had not enough to eat. Even in reading books it makes me unhappy when the sad parts come, so I don't know what I shall do if sad things really happen by-and-by. 'So they all lived happy to the end of their days,' or 'so they were happy ever after'—*that* sounds really delightful!"

The little people were walking round and round the garden together when this was said, and they did not see Mr. and Mrs. Harland with Mr. and Mrs. Carey sitting under a drooping ash-tree on the lawn, quite near enough to catch sound of

Pansy's exclamation. Before Lina had opened her lips to reply, Mr. Harland had put his head out of the shady retreat and called the children to him.

"Well, darlings," and he made room for them on the bench. "Has it been a pleasant afternoon, were there cakes enough, and were the strawberries and cream as good as usual?"

"Yes, yes," they answered, laughing. "It has been a nice garden-party, and every one was happy."

"I thought little Tottie Marshall fell into a rose-bush and scratched her nose?"

"Yes, papa," said Pansy; "but that was only a tiny accident, and she soon forgot it. No one would have cried at all for such a thing *except* a baby of three years!"

"And did not Robert Temple fall out of the swing and bruise his forehead?"

"Yes, Uncle Harland," exclaimed Lina; "but he never cried a bit, and it did not spoil his being happy all the rest of the afternoon."

"Well, I am very glad to hear there were no serious drawbacks to the pleasure. I suppose children's parties cannot well be quite free of little difficulties."

“Oh no,” and the little girls spoke together this time. “Nobody minds very much about a bruise or a fall, except just at the minute.”

“That is something like the troubles of life, then,” said Mr. Harland, more gravely than before. “Even those which are heavy and hard are almost forgotten as time goes on, for joys and comforts follow, and sunshine comes after rain. And then, even if God sends us more sorrow than joy all our lives long, we know that in heaven it will be all forgotten, and we shall see we needed it every bit to make us ready to enter there.”

Perhaps some children would have felt this rather dreary talk after a romp in a hayfield and tea-drinking under the trees, and all the other amusements of a party on a fine summer afternoon; but Lina and Pansy were always well pleased to sit down quietly and listen when Mr. Harland chose to talk to them.

There was a silence of a minute or two before he went on. “I have heard, do you know, of people who make themselves quite distressed in thinking of what *may* befall them some time or other. They always bring to my mind the old absurd story of the woman crying over her baby as she nursed it by the kitchen fire.”

“Oh, what is that?” exclaimed Pansy. “Do tell us the story, if it is funny.”

“You may think it *funny*,” answered Mr. Harland, “but it is meant to teach a useful lesson—the lesson of never tormenting ourselves with imaginary troubles, or meeting troubles half way. So listen. There was once a woman who, sitting by her kitchen fire one rough winter’s night, shed such tears that they rolled heavily down her face and fell upon the infant asleep on her knee. She had no husband tossing on the stormy sea in peril of his life—no! he was whistling cheerfully over his work in the wood-shed hard by; she had no death to mourn for, and, indeed, was almost envied by her neighbours for the quiet comfort of her life. Why then did she cry so sorrowfully? A neighbour coming in for a bit of gossip asked her this, and, after a good deal of hesitation and shaking of her head, this was the reply: ‘The wind set me thinking of the time when my baby should be a grown woman and sitting here by the fireside nursing a child of her own upon her knee, and then it seemed to me that, on such a windy night as this, how easily a brick might be loosened and come falling down the chimney; and I *can’t* help crying as I imagine what a terrible thing it would

be if my child's child should be killed in such a fashion!' That was the secret of this fit of sorrow, Pansy; and a little girl who lies in bed and cries over imagining who may die or what poverty may befall her by-and-by, is—well, *rather* like this silly woman!"

"Oh, papa, you heard me!" and Pansy's face was like one of the reddest roses of the garden.

"My child, I could not help hearing you, and I am glad I did, if so I can teach you to have more loving trust in your Heavenly Father. If He takes care even of the little sparrows, will He not remember and protect Pansy, nor let the sorrows of life be *too* hard for her?"

"God does let people be very, very unhappy," remarked Lina.

"He does indeed; and I suppose the hardest thing we ever have to do is to feel quite sure that He does not willingly let us be so, but that it is the way by which we are to be made truly and eternally happy in heaven by-and-by. Ah, Lina and Pansy, it *is* possible to be 'happy ever after,' though not in fairy-story fashion. The longest life ends in the narrow grave, and when we lie down to die we shall see that neither the sadness nor the joy of our earthly days is anything to us then, it is the

'ever after' which really matters. And both my dear little girls know how this unending happiness is to be gained. It is not for the rich or poor, for the young or old, alone, but for every one who loves Christ, and for His sake has been forgiven all sin, and so made fit to be one of the blessed company who live in God's presence eternally, never, never to be cast out."

Nothing more was said then, and after a few moments the two children went away to their amusements; but even as she played at dolls Pansy remembered what her father had told her, and she said, "I shall try and think of the *real* happy for ever after, shan't you, Lina? It will make us try to please God better, and even if we are very sad it will be easier to bear, because we know nothing lasts always, except in heaven."

"And no one *can* be sorry there," added Lina. "I am glad there is a happy heaven to go to, Pansy."

"Yes; and that it is not hard to be forgiven," answered Pansy. "If only very good people went there—people who never feel cross, or selfish, or disagreeable—it *would* be hard! But ever since I could understand, mamma taught me that Christ

will pardon all sin, so I ask Him at once, and then I feel I can try better."

"Do you remember when Auntie Harland was ill that long time, Pansy, how 'Aunty Rose' talked to us about trying always, and never being afraid to begin again? It has helped me so often."

"We *ought* to be good," remarked Pansy, "for we both have so many to teach us right, and to remind us when we forget. But though I have so many faults, I do pray, and I do strive to be good; and mamma says she sees that God helps me very much. When I look at my white donkey, Lina, it always seems to tell me that it *is* some use trying, even if it takes a long, long while, because you know Lubin came as a proof that I had pleased papa and mamma. I wonder when I shall see your pretty grey pony!"

"Very soon, I think," said Lina; "for mamma told me that Mrs. Harland had promised to let you go back with us to Fern Lodge, to stay a whole month."

Pansy was delighted with this news, and still more so when her mother said it was quite settled. She would have been even happier had her parents accompanied her, but as this was impossible, she was sure she should be very safe with her good

friends, and that there would be a great deal to talk of on her return home.

And now, as my story is only for little ones, I must not speak of Pansy and Lina grown older ; some day, perhaps, we may hear of them again, but at present we will bid them good-bye, learning, it is hoped, some lessons from their faults and falls, and more than all from their real earnest efforts to be God's dear children, doing what is well-pleasing in His sight.

Dear little readers, may you, like them, learn early to love and think of Jesus as your Friend, your Example, your Saviour ; and may you, and I, and all we know and care for, be gathered by-and-by around His feet in heaven, where we shall truly be "happy for ever and for ever" !



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