

MELVILLE WISHES TO BE A SAILOR.



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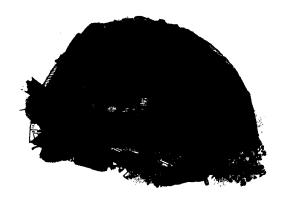
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QLIVE'S STORY...

PART I.

LIFE AT RAVENSCLIFFE.

CHAPTER I.

MY BIRTHDAY PRESENT.

esterday was my birthday, and I was thirteen years old! It was such a happy birthday, the first one I had spent with mother since I was eight years old, so of course I could not help enjoying it.

When I awoke in the morning, there was a parcel laid on my pillow.

It was tied up in pink paper, with white satin ribbons. I was sure mother had tied it up, as soon as I saw it, no one else would have thought of making it so pretty. I untied the ribbon very carefully, and took off the paper, and inside was a large book, with red edges. There was nothing written in the book, but it was full of lines, like a copy-book. Then mother told me she had bought it for me to write in. She thought it would be so nice for me to write a little account of Ravenscliffe, and what we did there; she said it would be nice for me to have it when I was older, as it would remind me of the happy days we spent with mother. So I have begun to write in it at once!

But I shall not let any one see what I have written. I shall keep it quite for myself, that I may read it over when I am an old woman. I told Mrs. McBride so this morning, and she did nothing but laugh, and said, "I was an old woman already;" but I do not know what she meant, for mother is just three times as old as I am, and I am sure she is not an old woman yet! But Mrs. McBride is always telling me that I am "a regular old woman!" She is the baby nurse, and helps Emma to look after the children.

Such dear little things they are! Melville

and I never saw them, till mother brought them home from India last year. There is Charlie, he is just eight; and Mrs. McBride says he is "a regular pickle," because he is always getting into mischief, and never has a clean face or clean hands!

And then there is Willie; he is quite different, so quiet and gentle, and so very thin. Sometimes I see mother crying when she is looking at him, and when she thinks we do not see her. She told me once that she was afraid Willie was very delicate, and would not live to grow up. So we always try to take great care of him, and wrap him up when the wind is cold, and see that Charlie and Walter do not tease him. Walter is four years old, such a fat, sturdy, plump, little man.

And then there is the baby-boy, and Mrs. McBride declares he is the best-looking of us all, and that there never was such a beautiful boy since the world began! Mother is sure that Melville was just like him when he was a baby, but Mrs. McBride will not believe her. He has long, curly, brown hair, and very dark brown eyes, and is so heavy I can only just lift him!

It is so delightful to have mother at home.

Aunt Jane was very kind to us when we lived

with her, but not like mother; but then, no one ever could be like mother! Melville says she has the prettiest face he ever saw. And I am sure no one else could write such beautiful letters as mother wrote to us when she was in India. I have them all tied up together, and I would not lose them for the world.

If only mother could stay with us always! It is so dreadful to think she must go away again in six months' time, and that I shall not see her any more till I am a grown-up young lady, with long dresses, like Cousin Emily.

But father is so lonely by himself, and mother could not be away from him any longer. He is in the Indian Army, so he cannot get to England very often. He meant to have brought mother and the children home, but there was some fighting in India just then, so he could not get away, and mother had to come alone, and bring the children with her. Baby was born soon after she came to Aunt Jane's house, so father has never seen him.

And now we are going to Ravenscliffe, to be alone with mother for six months. It is such a beautiful place, mother says; she used to go there when she was a little girl. It is close to the sea; so near, that we shall hear the waves roaring when we are in bed.

We are to have no governess whilst we are at Ravenscliffe, but mother is going to teach us herself. Melville says it will not seem like lessons a bit, it will be so nice. Miss Charles, Aunt Jane's governess, was very kind to us, but, of course, mother is better than any one.

Then, when lessons are done, we are to go for nice long walks; and Uncle John has lent us a little brown pony, that mother may drive us about to all the pretty places round. He is such a dear, quiet little pony. We cannot quite settle what to call him. I think Brownie would be a nice name; but Melville says that sounds silly, and wants to call him Stella, because he has a white star on his forehead. Mrs. McBride thinks Dobbin is the proper name for a horse; but both Melville and I think it is a very ugly one. Mother says she does not mind what the pony is called, so long as we are both pleased; so we have settled that when we are in the train to-morrow, we will write both names, Stella and Brownie, each on a piece of paper, and let mother draw one out of Melville's hand, and whichever she draws, we will settle upon.

We shall have such a long journey to-morrow, the children will be very tired when we get to the end. But Mrs. McBride says it is so much nicer than London, that we shall never want to come back again, when once we get there. Her home is in a little town called Rawby, about six miles from Ravenscliffe, so she is very pleased that we are going there.

Uncle John wanted us very much to stop at West Court, but mother said she would like to have us quite to herself the short time she is in England, as every moment is precious to her. Six months alone with mother! It seems almost too good to be true!

But oh, what shall I do when mother goes away? Last night, when I was in bed, I could not help thinking of it. I had had such a happy birthday, and I wondered where I should spend my next birthday. Alone at school, somewhere, not even Melville there, and mother gone away!

I could not help crying, and mother, who had come to tuck me up, as she always does at night, asked me what was the matter. So I told her, and then she cried too, and said it would be just as hard for her as for me.

"But, little Olive," said mother, "Jesus will be with you, and He will love you, and comfort you better than I can."

But I wish I could feel Jesus was as REAL to me as He is to mother. She always talks

about Him as if He were somebody quite as real to her as father is, and she tells Him all her troubles, and is quite happy because He is NEAR her.

I wonder if I shall ever feel like that. Jesus always seems to me so far away; and when I said my prayers, I used to think of Him far away above the blue sky.

But mother says, when she prays, she likes to think of Him *close beside her in the room*, and she always speaks to Him as if He was standing close by, listening. And she says I should try to do so too.

But I don't think I love Him as much as mother does. I wish I did!





CHAPTER II.

THE PRIMROSE LADY.



when the train stopped at Castleton station. The children were very tired, for it was long past their bed time, and one by one they had fallen asleep. But they woke up as Mrs. McBride and Emma lifted them out of the carriage and carried them to the wagonette, in which we

were to drive to Ravenscliffe.

It was such a long, cold drive, and mother was very much afraid that Willie would take cold. She took off her own shawl and wrapped him in it, and made him as comfortable as she could on her knee.

We could see nothing as we drove along, for

it was quite dark, and it seemed a very long way. At last the carriage stopped before a house, and mother said, "This is Ravenscliffe!"

The door was open when we drove up, and a bonny old woman, called Mrs. McIntire, came out to meet us. She took us into a long, low room, which looked very clean and comfortable. There was a good blazing fire, which we were very glad to see, we were all so cold.

And then we had tea, such a good tea! Scotch scones, and oat-cake, and mountain honey, and beautiful new milk. The children were very tired, almost too tired to eat, and mother would not take anything herself till she had seen them safe in their little beds. Melville and I were very glad to go to bed too, as soon as we had finished our tea.

I sleep in mother's room, and baby sleeps there too. I have never slept in the room with him before, and mother says I may take him into my bed every morning whilst she is getting dressed. Baby wakes as soon as it is light, just like a little bird, and then he never will go to sleep again. He gets up in his little bed, and laughs, and calls mother till she gets up. Then he asks for "Dadda," and mother gets out of bed and brings him father's photograph, and he takes it and kisses it. Mother says he

knows it quite well; she gave him another photograph one day, and he threw it away, and would not look at it.

But this morning I was so tired that I never heard baby wake, and mother was nearly dressed before I opened my eyes. "Now, Olive," said mother, when she saw that I was awake, "come and look out of the window."

I jumped out of bed, and ran to where she was standing, and looked out.

Oh, it was such a pretty place; so different from London! I could not see a single house, nor a bit of smoke. Close to us was a road, where some chickens and ducks were getting their breakfast. Then across the road was a field with three black cows in it, and past the field was the sea. It looked so blue and beautiful this morning, with the sun shining on it! I was not long getting dressed, and when I came down I found Melville had been out already, helping Mrs. McIntire to feed the chickens.

After breakfast, mother said we might go for a walk. She could not come with us herself, for Willie was very poorly, and she had to stay with him. But she came to the door to see us off. And then she told us that we must never go into the field across the road unless she was with us. She said that at the bottom of that field were some very steep rocks, and there was only a very narrow path to walk on. Mother told us that if we fell over those rocks, we should be dashed to pieces, and that Uncle John did not want her to come to Ravenscliffe, because he was so afraid that we should tumble over the rocks. But mother said she could trust us to do what we were bid, and she was sure we loved her too much to be disobedient.

We were very pleased to hear mother say that, because we really do love her very much indeed, and we would not grieve her for the world.

Mother says that is just how she feels about the Lord Jesus; she loves Him so much, that she cannot bear to make Him sorry. I wonder if I shall ever love Him as much as mother does!

When mother had told us about the rocks, she went in; and Melville and I stood still, wondering which way we should go. And then Melville took me to look at a large picture of a Raven, with its wings spread out as if it was flying, which was painted on a board over Mrs. McIntire's door. Underneath the raven there was another board, which said what she was licensed to sell. Melville said that Mrs.

McIntire told him that a great many people came every day to see the rocks. They come from a long, long way off, and then they rest their horses here, and Mrs. McIntire gives the horses some corn, and the people some dinner. She says the rocks are a wonderful sight. I hope mother will take us some day, but I would not go without her for anything.

At last Melville and I settled that we would turn to the right, and go along the road which led that way. This road was not very far from the sea, and we saw two beautiful ships go past, and Melville said he wished father would let him be a sailor, that he might always be on the sea. But I do hope father never will; I should be so unhappy on windy nights, if Melville was away on the rough sea; I do not think I could ever go to sleep.

We went on a long way down the road, and at last we got to a place where the trees met over our heads, and quite shut out our view of the sea. There were high banks on each side of the road; and as Melville was walking close to one of these, he saw a little yellow primrose.

Oh, how pleased we were; we had never gathered a wild primrose before—only the garden primroses which grew in Uncle John's garden, and they were always very dirty with

the smoke from the chimneys round. We climbed all over the bank, and found three or four more primroses, and a good many buds which were not quite out. I thought it a pity to gather these, but Melville said he was sure mother would like them, and they would come out in water.

We were so busy gathering our primroses, that we did not hear any one coming up; and we were quite startled when we heard a voice close behind us.

"There are not many primroses there, I think," said the voice.

We turned round, and there, at the bottom of the bank, was such a nice lady! She had the very kindest face I have ever seen, except mother's; and in her hand was a basket full of splendid primroses, tied up in bunches with pieces of red wool.

"I cannot give you these primroses," she said, "because they are for some sick people; but if you like to come into our plantation, you will find plenty more, and you may gather as many as you like."

As we were walking there, she asked us where we came from, and Melville told her that we were staying at Ravenscliffe. And then she asked us what our names were, and she was so pleased when she heard that my name was Olive. She said she had some little books at home, called "Little Olive," and she would bring me one some day. Then we came to the plantation, and she opened the gate and showed us where to find the primroses.

The ground was quite yellow with them, such beautiful large primroses. I had never seen such fine ones before! Then the lady said she must go on, but we might stay in the plantation as long as we liked. Oh, how pleased we were! I wonder if she knew how happy she made us.

We had a great deal to tell mother when we got home, and she was so pleased with the flowers. I wonder whether we shall see the Primrose Lady again?





CHAPTER III.

A DREADFUL NIGHT.



other says I am to write about all that happened last Saturday night, before I forget it. It was such a terrible night! Melville says he shall never forget it as long as he lives; and mother says she hopes he never will. She does not think God would

like us to forget it.

We had had such a happy evening. On Saturday evenings we always get ready for "God's Sunday-day," as the children call it. We put by all our toys and dolls and week-day picture-books, and make everything quite neat and tidy. Mother has a drawer in her room

which we call "the Sunday drawer," and here she keeps all our Sunday books, and the letters with which we make texts, and the beautiful Sunday pictures Uncle John gave us. We may never open this drawer except on Sunday, but on Saturday night mother gives me the key, that I may be able to open it the first thing in the morning.

So last Saturday night, when Melville and I had put everything away, mother called us into her room, and had her little Saturday-night prayer with us. We all knelt down, and mother prayed that we might have a happy Sunday together, and that God would make us all His own dear children.

It always seems so real when mother prays; I cannot help thinking of it for a long time after. Then I went to bed, and mother said, as she tucked me up,

"Little Olive, do you think you are safe yet? Have you ever come to the Lord Jesus?"

I told mother that I did not know, but that I was afraid I had not.

And then mother said, "If you only knew, Olive, how I long to know that my darlings are all safe! I think I could go back to India cheerfully, if I felt sure you had all come to Jesus."

And then, after she had talked a little more to me, mother knelt down, and prayed that I might come to Jesus and take Him for my Saviour.

I lay awake a long time, thinking of what mother had said, and wondering what she meant by coming to Jesus, and then I became very sleepy, and turned over on my pillow, and fell fast asleep.

It seemed a long time after that, for I had been dreaming about a number of things, when I woke up quite suddenly.

Mother was getting out of bed and going to the window. She pulled aside the thick curtain, which was fastened up tightly to keep the light from coming into baby's eyes in the morning, and, in a moment, the room, which had been dark before, was full of light, bright red light.

"Olive!" said mother, "don't be frightened, darling. The house is on fire. Get dressed very quickly, and pray to God to take care of us."

Her voice trembled very much as she spoke, and I could see by the bright light that her face was very white. She ran away, just as she was, into the next room, to wake Mrs. McBride and Emma, and downstairs to wake Mrs. McIntire.

Oh, how quick we were! In two minutes

Mrs. McBride had dressed the baby, and Emma had put some clothes on the boys, and we were ready to go out.

I looked out of the window before I left the room, and saw sparks flying past, and a great deal of smoke driving along with the wind.

Then mother opened the front door, and we went across the road, and she put us all under a hedge with Emma, and told us to sit there quite quietly, and to pray that God would put the fire out.

We could see the fire quite well now. Under the same roof as the house was a stable, and it was this stable, and the two rooms over it, which were on fire. I never saw such a terrible sight; the flames were pouring out of the windows and blazing away, and every moment the fire was getting larger! The floor of the two rooms over the stable had fallen in, and soon the whole place would be nothing but a heap of smoking ruins.

- "I wonder where old Colin is?" said Emma, as she sat beside us with baby on her knee.
 - "Who is old Colin, Emma?" said Melville.
- "He's the old man who looks after the cows and the horse," she said. "He sleeps in one of those rooms over the stable. I wonder he isn't here helping them."



All this time, mother and Mrs. McIntire and Mrs. McBride, and Mrs. McIntire's daughter, were running backwards and forwards, dragging everything out of the house, and putting it on the road.

"Miss Olive," said Emma at last, "don't you think you could mind the children whilst I go and give a help?"

So I took the baby on my knee, and all the others crept quite close up to me under the hedge.

Oh, how mother worked; I thought she would kill herself, she lifted such heavy weights, and did so much! But they kept looking up at the fire, and they saw that it had already caught hold of the roof of the house, and the wind was driving it on at a dreadful pace.

But just then it began to rain. Mother said she had been praying that it might. Oh, how it poured! It was a drenching, soaking rain. Mother ran to us with some blankets, and I wrapped them round the children, and made them as snug as I could.

They were so good the whole time, they never cried once, nor were the least bit cross, though they had been waked up so suddenly and taken out of their warm little beds into the cold and wet outside. Charlie and Willie

seemed quite to enjoy it, and little Walter asked me if it was a picnic, and wanted mother to bring him some sandwiches! They were too young to understand how dreadful it was.

Mother let Melville go into the house once, to help her to bring out the children's strong boots, for they only had their thin shoes on. I should so much have liked to have helped mother to carry some of the things out, but she said I was helping her much more by taking such care of the children; she was quite happy about them, when she knew that I was with them.

By this time a man, who lived in a cottage near, had come up to help, and he brought a ladder, and went up on the roof, and pulled some of the slates off, and tried to stop the fire spreading.

Everything in the house had been dragged out, and put in a large heap on the road; chairs, and tables, and sofas, and books, and beds, and mattresses, and pillows, and pokers, and fenders, and shovels, and pans, and basins, and cups, and saucers, and all our clothes, and everything that could be carried. Our dear little birds, that we brought with us all the way from London, were with us under the hedge; mother had brought them to us first of all, before she carried anything else out.

The rain was coming down faster than ever, and the children began to get very wet; mother brought us a waterproof cloak to put over us, but still it was very hard to keep them dry. It was getting very cold and miserable under the hedge, and we were all very tired and sleepy, and my arms ached so much that I could hardly hold the baby. Just then we saw the light of a lantern in the distance.





CHAPTER IV.

THE BEAUTIFUL HOUSE.

and we saw that a man was carrying it. He was running very fast, and several more people were running after him.

As soon as they came up to the house, the man began to collect all the buckets and cans that he could find, and he, and a

great many more men and women, ran off to bring water from a stream about a quarter of a mile away, to put the fire out.

But one of the people who had come with the lantern stopped behind. It was a lady in a long cloak. We watched her peeping about all round the house, as if she were looking for something, and then we saw her speaking to Emma, who was just going away for water. Emma pointed to the hedge where we were sitting, and we saw the lady coming towards us.

"Olive," said Melville to me, "I think it must be the Primrose Lady!"

Yes, it was the Primrose Lady, and she was looking for us.

"You poor little wet things!" she said when she came up to us. "You must come home with me. Where is your mother?"

We told her that mother was helping to put out the fire, so she went to look for her, and then she brought mother back with her, and we all set off together for the Primrose Lady's house. Mother carried the baby, and the lady took Freddy and Walter and Melville, and Charlie and I ran after them.

It was a very long way to the house, and we were all so tired when we got there. We had to go up a steep hill, and then we came to the Primrose Lady's house. It was too dark for us to see what the house was like outside, but when we got inside, the lamps were lighted, and we could see that it was a very large house indeed, much bigger than Uncle John's.

The lady took us into a beautiful room,

where there was a large, blazing fire, and a kind servant came and helped to take off our wet clothes. Then we were dressed up in long nightgowns that were much too big for us, and we sat round the fire, wrapped in shawls, and had some warm bread and milk.

. But when Freddy was eating his bread and milk he fell fast asleep, so mother carried him to bed. There were beds for all of us, made quite ready, and we were so glad to be tucked up in them and go to sleep.

Melville was to sleep in a little dressing-room which opened out of my room.

"I am sure the Primrose Lady is the kindest lady in all the world!" I heard him say to mother as she was tucking him up.

And mother said, "Yes, I am sure God will bless her for all she has done for us to-night!"

Then mother had some tea, and went to bed too, and we all slept quite soundly till the middle of the next day.

When I awoke, I could not think at first where I was. It was such a pretty room. There were white curtains with pink roses on them, hung before the windows, and pretty pictures in frames on the walls. Little Walter was in bed beside me, fast asleep still.

I jumped up, and looked out of the window.

Then I remembered all about the night before. It seemed like a bad dream that I had almost forgotten. But it could not be a dream, for here I was in the Primrose Lady's house. The door into Melville's room was open, so I called to him to come and look out of the window.

Oh, it is such a lovely place. There is a beautiful park in front of the house, and the park goes on as far as the sea.

"Isn't it kind of the Primrose Lady to bring us here?" said Melville.

"Yes," I said; "but what shall we call her? It won't do to say 'Primrose Lady,' will it?"

"No," said Melville, "we must ask her!"

After a little time, the lady came into the room, for she heard us moving about, and then I asked her what her name was, and she told us she was Miss Howard. She laughed very much when she heard that Melville and I always called her "the Primrose Lady."

Then we got dressed, and went downstairs. It is such a large house, such long passages, and such a large hall, and such great, high rooms.

"It must be quite as big as the Queen's palace," Melville whispered to me, as we went into the dining-room.

Mother had just come downstairs. She was

very tired, but very thankful. She said she felt as if she could not thank God enough, for taking such care of us last night. Mother says, she is sure it was God that made her wake just in time for us to get out of the house. She was sleeping so soundly, and she so seldom wakes in the night, but last night she awoke quite suddenly, and then she saw the light. At first she thought it was only moonlight, and she turned over to go to sleep again. But then she felt that she must get up, and see what it was. Mother is sure it was God that made her do that.

It is very wonderful, to think that God is so near us, watching all we do, and taking care of us, by night and day. He must love us very much, to think of us so often.

Whilst we were having our breakfast, everybody talked about the fire. There were a great many ladies and gentlemen staying in the house, and they all wanted to hear about it.

But there was one thing which had happened of which mother did not like to talk, and that was about old Colin; for poor old Colin had been burnt to death, and his body had been found, all charred and burnt, amongst the ruins. He slept in the room over the stable, and the roof had fallen in, before mother woke.

We all felt very solemn when we heard this, for we might all have been burnt to death, just like old Colin.

When we were alone with mother after breakfast, she began to talk about it, and she said, she wondered so very much where old Colin's soul was.

And then mother said, "Oh, Melville and Olive, if I had not waked last night, I wonder so very much whether you would have been with Jesus now. Do you think you would?"

We did not say anything, so mother told us to sit down beside her, as she wanted to have a little talk with us. And then she told us how anxious she was about us. She said she knew we loved her, and that we were good children, and very obedient and loving, but that was not enough. Mother thought we were quite old enough now to come to the Lord Jesus for ourselves, and to take Jesus for our own Saviour, and she could not rest till she knew we had done this.

"Oh, darling children," she exclaimed, "it is hard enough to leave you in England and be parted for several years, but how dreadful it would be if we were parted for ever!"

Mother said a great deal more than this, but I cannot remember more just now. Melville

and I sat still for a minute or two after mother had gone, thinking about it.

"I believe mother thinks," said Melville, "that if we had died last night we should not have gone to heaven. I never thought about that before."

I began to wonder very much how I could come to Jesus. I felt as if I would do anything to know that I had come to Him. I thought I would ask mother about it, the very next time that she and I were alone together.





CHAPTER V.

WHISKER.

E are to stay in this beautiful house till the end of the week, and we are all so glad except mother, who we are giving Miss Howard.

thinks we are giving Miss Howard a great deal of trouble. But Miss Howard says it is no trouble at all, and that she likes very much to have us here.

We cannot go back to Ravenscliffe yet, because, though the house was saved, all the furniture became so wet with the rain, that it cannot be used again until it has been well dried. The beds and mattresses and pillows and blankets are all full of water, and will have to be baked in front of enormous fires before we can sleep on them again.

This morning, Miss Howard gave me "Little

Olive," the book she had promised when she met me on the road that day. I was just going out for a walk when she gave it, so I took it with me to read out of doors.

Melville and the children had gone down to the sea, and I was going to look for them. And as I walked slowly down the path which led through the wood to the sea, I read the little book.

It was so strange to see my own name in print; it seemed just as if it was about me!

The little Olive in the book was going along a road, when she came up to a beautiful City. The City was made of gold, bright and shining, and little Olive wanted very much to go inside it. So she knocked at the gate. A beautiful angel came to open it, but he told her that he could not let her in. He said that all the little children in the City had pure white dresses on. And then he showed her, that her frock was covered with black spots, and he told her that, unless it was quite white and clean, she could not come inside the gate.

Then the gate was shut, and Olive went away. She thought she would wash her frock, and make it quite clean, and when she had done this, she went back to the gate.

The same angel opened it, and he asked her

why she had come again. Then Olive told him that she had washed her dress, and that it was quite clean now; but the angel looked very sad, and showed her a great many dirty marks which she had not noticed before, and told her that she could not come inside with one stain on her dress.

Little Olive went away, and sat down and cried. And then some one came up to her, and asked her what was the matter. It was Jesus, and Olive told Him all about it, how she wanted so very much to go into the beautiful City, and how she could not go in, because her dress was so dirty.

Then Jesus said to her, "Shall I wash your dress for you, little Olive?" So He washed her dress, and made it quite pure and white, and then He carried her all the way to the City.

The angel was so glad to see who had brought her, and said, "Come in, little Olive, there is room for you in the beautiful City."

And then the little book goes on to say what the story means. The beautiful City means Heaven, and we cannot go into Heaven unless our hearts are quite pure and white. Every naughty thing we do is like a black mark on our souls, and no black mark can go inside the gates. And then the book says, that we cannot make ourselves ready for Heaven—that would be like Olive trying to wash her own frock. It says, if we want to get inside the gates of the beautiful City, we must ask Jesus to wash us in His blood, for only His blood can cleanse the black stains of sin.

It is a very dear little book. When I had finished reading it, I went behind a tree in the wood, and knelt down, and said the little prayer which the book asked me to say, "Lord Jesus, wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

When I got down to the shore, I found Mrs. McBride, and Emma, and the children making castles in the sand. They were putting in white stones for the windows, and making little paths and garden beds, and a wall of sand all round.

Melville was sitting by himself on one of the rocks. "Olive," he said, when I came up, did you think of Whisker?"

Whisker is our dear little cat; we all love her very much, but no one loves her so much as Melville. We brought her with us from London in a basket, and she follows us about, just like a dog. When the children go out for a walk, she always goes with them, but when Melville is there, she does not seem to care for any one but him.

"Isn't Whisker at Ravenscliffe, Melville?" I

"No," he said, "she wasn't there when Mrs. McBride went this morning. Mrs. McBride called her, and she never came, and Mrs. McIntire said she had not seen her since the fire.

"Oh, Melville," I asked, "do you think she is burnt? She would not be in the stable, would she?"

"I don't know," he answered. "I thought she always slept by the kitchen fire; but Mrs. McBride says, old Colin took a great fancy to her, and she thinks that she must have been sleeping in his room."

We both felt very sorry, and Melville almost cried, he was so very fond of Whisker.

"Shall we go and look for her again, Olive?" he said. So we asked Mrs. McBride to tell mother where we had gone, and we set off for Ravenscliffe.

The ruins were still smoking a little, and looked very black and dismal. Mrs. McIntire and her daughter were spreading their clothes in the sunshine to dry them, and sweeping the dirt out of the house. They were very pleased to see us, and kissed us, and cried very much whenever they talked of old Colin.

Then we asked for Whisker, but they had not seen her anywhere. "Perhaps she has run away in the woods somewhere," Mrs. McIntire said.

But Melville shook his head. Whisker never ran away from home, and it was a long time now; the fire was on Saturday night, and this was Monday morning.

"She must be burnt, Olive," he said to me, as we came out together. "Poor little Whisker, we shall never see her again!"

But, just then, I thought I heard a little cry. "Listen, Melville! what is that?"

"It's Whisker!" said Melville; "I'm sure it's Whisker," and he ran off in the direction of the cry.

He was just going through the gate of the field near the sea, when I ran after him, and stopped him, saying. "Oh, Melville, did you forget what mother said? don't you remember, she told us never to go this way?"

"Oh, yes, Olive," he said. "I'm so glad you reminded me; but I'm sure Whisker is there. Listen!"

Yes, we could hear a faint little mew, and it came from the direction of the sea.

At last we agreed that Melville should ask Mrs. McIntire if she would go and look for Whisker, as mother did not like us to go near the rocks.

Mrs. McIntire was so kind that she went at once, and we stood by the gate and waited.



IN HER ARMS WAS OUR DEAR LITTLE WHISKER,

At last, after a long time, Mrs. McIntire returned, and in her arms was our dear little Whisker.

Oh, how she purred when she saw Melville again. "Look at her, poor wee thing," said Mrs. McIntire; "she has been in the fire and got scorched, sure enough!"

She showed us that Whisker's hair and tail were singed and burnt. She must have been sleeping in old Colin's room, and have waked just in time to leap through the flames and get off. And then she must have been so frightened, that she ran away as fast as she could, till she got to the edge of the rocks, and could not run any farther.

Poor little Whisker, she was very hungry, for she had had nothing to eat for nearly two days. Mrs. McIntire took her into the kitchen, and gave her such a good meal, fish and bread and new milk, and all sorts of good things.

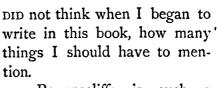
Everybody came to look at her, and to stroke and to feel how good her hair was think we shall love he

We did not bring her the Lang-holme, Miss Howard's house, for we thought she would not be happy in such a large house, and Mrs. McIntire promised to take great care of her till we came back to Ravenscliffe.



CHAPTER VI.

THE PICNIC.



Ravenscliffe is such a quiet place, that I thought all the days would be alike, and that I should very seldom have anything fresh

to say. But we had not been there long before the fire happened, and I had to write about that, and now what took place last week was even more dreadful than the fire, at least it made us much more unhappy.

Mother has gone to spend the day at Langholme with Miss Howard, so we are having no lessons, and I mean to write a long, long piece of my story.

We came back to Ravenscliffe on the Saturday after the fire. Mrs. McIntire and her daughter were very glad to see us, and Whisker was more glad than any one. She ran out to meet us, and purred and rubbed herself against us, and followed Melville wherever he went; even at dinner she sat on his shoulder.

It was beautiful weather after we came back, and we were out of doors nearly all day.

Mother took us once to see the wonderful rocks. We held fast to her hand, and peeped at them, but we were very glad she was with us, for the path was so narrow, and looked so dangerous, that we should not like to have gone alone. When Melville and I went out by ourselves, we always went to a place up the shore much nearer Langholme, where there were no high rocks, but where there was plenty of nice smooth sand.

After we had been back at Ravenscliffe for about a week, Melville's birthday came. He had such a great many presents; we all of us gave him something. I could not think for a long time what to get for him, because there are no shops here. We have not seen a single shop since we left London. Mother sends for all the things that she wants to a little town seven miles away, the town where Mrs. McBride's

home is. A carrier brings them here every Monday morning.

So I was very puzzled what to do about Melville's birthday.

But one day when I was at Langholme, and I was alone with Miss Howard, I asked her if she thought she could keep a secret, and she said she thought she could. So then I told her about Melville's birthday, and asked her what she thought I could do about it.

Miss Howard sat thinking for a minute or two, and then she asked me if I knew how to knit. I told her I could knit a little, but not very well. Then she asked me if I did not think a nice warm pair of cuffs for the winter would be a useful present for Melville; and she said that if I liked she would show me how to knit them for him. I thought it would be very nice, and Melville would be so pleased if I made them myself; so Miss Howard went to a drawer, and brought out some soft grey wool and white wool, and some knitting-needles, and let me begin at once.

The cuffs were quite finished before I left Langholme. Miss Howard used to let me sit in her room to knit them, so that Melville might never get to know that I was doing them.

They looked so pretty when they were finished, and mother gave me some thin white paper to wrap them in, and some narrow pink ribbon with which to tie them up, and then I hid them at the bottom of my drawer, till Melville's birthday came.

I shall never forget that birthday as long as I live. It was a very beautiful day at the beginning of April. I got up very early, before Melville or any of the children were awake, and went out and gathered flowers, to make the breakfast table pretty. I put a wreath of primroses, and violets, and ferns, round Melville's plate, and decorated everything on the table with flowers.

Then mother came downstairs with Melville's presents, which she arranged on the table near his plate, and then I brought my little parcel, and laid it upon a fern-leaf close to the others.

We had locked Melville into his room, that he might not come down till we were ready for him; but, when all was done, I went to let him out, and to bring him downstairs. He was so pleased when he saw how pretty the table was, and then he looked at all his presents, and he liked the cuffs very much, and put them on, and mother said they fitted him beautifully.

Then mother told us that it was such a fine

day that she was going to let us have a picnic by the sea-shore. We might all go, even the baby-boy, and we would take our dinner with us, and eat it on the sands. We were so pleased that we almost danced for joy, and Melville said he was sure he had never had such a happy birthday before.

After breakfast, mother and Mrs. McBride packed two large baskets with all the things for dinner. Everything was quite ready in Mrs. McIntire's larder; she had prepared it all the day before, but mother had not told us anything about it, because she thought that if, after all, it was a wet day, we should be so much disappointed.

So the basket did not take very long to pack. We kept running in and out whilst they were doing it, but we felt too happy to stay very long in the house, so we went outside and had a run on the Langholme Road.

Whilst we were there, we met Miss Howard's man-servant riding on a horse, with a letter and a parcel in his hand. We looked after him, and saw that he was stopping at Ravenscliffe, so we ran back to see why he had come.

The letter was for mother, such a kind letter from Miss Howard, asking mother and Melville and me to go and spend the evening at Langholme after our picnic was over. Mother had told her about the picnic when she had seen her the day before. The parcel was for Melville, such a pretty book, full of beautiful pictures and splendid stories.

"Isn't the Primrose Lady kind?" said Melville, as he opened it, for when she was not in the room he still called Miss Howard "the Primrose Lady." We sat down quietly after this to look at all the pictures in Melville's book until baby awoke from his morning sleep, and then mother said we might all get ready to start.

Stella was put into the pony carriage, and Mrs. McBride, and baby, and the little boys got into it, and mother drove them and the two large baskets down to the sea, whilst Emma and Melville and I walked after them as fast as we could.

As soon as we got down to the shore, Mrs. McBride took the pony out of the carriage, and fastened him to some palings in a green field very near the sea, and here he nibbled the grass, and seemed very happy and contented.

Then we began to get dinner ready. We spread the table-cloth on the short grass, and put a stone on each corner, to prevent it blowing away. Then we gathered fern-leaves for plates, and put the cakes and the pies upon them and

decorated them all with flowers. Then Mrs. McBride said that we must make mother a cup of tea; she had brought a kettle and a teapot, and all she wanted now was a fire.

Oh, how we enjoyed making that fire; we ran about all round gathering dry wood and sticks, and Mrs. McBride put the kettle on two large stones, and soon we had a beautiful blaze.

When the kettle boiled we all came to dinner; mother said grace, and we began to eat, and very hungry we all were with the sea air.

Whilst we were eating our dinner, Mrs. McBride told us of a wonderful cave, about two miles farther up the coast. She went to see it once when she was a girl. About a hundred years ago, some pirates used to live in this cave and keep all their stolen goods there. They used to put up lights at night to draw the ships towards the shore, and then, when the ships ran upon the rocks, they used to plunder them, and murder the sailors, and carry off everything they could find to this cave.

Mrs. McBride said it was a very strange curious cave, with a very narrow opening into it, but as large as a house inside.





CHAPTER VII.

A SEARCH.

FTER dinner we helped Mrs. McBride and Emma to pack the baskets, and then mother said that if we liked we might take a walk along the shore.

About a mile farther on there was the little rocky path which led up through Miss Howard's park to

her house, and mother said she thought it would be nice for us to go to Langholme that way.

Mother could not come with us, for she was obliged to go back to Ravenscliffe before she went to Langholme. So she said she would stay by the sea with Mrs. McBride and the children for about an hour, and then she would drive them home, before it began to grow chilly,

and come to Langholme by the high road soon after.

Just as Melville and I were starting, Charlie begged very hard to come just a little way with us, and mother said he might come if I would see that he turned back in time to get to her and Mrs. McBride before they left the shore.

We had a very happy afternoon. About half a mile farther on we found a flat, rocky piece of the shore, full of beautiful little pools of salt water. These pools were quite alive with different kinds of creatures, sea anemones spreading out their pretty pink arms, tiny fishes darting in and out of the seaweed, and funny little crabs running backwards and forwards and sideways from one pool to another.

Melville and Charlie and I each chose a pool for ourselves, and then began to stock it with as many creatures as we could find, and filled it with all the most lovely bits of green and pink and yellow and black seaweed which we could gather on the shore.

But as we were doing this and were all so happy, Charlie slipped upon a rock which was covered with slippery green sea-weed, and grazed his knee and cut his hand. He cried a little and seemed very miserable, so I said I would take him back to mother at once.

"It's a long way for you to go, Olive, and then to come back alone," said Melville; "I'll come with you."

"Oh, no," I said, "don't do that," for I wanted him so much to have a happy birthday, and he was just getting his pool to look so pretty; "I'll take Charlie back to mother, Melville, and then I can go to Ravenscliffe with them, and drive to Langholme with mother."

Melville thanked me very much, and said that would be very nice; he would stop on the shore about an hour longer, and then go up to Langholme by the rocky path, and meet us there at tea-time.

So I turned back with Charlie, and we arrived just as Mrs. McBride was putting Stella into the carriage. Mother was very glad that I had brought Charlie back, and thought that Melville and I had arranged it very well.

We drove back to Ravenscliffe, and then, after mother had written one or two letters, we set off for Langholme. Miss Howard seemed very glad to see us, and asked us if we were too tired to walk round the garden before we took off our hats.

But we were not at all tired, and were very pleased to go. Two nice ladies who were staying there came with us, and we enjoyed it very much; it was such a lovely afternoon, and though the flowers were not quite so fine as they were a fortnight before, still they were very beautiful.

When we came back to the house we asked if Melville had come, but no one had seen him; so mother told me to run down the rocky path to the sea, and to tell him that it was time to come in.

I ran down very quickly, and was soon on the shore, but I could not see Melville. Then I went a long way down the shore, calling "Melville, Melville, Melville!" at the top of my voice, but no one answered me, and though I peeped behind every rock, and looked into every little cave, I could not see anything of him.

The tide was coming in fast, so I was obliged to turn back.

"Melville must be somewhere in the Park, mother," I said, when I got back to Langholme; "I can't find him anywhere on the shore."

It was beginning to get dark now, and I could see that mother was becoming anxious about Melville. She went all over the park and garden and field looking for him, and Miss Howard went with her.

"Don't vou think he must be on the shore

still?" said Miss Howard, as we came back to the house.

"Oh, no," said mother, "I don't think so; you looked for him there, didn't you, Olive?"

But mother turned very white as she said it.

"I'm not afraid of the rocks," she went on;

"Melville always does what I tell him, and I told him never to go that way."

"Oh, yes, mother," I said, "I'm quite, quite sure Melville has not gone the Ravenscliffe way."

"There are no rocks the other way, are there, Miss Howard?" asked mother.

"Oh, no," said Miss Howard; "at least they are not at all dangerous, for they are so high and steep that Melville could not possibly climb to the top of them, and there is no way of getting to the top from the sea-shore; he would be obliged to keep underneath them."

"Then I suppose that way is quite safe," said mother. "I told the children that they might go as far as they liked in that direction."

Miss Howard did not answer her; I thought she had not heard what mother said. She walked on very fast, and ran upstairs as soon as she got into the house, as if she did not want to speak to mother just then.

Mother went into the dining-room to see it

Melville could possibly be there, but I waited in the hall.

Presently Miss Howard came downstairs, and went quickly out of the house, and several of the servants and of the people who were staying in the house went with her. I was just going to follow them, when I saw mother coming out of the dining-room.

"Where are they going, Olive?" mother asked me. "Do you know what they are afraid of? Did you hear them say?"

"No, mother," I said; "Miss Howard did not speak to me; she only went past with those other people."

"Let us go with them, Olive," said mother.

She was very white, and I could feel that she was trembling very much as I took hold of her arm, but her voice was calm and quiet.

It was quite dark now, there was no moon and the sky was very cloudy, and it was sodark under the trees that we could not find the rocky path for some time, and even when we found it, it was very difficult to keep in it.

We stumbled along for some time, and then we got into the bushes, and could not find our way at all.

"We must go back, Olive, I think," said mother, at last. But just then I saw a light.

- "Look, mother," I said, "what is that?"
- "Yes," she said, "it is a light; let us go in that direction!"

So we went on together, feeling our way from one tree to another, and keeping the light in view. When we got nearer we found that the light was in a cottage window.

"It's the cottage near the sea, mother," I said. "Now we shall find our way; I saw it this afternoon. There is a gate somewhere here."

We had come up to a stone wall, which stopped us from going any farther, and for a long time we walked up and down and could not find the gate.

At last mother called out that she had found it, so we opened it and went up the path to the cottage, to ask if they knew whether Miss Howard and the other people were down on the shore.





CHAPTER VIII.

THE BUGLE BLAST.

COTHER and I went up to the cottage door, and knocked four or five times, but no one came.

We were just going away when mother said she thought she heard a noise inside. I put my ear to the door and listened, and could

distinctly hear some one coming downstairs, very slowly, step by step.

It seemed a very long time before the person got to the bottom step, and then we heard an old shaky voice on the other side of the door asking who we were and what we wanted.

Mother called out that we wanted to find some people who had gone down to the shore,

and then after a minute or two the door was opened, and we saw a very old woman leaning on a stick. She asked us again what we wanted, and mother shouted it into her ear as loudly as she could. But still she could not make the old woman hear. She told us that we must come again, for all the folks were out now looking for the "puir bairn" that was lost on the shore. And then the old woman shut the door again.

"Oh, Olive," said mother, "where can they be gone, and where can Melville be? O God, take care of my poor boy," she prayed aloud, as we went out of the gate.

"Mother, I'm sure God will," I said. "Don't be frightened, mother, I am sure God will keep Melville safe."

But by this time we had gone down the little sandy path which led from the cottage to the shore. Mother was walking first, and I was following her, when she suddenly stopped short, with a cry which I shall never forget. She turned round, and holding me in her arms, she sobbed:

"Oh, Olive, Olive, I know now what Miss Howard was so afraid of; the tide is in! Yes, the tide is in, and Miss Howard said that farther on the rocks were so high that it would be impossible for him to climb them. Oh, my poor, poor little Melville!"

I felt very frightened when mother said this, for I remembered that even when I was down on the shore the tide was very high, and I had seen it beating against the cliffs about half a mile farther up the coast. It was this which had made me turn round, and feel sure Melville could not be there.

- "Are you going no farther, mother?" I said.
- "We can't go farther, darling," said mother, quite calmly again, "the sands are covered now; I nearly walked into the water. Miss Howard cannot be down here. I wonder where she can be."
- "Mother," I said, "look in that direction; don't you see a light moving? I think they must be there! Or can it be a light in a cottage window?"

We stood still, and watched the light. Yes, it certainly was moving.

"It seems very high up, Olive," said mother.
"I think it must be at the top of the cliffs.
How can we get there? do you know?"

I told her that we must go back to the high road, which we had crossed close by the cottage, and we must go along that road for half a mile, and then we should find a stile, and a path leading to the top of the cliffs. I had been there once with Miss Howard, when I was staying at Langholme.

So mother and I went along as fast as we could. It was not so dark here as it had been under the trees, and we could see the white road quite clearly, and the path leading down to the cliffs.

It was a wild, stormy night. The sky was covered with clouds, and the wind was blowing fiercely. We had the wind in our faces as we went along this road, so that it was a great struggle to get on at all. But mother pressed on with all the strength she had, and I followed her as well as I could.

We had lost sight of the lantern for some time, but just as we were getting over the stile to go on the cliff path, we saw it coming towards us. There must have been quite thirty people following the lantern, and they had several ropes with them, and one gentleman had a bugle in his hand.

Miss Howard caught sight of mother, and came up to her and gave her her arm. She told mother that now she must come back with her to Langholme, for they had done all that possibly could be done till the tide went out again. They had been up and down the top of

the cliffs, blowing the bugle, listening to hear if there was any answer from below, and ready to let down the ropes at once if they heard Melville's voice.

But they could hear nothing, for the wind was so high that even if he had answered them, the sound would have been lost.

"Let us try once more," said Captain Hendrie, a gentleman who was staying at Langholme, and who had the bugle in his hand. "Now, all of you, be quiet, please."

He went to the edge of the cliff, and blew the bugle. Then he waited, and we all listened, but we heard no sound except the roaring of the waves and the howling of the wind.

Then Captain Hendrie blew another blast, and this time mother fancied that she heard the sound of a voice below, though the wind was so high that it was impossible for her to be sure of it. So Captain Hendrie blew again, and this time a white sea-bird, whose nest was just below, flew out with a wild cry, frightened at the sound of the bugle.

"It must have been the bird that we heard before, I think," said the captain, "but we will try again!"

He blew once more, but this time there was no answer, and we all felt sure that it was the bird, and with sorrowful hearts we turned back to Langholme.

Then Miss Howard sent one of her servants to Ravenscliffe, to tell them not to sit up for us, as mother and I would stop at Langholme all night.

We went back to the house, and Miss Howard took us upstairs. She wanted mother very much to go to bed and to get a little rest, for she told her that all had been done that could possibly be done until the morning, and she said that mother looked so very tired and worn out, and she was afraid that she would be quite ill, if she did not lie down a little.

But mother *could* not lie down. She sat with me for a little time over the bedroom fire, and then she walked up and down the room, up and down the room, till I thought she would have fallen, she looked so tired.

I shall never forget mother's face that night; it was so strange, and so unlike herself. She did not cry any more, and she was quite calm, but she was so very, very white, and looked so sorrowful, that it made me cry to look at her. Every time that she walked past me, I could see that her lips were moving, and I knew that she was praying. I believe she prayed almost all night.

Miss Howard came in several times during the night, and once she brought mother a cup of cocoa, and made her drink it, and another time she told me to lie down on the bed, and covered me with a shawl. But every time she came in, she had some kind sympathising word to say, to show us how much she felt for us.

Mother has said since, that she shall always now think of Miss Howard when she hears these two lines, which come in one of mother's favourite hymns:

"A heart at leisure from itself,
To soothe and sympathise."

I hope so much that I may be like her some day. Mother says it is when people live very near to Jesus that they get so unselfish, and are always glad when other people are glad, and sorry when other people are sorry.

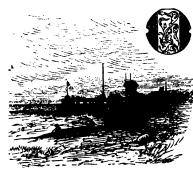
I wish so very much that I loved Jesus as mother and Miss Howard do!





CHAPTER IX.

ON THE SEA-SHORE.



H, what a long night that was! The hours seemed as if they would never pass away. There was a clock on the mantelshelf, and the hands moved

round so slowly, that sometimes I thought it must have stopped altogether.

I fell asleep once or twice, but only for a short time, and, whenever I woke, mother was pacing up and down the room.

Every now and then she went to the window and drew back the curtains, and looked out to see if any light had come in the sky. But it was a dark, wild night; the wind was howling in the chimney, and the rain was beating against the windows.

About five o'clock I fell asleep for a fewminutes, though I had been trying very hard to keep awake. Then I woke up quite suddenly, and heard a door shut. I opened my eyes, and saw that mother was gone.

I jumped out of bed, and drew back the curtains from the window, and I saw that it was beginning to get light. Mother had gone to look for Melville; I felt sure of that.

I put on my hat, and wrapped a shawl round me, and went downstairs as fast as I could.

In the hall I found Captain Hendrie, and Miss Howard, and all the people who had been out the night before. They were all starting again to look for Melville.

"Where is your mother, Olive?" said Miss Howard. "Won't you stop with her, dear?"

"Mother has gone, Miss Howard," I said. "Haven't you seen her?"

"Oh, dear," said Miss Howard, "she must have gone down to the shore. I am so sorry. Can't anybody stop her? I had no idea that she had gone out. Oh, she must not go alone. Come, let us go after her as fast as we can. Oh, dear, I wish we had gone before her!"

I could see that Miss Howard was very much afraid of what mother would find on the shore, and the thought of it made me tremble very much indeed.

But there was no time to think about it then. We all went down the rocky path as fast as we could, and tried to overtake mother. Some of them ran very fast, but no one went so quickly as mother.

When we got as far as the cottage, we could see her before us on the shore, fighting against the wind and the rain, and running on so fast that no one could get up to her.

I never knew before that mother could run so quickly; it was wonderful to see how she still kept so far in front of us. I suppose it was because she loved Melville so very much.

Then she went round a ridge of rocks, and we could see her no more.

"I am afraid we shall not overtake her," said Miss Howard. "Oh, may God help her, and comfort her, poor thing!"

Miss Howard was crying very much, and I cried too, though I hardly knew what she meant. But I felt quite sure that she must think that something very dreadful had happened to Melville, and that she was afraid of mother's finding it out, when she was alone.

It can only have been five minutes after this that we turned round the ridge of rocks and saw mother again, and yet it seemed more like an hour. We wanted to get on so fast, and it seemed as if our feet would not carry us.

Captain Hendrie got there first, for when we came close to the corner, Miss Howard took hold of my arm and drew me back a little, as if she dreaded turning it.

But, to our astonishment, no sooner did Captain Hendrie reach the place from which he could see mother, than he turned round to all the people who were following, and taking off his hat, he gave a long and hearty cheer.

What had he seen?

Oh, how Miss Howard and I hurried on now! "Look there!" said Captain Hendrie, in a very glad voice, as we came up to where he was standing. "Look there!" and he pointed to mother.

She was coming towards us, and we saw (but I could hardly believe my eyes) that her arm was round Melville's neck, and her hand was resting on his shoulder.

Yes, she had found her boy! Melville was safe! Oh, it seemed too good to be true!

We ran quickly to meet them, and mother said, in a choking voice.

"I've found him; I've found my darling boy. You must all of you thank God so much for me."

But mother could not say anything more. Her hand dropped from Melville's shoulder, and if Miss Howard had not held her, she would have fallen backwards on the ground. Mother was so worn out with all she had gone through, that she had fainted, and it was a long time before she seemed to know any of us again.

We were so glad when at last she opened her eyes and smiled at Melville.

Then she tried to walk, but her legs trembled so much that she could not stand, and she was obliged to sit down again. So Miss Howard sent one of the servants home to bring the little pony carriage, in which she often drove on the sands, and mother waited until it came, leaning against Miss Howard, but holding Melville's hand fast in her own.

"Where have you been all night, my child?" said Miss Howard, as soon as mother began to be a little better.

"Up there, in the cave," said Melville, pointing to a place about halfway up the cliffs. "I got up there when the tide came in, and then I couldn't get out again till just now.

But, oh, I did think of mother; I knew she would think I was drowned." And for the first time Melville began to cry.

We were very glad to get back to Langholme, for mother seemed very exhausted, and Melville was cold and tired and hungry.

Miss Howard wanted mother to go to bed at once, but she seemed as if she could not let Melville go out of her sight.

So breakfast was made ready, and they both looked so much better when they had some. And then Melville told us what had happened to him, and how he had spent the night. I am not going to write it down here, because I want Melville to write it himself for me. I do not know whether he will, because he always laughs so much about my red book; but I shall ask him some wet day, when he has nothing else to do.

Mother was so grateful to Captain Hendrie, and Miss Howard, and all the kind people, who had taken so much pains to find Melville.

After breakfast we drove back to Ravenscliffe. Miss Howard wanted us very much to stop, but mother was anxious to get home to the children, and to let them know that Melville was safe.

But they had heard the news before we got

there, for one of the people who had been with us on the shore had run over to Ravenscliffe to tell them. So, when we got near the house, we saw them all coming to meet us.

Little Whisker was with them. Mrs. McBride said that Whisker had been so miserable the night before, she might have known that something was wrong with Melville. She did nothing but cry, and run about from one room to another, and jump upon the chairs and off them again, as if she could not rest anywhere. Now that Melville was home she was quite contented again, and purred and rubbed herself against him every few minutes.

As soon as we got home, mother took Melville and me into her own room, and we knelt down, and she thanked God so very, very much for hearing her prayer, and keeping Melville safe. And then she prayed that the life which God had spared might be given to Him, and that from this time Melville might indeed become one of God's own children, and spend the rest of his life in God's service. I never heard mother pray so earnestly before.

Oh, I do hope that all her prayers for Melville and for me will be answered.



CHAPTER X.

MELVILLE'S STORY.

in her red book about my night in the cave.

I am sure I don't know how to write it; and she has made me promise not to read a word of what she has written, which I think is a great shame, and even mother says it is But it rains so fast to-day that we

too bad! But it rains so fast to-day that we can't go out, so I must do my best.

Well, I suppose Olive has told all about our picnic, and about Charlie hurting himself, and how she took him back to mother. It was very kind of her to go back, wasn't it? Perhaps I ought to have gone with her. If I had, I should not have got into trouble.

When Olive and Charlie had gone, I did not care about my pool any more; it was no fun doing it alone. I put in the little crab I had just caught, and then I sat down on one of the rocks and watched the waves.

When I was sitting there I remembered about the cave of which Mrs. McBride told us. I thought what fun it would be to go and look for it! I wanted so much to see where the smugglers lived, and what sort of a place it was inside, and I thought that I should have plenty of time to get there. It would take mother and Olive a long time to go back to Ravenscliffe, and wait till mother had written her letters, and then to go on to Langholme. I thought I should have a great deal of time to spare.

So I ran along the shore, and passed the rocky path which goes up to Langholme, and went on as quickly as I could to look for the cave. I thought that I saw it a great many times, but then, when I came up to the place, it was only quite a tiny cave, and I felt sure it could not be the right one.

But, at last, I went round a ridge of rocks, and got into a little bay, and then, halfway up the cliffs, I saw the cave. It was a hard climb to get up to it, but I felt very glad that I had come.

Oh, it was a funny place! There was a long dark passage leading into it, and I had no light, and did not much like going alone. I had to crawl on my hands and knees, the passage was so low, and I did not know who might be inside. When I got to the end of the passage I felt that I was in a big room, though I could not see anything for a long time. But when my eyes got used to the dark, I could see that just a little light was coming in through a hole at the top of the cave. Then I saw that it was a great, big place, quite as large as the nursery at Ravenscliffe, and the queerest place you can imagine.

I thought it must have been great fun to have been a smuggler, and to have lived there, only of course I would never have robbed the ships and murdered the poor sailors. Then I wondered at which end of the cave the smugglers used to sleep, and I walked all round it, and found some curious little shelves cut in the rock, where I expect they kept their cups and saucers.

I must have been a good long time in the cave. I don't know how long, because I have not got a watch. Father says he will give me a watch on my next birthday, and then I shall always know how the time goes.

But I began to be hungry, so I thought it must be tea-time. I crawled out of the cave, and then climbed down the cliff, but it was much harder work coming down than going up, and I nearly slipped several times. At last I got down on the sands, and then I saw that the tide was coming in. It was a good many yards off the cliffs yet, so I was not at all frightened.

But I forgot that the ridge of rocks at the end of the bay struck out so far into the sea; I never thought of that till I got up to it, and then I found that I could not get past. I took off my shoes and stockings and tried to wade, but I found that I should soon be out of my depth, so I went back as well as I could.

I did not know what to do. The cliffs were so high and so steep, I could not possibly climb them. I tried in one place, but, after I had gone a long way, I saw the cliff going up as straight as a house over my head, so I had to come down again.

Then I walked all along the bay, to see if it was better anywhere else. But I could not find a better place. Then I tried to get out of the bay at the other end, but I soon found that the water was quite as deep there.

I saw now that the sea was coming up very fast, and that it would soon be up to the cliffs

all along the bay. There was nothing for me to do but to get into the smugglers' cave. It was not half such fun being there now!

I sat at the opening of the cave for some time, and soon I saw that the sea had come quite up to the cliffs, and then I knew that there was no chance of my getting out again till the sea went down.

And then I began to think of mother, and how anxious she would be. I knew she would be looking for me all over, and when she saw that the tide was up to the rocks, she would think that I was drowned. Then I asked God to comfort mother, and not to let it make her ill.

Well, after a time it began to rain so fast, that I was obliged to creep inside the cave for shelter, and then I felt more miserable than ever. I would hear nothing but the waves dashing against the cliffs, and the wind whist-ling through the cave, and I was very cold and hungry.

Then I thought that I should not like to have been a smuggler at all, and that it was much nicer to live in a house than a cave. I wondered whether the smugglers stopped up the hole at the top of the cave when they lived there; it made the place so very cold.

Soon it began to get dark, and I could not see anything.

Oh, it seemed such a long night! I went to sleep once or twice, but not for long. I was too cold and hungry to sleep.

Once I woke up, and thought I heard some music, and I gave a great shout to see if any one was there. Mother says it was the bugle that I heard, and that she was sure that she heard my voice, but nobody else did, and they thought it was a sea-gull which flew out just after.

I heard the sea-gull too; her nest was just at the top of the cave. I didn't know mother was there, just over my head!

Well, it seemed a long time before morning came; and at last, when I saw it was beginning to get light, I crept out of the cave.

Oh, I was glad to see that the sea had gone down! I climbed down the cliff, and then I had no sooner got to the bottom, than who should I see but mother. She was coming to meet me, with her arms held out for me to run into them. Dear mother, she had run all the way that she might be the very first to find me!

And then—but I suppose Olive has told all the rest. Only Olive could not tell half how

thankful I was, and Olive does not know how much I thought about when I was in the cave.

I can't write it down here, but I told mother about it that night when she came to tuck me up in bed and to put my candle out. And mother gave me a kiss, and told me that it was worth all the trouble that she had gone through to know what I had just told her.





CHAPTER XI.

A TALK WITH MOTHER.

AST Sunday evening mother took me into her own room, and said she wanted to have a little talk with me alone. She said she could not rest any longer until she knew that I had come to Jesus myself, and had taken Him to be my Saviour.

Then mother told me, that on that dreadful night when Melville was lost, as she had paced up and down the bedroom at Langholme, her one thought had been, "Is Melville's soul safe? Has Melville ever taken Jesus for his Saviour?"

Mother could not get this thought out of her mind, and she prayed very earnestly that, if Melville's life were spared, this terrible night might make him decide to come to Jesus at once. Then mother told me how wonderfully her prayer had been answered, for when Melville was in the dark cave alone he had really come to Jesus, and mother said she believed he was trying now to do everything he could to please his Saviour.

"But little Olive," said mother, "what of you? You are quite old enough now to think for yourself, and to choose for yourself. I have often brought you to Jesus in my arms when you were a little baby, but now I want you to come to Him yourself."

"But I don't know how to come, mother," I said. "If Jesus was at Langholme, I would run there as fast as I could. But Jesus is in heaven, and I don't know how to come to Him."

"You have not to go so far as Langholme, darling," said mother. "Jesus is in this room, close to you. He hears us talking together."

"Then how shall I come to Him, mother? I do want to come, if I only knew the way."

And then mother told me a story.

It was about a boy, whose name was Willie. He had a very kind, loving father, who was always so good to him, and gave him everything he could to make him happy.

But Willie was a bad boy, and did not love his father, and one night he got out of bed when every one was asleep, and ran away from home. He took some of his father's money, and with that he went a long, long way off; and then, when he had spent it all, Willie began to be very miserable. He had nothing to eat, and his clothes were quite ragged, and he had no one to love him or to comfort him.

Oh, how often Willie thought of his father and of his father's home, and how happy he used to be there. He would have given anything to be back again, but he did not like to go. He thought his father would be so very angry with him.

Willie did not know that his father was looking for him all over; he did not know that every time there was a knock at the door the father went himself to open it, to see if it could be Willie who had come back.

Well, after a time, Willie thought he would go to his father, and ask him to forgive him. He was too hungry and wretched to hold out any longer. He had got a few little bits of work to do, but they had hardly kept him from starving, and he said to himself, "I will go back, and ask my father to forgive me."

And so Willie went home, and what do you think he found? He found his father looking out for him. As soon as he got near the house his father saw him coming. He had been

watching for Willie from the window, and he saw him coming over the hill. And his father ran out to meet him, and put his arms round his neck, and kissed him.

Then Willie said, "Father, will you forgive me?" And the father forgave him at once, and took him home, and got new clothes for him, and carried his rags away, and gave him some good food, and did all he could to show how glad he was to get his boy back again.

Oh, how surprised and glad Willie was, and how much it made him love his father!

And, mother said, Willie never ran away again, but he stopped at home, and did all he could to please his dear, kind father, who had been so good to him.

When mother had finished the story about Willie, she said, "Little Olive, do you know who is like that kind father?"

I asked her if she meant Jesus.

And mother said, "Yes, Jesus is like the father, and you are like Willie, darling. You are a long way off from home, and you haven't loved Jesus as you ought, and you have often grieved Him, and disobeyed Him. But now you want to come to Him, as Willie came to his father. Don't you, Olive?"

"Yes, mother," I said, "I do want to come."

"And Jesus wants you to come," said mother.

"Do you know He is looking out for you, and wondering how soon you will come? Ever since you were a little baby He has been watching for you; all the time we have been here at Ravenscliffe He has been watching for you. Sometimes He thought you were coming; you seemed very near coming, but you never came. Just after the fire you thought about coming to Him, and set off a little way on the road. But you never came. And now He is looking for you again. Will you come to Him, Olive?"

"Oh, mother, I want to come so much," I said, "if you will tell me how."

"Dear little Olive," said mother, "I want you to stop in this room after I have gone away, and to shut the door. And then I want you to think: 'I am alone in the room with Jesus. I cannot see Jesus, but He can see me. He is as close to me as mother was,—looking at me,—listening to me.' And then, Olive, I want you to come to Him at once,—to come to Him as Willie came to his father,—to ask Him to forgive you, because He has died for you,—and to wash your sins away in His blood.

"Oh, Olive, how Jesus longs for you to come! He came to be a poor Man on earth, that He might save you. He let

Him, and laugh at Him, and ill-treat Him, that He might save you. He was put to death,—oh, such a dreadful death on the cross, that He might save you. And now He is longing for you to come to Him, and ask Him to be your Saviour. Will you come, little Olive?"

"Yes, mother," I said, "I will come now." So mother gave me a kiss, and went away.

Then I felt that I was alone with Jesus. I was sure that He was in the room, close beside me, listening to me as mother had done, and waiting to see whether I would come to Him.

And then I did come to Jesus. I knelt down, and talked to Him, just as I would have done if He had been on earth. I thanked Him so very much for dying for me, and I asked Him to be my Saviour—to save me and forgive me—just then, even while I was kneeling there in mother's room. I am sure Jesus must have heard my prayer, for if He was longing for me to come, as mother said He was, He would never turn me away when I did come.

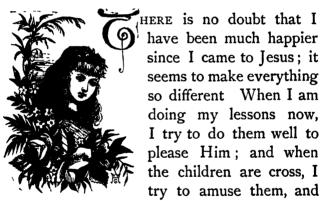
And then, too, He said Himself, "Ask, and it shall be given you," and I am quite sure that I did ask with all my might.

Mother was so glad to hear that I had come to Jesus; she came in and knelt down beside me, and told God how glad she was.



CHAPTER XII.

A SURPRISE.



be patient with them, because He would like me to do so; and when mother is busy, I try to help her, because I know Jesus is looking at me to see if I love Him, and will try to do what He tells me.

And then prayer seems so different now from what it did before. I know now what mother meant, when she said she felt Jesus close beside

her when she prayed. And oh, I can't help loving Jesus now; I don't love Him nearly enough; I never shall do that. But, whenever I think of all He has done for me, I can't help loving Him better than any one else.

My red book is nearly full, only two more empty leaves. But I cannot finish the book without telling of one more wonderful thing that has happened whilst we were at Ravenscliffe.

It was in the month of July, a very hot summer's morning. Melville and I had done our lessons, and were sitting in the branches of a tree on the Langholme Road. Such a pretty little place it was; we used to go there every day when lessons were done. We could see every one who went past, and no one could see us, for we were hidden by the leaves of the tree.

Mother had been very dull the last day or two, for she had not had a letter from father for a very long time; three weeks had gone by without one, and now mother thought that father must be ill. She tried to be cheerful when she was with us, but when she was sitting at her work I saw that she often looked very troubled, and she read father's last letter over and over again, to see if she could find out any reason why he had not written. And every morning,

when it got near post-time, mother used to stand at the door, watching for the postman, and would go herself to meet him, and look through all the letters quite quickly, to see if there was one from India.

But no letter came. "I am so glad mother has gone to call at Langholme," said Melville; "it will cheer her up."

"Yes," I said, "Miss Howard always comforts mother. I do love Miss Howard; don't you, Melville?"

"Yes, she is the very nicest lady in the world, except mother," said Melville, and I quite agreed with him. But it was too hot to talk much, and we felt very sleepy, as we sat in our sunny place in the tree.

All was very quiet; nobody passed by on the road, except a woman with a can of water, and a boy driving some sheep. "Shall we go home?" said Melville, after we had been there some time, "the sun comes on us a little now."

We were just going to climb down, when we heard the sound of wheels in the distance.

"Let us wait and see this carriage pass, Melville," I said, "and then we will go."

So after a minute or two the carriage came up. There was a gentleman in it, and some luggage. He could not see us, for we were hiding in the tree, but we could see him quite plainly, for it was an open carriage, and it was going slowly up the hill.

"Melville," I said, "who is he?"

"Yes," said Melville, "I was just going to say, Who is he? Isn't he very like——"

"Like father, Melville," I said. "Were you going to say that?"

"Yes," said Melville, "I am sure he is very like father. Oh, Olive, do you think it could be father?"

"Oh, no," I said, "of course not, Melville. Why, father is in India! Of course it isn't father."

"Well, Olive, I'm sure he's just like that picture in mother's room," said Melville. "Let us go home and see if the carriage has stopped at Ravenscliffe."

Oh, how quickly we ran home! On our way we met the carriage going back again, but only the driver was in it; the gentleman and his luggage were gone.

"Oh, Olive," said Melville, "he must have stopped at Ravenscliffe; he has not had time to go any farther."

Then, though it was such a hot day, we went even faster than before. But when we got within sight of Ravenscliffe, we saw the gentleman coming to meet us, and he ran even quicker than we did.

"Olive," said Melville, "I am quite sure now that it must be father."

Yes, it was father, our own dear father; he had come to take us by surprise. He had got leave unexpectedly, and he thought it would be so nice to drop in upon us, and to see if we knew him, so he had not written to tell mother anything about it. I cannot write down how pleased we were to see father, because there would never be room in this book to do so. Melville and I had not seen him since we were little children, and it seemed very wonderful to have him there with us at Ravenscliffe.

Then Melville and I took father to Langholme, to find mother. I shall never forget mother's face when he went into the room. She was so very, very glad, and yet she could not keep from crying. And now we are all together, and are so very happy.

Father has brought us such beautiful presents home from India; there is one for each of us, even for the baby-boy. Father does like the baby so much; he had never seen him before, and he was so pleased that baby was not frightened of him. But Mrs. McBride said, "Of course baby had too much sense." And

she was sure he knew father quite well from his photograph. She says baby could not help knowing father, when he has looked at father's picture and kissed it every morning.

Father says he does not think he should have known Melville if he had met him anywhere else, he has altered so much; but he says he would have known me anywhere, because I am the very image of mother. I am so glad father thinks that I am like mother! It is so nice to see mother as happy as she is now; she seems as if she could not leave father for a moment.

We have had a whole week's holiday, that we might take long walks with father, and that he might tell us about the places he has been to and the people he has seen.

To-day father caught sight of my red book, and he asked what it was. So mother told him that it was a little history that I had written of all that had happened to us since we came to Ravenscliffe, but that no one had ever read it, because I kept it quite for myself. And then father asked me if I would not let him read it, because he has not been here with us all the time, and he would like so much to know what we have been doing. So, when the book is finished, I am going to let father read it,

now I have come to the very last page of the book. Mother says that she will buy me a new one, if I would like to go on with my story. And she says I must take great care of this red book, and keep it all my life, for she thinks I shall like to read it when I am grown up.

And mother says she is sure I shall always be thankful that, when I was a little girl at Ravenscliffe, I came to the Lord Jesus. She says it is so much easier to come when we are young, and before we get into the troubles and cares of the world. And mother says it will make me so much happier all my life.

And she says, too, that when she has to go back to India (which will not be for a long, long time now, as father has come home), but when she has to go, and leave me behind, she will not be afraid, because she knows now that Jesus will be with me, and will keep me from evil, and that will be her great comfort.

And I am sure that it will be my comfort too.





PART II.

OLIVE'S SCHOOLDAYS.

CHAPTER I.

MY SCHOOL MOTTO.

HIS is my first day at school. Miss Maynard says we need not do any lessons to-day, as all the girls have not arrived, so I shall have plenty of time to write a few pages of my little journal.

Mother wants me to write an account of the way in which I spend my time here, so that when I meet her again, I may

be able to read it to her, and to tell her about my school friends, and of what I did and thought about whilst I was so far away from her.

Dear mother! I can hardly write her name without crying; it seems so very dreadful to think that two whole years must pass away before I see her again. Two whole years! What shall I be, and how shall I feel then? I shall be seventeen, quite grown up, and I shall have left all my schooldays behind, for ever.

Mother says the two years will pass away like a dream, and will seem as nothing when they are gone, and I look back upon them. But they are not gone now; they are stretching out before me, like a very dreary bit of road, which I must pass over, and at the very thought of which I feel lonely and desolate and disheartened. I know it is very wicked to feel so. I ought to be glad to be here, that I may learn to be of more use to mother when I go out to her in India, and I ought to feel that it is God's will that I should be here, and that He knows what is best for me. Mother talked so beautifully to me about it the last night we were together.

Oh! that last night with mother! I shall never forget it; it was such a very sorrowful night!

We all had tea together; even little Hugh, the baby-boy, came downstairs to tea. But instead of being merry and happy, and laughing and

talking, as we had done on other nights, we were very quiet and sorrowful. Father and mother, and Melville and I, scarcely spoke a word. Only the children chattered away to each other, for they could not understand about father and mother leaving us, and as they talked, mother sat and watched them, with such a hungry, yearning look in her eyes, as if she could not bear them to be for a moment out of her sight.

They sat up later than usual that night, but at last they grew sleepy and tired, and one by one mother put them to bed. She would let no one help her to undress them; she wanted to do everything for them herself. And, as each child said his prayers at her knee, mother leant over him, and seemed to be sobbing, for she shook from head to foot. But I heard no sound, so I may have been wrong, but I know that when all the little ones were in bed, she went about from crib to crib, tucking them up, over and over again, and kissing them, and holding them to her heart, as if she could never leave them.

And then mother came downstairs to Melville and to me. Father had gone out, for he had much to arrange that last night, so mother and Melville and I sat together by the fire.

For some time no one spoke, only mother held our hands very tightly, and drew us both closer to her side.

"Oh, mother, mother!" I sobbed at last; "it is so dreadful to say good-byé!"

Mother could not answer me at first; she tried to speak, but the words seemed to choke her.

At last she said, "You know what good-bye means, Olive, darling. It really is 'God be with you.' We must think of its real meaning when we say it to-morrow. God be with you, my darlings. And I know He will," mother said, more brightly, "for you are both His children. You have both, I do believe, taken Jesus for your Saviour, and are trying to please Him, and I know He will be with you both."

And then mother told us to go to Jesus in every trouble, just as we would have come to her, if she had been with us, and to feel quite sure that He loved us and felt for us, and would comfort and help us far better than she could have done.

"And now, darling children," said mother, "I have a little present to give you; my last little present. I kept it till the last night, that you might remember that it was your mother's last gift to you, before she went away.

Mother left the room for a moment, and then

returned with two beautiful cards in her hand. There was a wreath of forget-me-nots round each card, which mother said must often speak to us of her when she was away. But it was the words inside the card, that she wanted us so much to remember. It was a question, printed in blue and gold letters. Mother read it aloud, as she gave us each one of the cards.

"WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?"

"Olive and Melville," said mother, "you are going out into the world now, and I want these words to be the rule of your life. Whenever you do not know what is right, or what you ought to do, in any difficult matter, look at your card. 'What would Jesus do?' let that settle it. Just try to fancy, if Jesus were in your place, how He would act, what He would say, how He would behave. He came to this world of ours chiefly to die for us, that we might be saved and go to heaven. But He also came to leave us an example, that we should follow His steps." And then mother told us a story.

"There was an Indian chief," she said, "who lived in North-west America, amongst the cold, and the ice, and the snow. This chief had a visitor, a white man, who came and spent a

night with him. In the morning the chief took his visitor outside the wigwam or hut in which he lived, and asked him a question.

"'How many people, do you think,' said the chief, 'passed by this hut last night?'

"The visitor looked at the snow very carefully, and saw the footmarks of one man, distinctly imprinted upon it. There were no other footmarks to be seen, so he said to the chief, 'Only one man has passed by.'

"The chief, however, told him that several hundred Indians, in fact a whole tribe, had passed his wigwam in the night.

"And then he explained to him, that when the Indians do not want it to be known in which direction they have gone, the chief of the tribe walks first, and all the rest of the tribe follow in single file, each man placing his feet exactly in the footmarks of the chief, so that no new footmarks are made, and it looks as if only one man, instead of hundreds, had gone by. By this clever trick the enemies of the tribe are not able to find out in which way they have gone, nor to overtake them.

"Now, dear children," said mother, "Jesus is our Chief. He has gone first over the path of life, and He has left us His footmarks, His example. Did you ever think why He came as

an infant, and grew older and older by degrees? I think it was to set us an example in every age of life. He was a tiny child, to set an example to tiny children, that they might follow His steps; then He was a boy at school, to set you who are at school an example, that you may follow His steps. And then He grew older, He became a young man, and a full-grown man, to set young men and men an example, that they also might follow His steps. He went through it all before us, every step of the way; He trod it all, and He only asks us to follow where He leads.

"Dear children, will you follow Him? Will you put your feet where He has gone before? Will you try to say nothing which Jesus would not have said? to go to no place where Jesus would not have gone? to do nothing Jesus would not have done? If you will, you will indeed be safe and happy.

"But you cannot do it without Him," said mother; "oh no! not without Him. But He will help you, I know He will—if you will ask Him. Will you ask Him, darling children?"





CHAPTER II.

A LONELY JOURNEY.



bye to mother, but I cannot write about that; it was far too dreadful a time to be described, but I am sure that I shall not forget it as long as I live. I shall always remember mother's face, as she looked out at us for the last time from the carriage window, and I shall

always remember the last words she spoke to us on the platform, when she said good-bye. And, just as the train was moving off, she leant out, and said, with a smile, though she had tears in her eyes at the same time:

"Don't forget the question on the card, darlings. 'What would Jesus do?'"

Those were mother's last words to us, and then the train moved off, and we saw her no more. I walked away by Uncle John's side, feeling very lonely and miserable. "Oh! mother, mother, how I miss you!" I kept saying, over and over again to myself, and then I looked up, and asked the Lord Jesus to be near me, and to comfort me. And I am sure He did.

We went back to West Court, to Uncle John's house, and, after another week, we had to say good-bye to each other. Melville was going to a school in the north of England, I was going to a school in the south, and the children were to stop at West Court, with Uncle John and Aunt Jane. It was not so bad as saying good-bye to mother, but still it was very hard to leave them all. Melville was eagerly looking forward to school life, and school friends, and school games, but I felt afraid of going amongst strangers, and thought at times that I should never be happy again.

Uncle John meant to have brought me to Clinton, but, just at the last moment, an important engagement obliged him to stay at home, and I had to come alone. He came to the station with me, however, and was very kind to me. He chose a nice carriage for me, and bought an illustrated paper for me to read, and asked a lady in the carriage "to keep an eye on me."

"You will be all right, Olive," he said. "I have written to Miss Maynard to send some one to meet you at the station. Good-bye, my dear. Keep up a good heart! Good-bye!"

The train moved off; he waved his hand to me, and then I saw him no more, and felt that I had indeed, as mother said, "gone out into the world."

The lady in the carriage did not take much notice of me. She was reading a book in a yellow cover all the morning, and hardly looked up for a moment. At twelve o'clock she left the train, and a gentleman came to meet her, and I watched them drive away together before the train started again.

Then I was quite alone in the carriage. I am not at all afraid of travelling, and Uncle John had written down on a card the names of the different stations, and the time at which the train was due at each, and had made a large red line where I was to change my carriage.

So I managed very nicely, and all went on well till I arrived at Birmingham, one of the places where there was a red line, and where I expected to have to wait half an hour.

When the man came to take the tickets I asked him on which platform I should find the train I wanted, but found it had gone a quarter

of an hour before. We had lost time on the way, and could not catch the express, he said. We should be shunted on to another line, and go on by a slow train presently.

We did not go into Birmingham station, but were shunted round the town for about twenty minutes. Oh! what a large place it looked, with its rows of smoking chimneys, its long streets, and its large warehouses! It looked very dismal to me that evening; for I was feeling more lonely than I had ever felt before.

I was beginning to feel very anxious as to what time I should reach Clinton. Uncle John had told Miss Maynard that I should arrive by the eight o'clock train. What if I should miss that, and there should be no one there to meet me! I had a feverish cold last week, and Uncle John had said in his letter to Miss Maynard that he was not quite certain that I should be able to travel; so I felt sure that, if I did not reach Clinton at eight o'clock, she would not expect me later. I should arrive in the middle of the night, quite alone, with no one to take care of me, or to tell me what to do.

I was growing more and more tired, my head ached, and I felt sick and miserable. There was no one else in the carriage, and, after a time, it got quite dark, and the lamps had never

been lighted. I crept into a corner, and leant my head on the cushion, and cried. I felt so very lonely and unhappy. "Oh! mother, mother," I said, "if only you were here, to take me in your arms and comfort me!"

But, as I said it, a verse came into my mind, a verse which had come in our reading with mother, a short time before she went away; "Underneath are the everlasting arms."

I am sure God's Holy Spirit, the Comforter, whispered that verse to me just then. It was just what I needed, the Everlasting Arms,—the arms of the Lord,—strong, loving arms underneath me. As I lay in the corner of that dark carriage I rested on those arms, and on that love. And I do not think I felt at all afraid after that.

At half-past eleven the train reached Clinton, and drew up on the platform. How anxiously I looked out of the window as we steamed into the dimly lighted station. A few porters, a man-servant in livery, and several other people were standing waiting for the train, but no one seemed to be looking for me.

I stepped out of the carriage, and the light of the station lamps dazzled me, after being so long in the darkness. A porter came up to me and asked about my luggage, and I followed him to the van, but I felt as if I were walking in a dream. I was worn out, sleepy and bewildered.

"Is there no one here to meet me?" I asked.

"No, miss," he said, "I believe not. I don't see any one waiting. Who did you expect, miss?"

"I hardly know," I said. "I am going to school in Clinton, and have missed the quick train."

A lady who was standing by, overheard what I was saying to the porter. She was such a kind lady, with a face something like mother's. Her man-servant, the one I had seen on the platform, was getting her luggage, and she was standing by waiting till all was collected.

"What is the matter, my dear?" she said, coming up to me. "Tell me about it."

So I told her just how it was, and she said she would help me as much as she could. I am sure God put it into her heart to do so.

She called her man-servant, and told him to find my boxes, and choose a cab for me, and then she saw me safely into it, and told the man to drive to Marlborough Place, which was Miss Maynard's address.

I had not driven far, when I passed an illuminated clock, and I saw that it was nearly twelve o'clock. And then a fresh fear crossed my mind.



CHAPTER III.

NEW FRIENDS.

bit of my journal every day, but now the holidays have come, and, when I look at my book, I find that I have only written about my journey, and have not said a single word about my school life. I was so very busy at

school that I had no time for anything but my lessons; but

now that I have no work at all to do for nearly two months, I shall be able to write an account of the most important things that have happened this half-year.

I will begin where I left off. I was driving

in a cab to Miss Maynard's house, at twelve o'clock at night, and I was very much afraid that when I arrived at Marlborough Place, every one would be in bed. I wondered what I should do if I could not wake them. I knew no one in Clinton, and I should be very frightened if I had to go to a hotel alone.

It was a very long drive. We drove down street after street, and it seemed to me as if I should never get there. How could I tell if the cabman were taking me in the right direction? I had never been to Clinton before, and it looked very dreadful to me that night when I was driving through it alone. Some of the streets were empty and deserted, but others were very noisy and crowded, although it was so Every now and then I passed some drunken people, or heard a sound of quarrelling and screaming from some dark court in one of the back streets. Oh, how lonely and unprotected I felt at first! But in a moment I remembered that underneath me were the everlasting arms. I must be safe in those strong arms; no one could hurt me there. I prayed very earnestly to be held safely to my journey's end, and to be kept from harm and danger.

Presently, to my great joy, we left the noisy back streets behind, and came upon a wide, open road. There was a very steep hill here, and the cabman got down and walked, and we went so very slowly, that I thought we should never come to the end of it.

At last we reached the top of the hill, and soon after the cabman drew up at Marlborough Place, and rang the bell.

Oh! how thankful I was when the door was opened, almost immediately. Miss Maynard had not expected me that night, but she had been obliged to sit up to finish some accounts, and she came to the door to meet me.

"Poor, tired child!" she said kindly; "what' would you like to eat?"

But I felt too sick and miserable to eat, and asked if I might go at once to bed. So she led the way upstairs, and took me past two landings to the top of the house.

"This will be your bedroom, Olive," she said. "There are three beds in it, and as you will be the eldest in the room, I shall make you responsible for what goes on in it. Maria Laurie has arrived. Poor child!" she said, as she bent over her bed, and looked at her as she lay asleep, "she has been crying, I see; she is young yet to leave home. Alice Carter, who is to sleep in this other bed, will not be here till to-morrow.

"Poor child, you are feeling lonely too," said

Miss Maynard, as she saw tears in my eyes; "but you will soon make friends here, and one Friend is always near to comfort us. Do you know that Friend, Olive?"

I told her I did, and she gave me a kiss, and said how glad she was. I loved her so much that night, and I have loved her ever since.

Then Miss Maynard went away, saying I must get quickly to bed. I was very glad to do as she told me, but I crept for a moment to Maria's bed, and peeped at her as she lay asleep. She is a rosy, healthy-looking girl, nearly twelve years old, and generally looks very happy and bright, but that night her eyes were red and swollen with crying. I wondered very much if she had said good-bye to her mother that day. Then I got into bed, and soon fell asleep.

I was waked the next morning by the sound of a bell. Three times the bell rang, first close to my door, then on the landing below, and then on the landing below that, so that every girl might hear it distinctly.

Maria Laurie sat up in her bed, and burst into tears.

"Oh, it's that nasty bell!" she said. "I was dreaming I was at home!"

I felt very sorry for her. "Have you never been from home before?" I asked.

"Oh yes," she answered. "I was here last half year. It is very nice for a school, but home is nicer still, isn't it?"

"Yes," I said, "I should think it was."

Then we made haste to get dressed, but though we were not quite half an hour getting ready to go downstairs, Maria had told me in that time where she lived, and all about her home, and her relations, and the names of the different masters and governesses, and the name and age and character of every girl in the school.

I soon saw that Maria was a great chatterbox. and that her trouble had quickly passed away, for she seemed quite happy and merry when we had been talking together for a few minutes.

At seven o'clock another bell rang, and Maria took me downstairs to the schoolroom. It is a very large room, with four windows in it, and a smaller schoolroom opens out of it. This little room is full of shelves, and here we keep our books and slates and copy-books, and all we need for our school-work.

I felt very strange that first morning, for I knew no one there; but I sat next Maria, and she told me what to do, and some of the girls came to speak to me, and were very kind and pleasant.

After breakfast Miss Maynard asked me a great many questions, and gave me a small examination in history and arithmetic and geography, and she seemed pleased with my answers, for she said I should go into the first class.

It is a very small class; there are only three other girls in it. There is Mary Conder; she is very clever indeed. She is always the first in the class, and yet she is the most idle. Sometimes she never looks at her lessons until a few minutes before we have to say them, and yet she always knows them better than I do, when I have worked hard for more than an hour. None of the girls like Mary very much; she does not seem to have any friends, they all think her very disagreeable and conceited.

Then there is Flora Morton; every one likes her. She has very pleasant manners, and is always in a good temper. I sometimes wish she was not quite so selfish; she always manages to get her own way in everything, and all the girls let her do whatever she likes, which I think is not good for her. They feel it rather trying sometimes to give up the piano to her whenever she wants to practice, and always to let her have the seat nearest the fire, and to be ready to fetch her everything she wants; and yet, somehow or

other, they always do it, and never like to refuse her anything.

Alice Marshall, the other girl in our class, is so different. Nobody waits on her, but she is always pleased to do a kind thing for any of us. She is not at all good-looking, and yet no one could help liking her face. She is not at all clever; it takes her twice as long to learn her lessons as it takes me, and sometimes she has very bad headaches, and cannot learn anything. So Alice is always at the bottom of the class, but she is never cross about it, and works just as hard as if she hoped to get a prize.

Mother told me before I went to school, that I should find school just like a little world. She said I should find there girls of all sorts of characters and tempers and ideas, and she told me I should need God's grace to keep me right quite as much in the little world of school, as I should need it when I am grown up, and leave lessons behind, and, as people say, go out into the world.

And I am sure mother was right.





CHAPTER IV.

MY FIRST SUNDAY.

HE very first day that I came to school, I hung over my bed the beautiful card that mother gave me, and oh, how many times I have looked at it since. It has helped me very often indeed to know what was

right, and has kept me many times from doing what I ought not to do.

I think mother would like to

know that I kept the promise I made her that last night, so I will try in my little journal to write an account of some of the times when I was helped by thinking of the question on the card: "What would Jesus do?"

I think the first time was the Sunday after

I arrived, and when I had only been two days at school. Sunday used to be such a happy day at home; mother taught us to love it better than any day in the week. And I am sure Miss Maynard tries to make it a happy day at school, and when she is with us, everything is so nice and quiet, and all goes on well; but as soon as she goes downstairs the girls begin to chatter and laugh, and to make so much noise, that to read or to think seems impossible.

Mother had begged me, before she went away, never to forget that Sunday was God's day, on which we must not speak our own words, or do our own work, or take our own pleasure, but on which we must think of Him, and speak of Him, and which we must spend in His service. I got up on the morning of that first Sunday, longing to spend the day as mother would like me to spend it.

But when I went downstairs I found it would not be very easy to do so. The girls were all sitting in a circle round the fire with the French governess.

"No French to-day, Olive," said Flora Morton, as I came into the room. "Come here, and get warm. We may talk English all day long."

Oh, how fast their tongues went, and how much they laughed. I felt very uncomfortable; I did not join in the conversation more than I could help, but it was very difficult not to do so, for they thought I was shy, and kept speaking to me to make me talk.

After a little time, Mademoiselle said: "Now we will all give our recollections of the holidays; we will tell each our story in the turn. Flora, you are the first on that side of the fire; you will begin. You will tell us how you have passed your holidays, what sort of parties you have had, what you have seen; all that sort of thing that is amusing. Come, Flora, you will begin."

So Flora began with a description of a ball that had taken place in Christmas week, and then she went on to tell of some private theatricals she had acted in, and all the rest asked her questions, and laughed, and seemed very much interested and amused.

I felt miserable. It was God's day, God's holy day, and I was spending it like this! I opened my Bible which I had brought downstairs in my hand, though of course I could not read; but I wanted to show them that I did not care to join in what they were doing.

"Oh, don't learn your verses yet," said Maria; "there will be plenty of time for that when the first breakfast bell rings, and Miss Maynard is never cross on Sundays!"

I closed the book, for of course it would seem a mere pretence to say I was reading, but as I did so, it flashed across my mind that I should be called upon to tell my story next. I was sitting next Flora, and Mademoiselle had said we were each to speak in turn.

Flora was getting to the end of her adventures. What should I do? Should I join in helping to amuse them? If not, they would think me so ill-natured and unkind, and perhaps they would laugh at me. What ought I to do?

I thought of my motto: "What would Jesus do?"

"Oh, I know what Jesus would do," I said to myself. "He would do what He felt was right, and not mind a bit what anybody said, or thought about Him. When He was on earth, He was often laughed at, and had many unpleasant remarks made about Him, but He was never afraid of anything but sin." I asked Jesus in my heart to help me to follow in His steps.

Almost immediately after this Flora said,

"There, Mademoiselle, that is all. I have finished my adventures."

"That is altogether charming, Flora," said Mademoiselle. "Your histories are quite amusing. Now we will hear what Miss—Miss—what is her name? I am quite forgetful or all these English names."

"Olive Stewart," said Maria. "I think it is such a pretty name!"

"Charming!" said Mademoiselle. "Now, Miss Olive Stewart, will you please to commence?"

I felt it very difficult to refuse. Mademoiselle is quite young, only four years older than I am; but still she is our teacher, and mother told me she hoped I should always be very obedient and respectful to all those who took the trouble to teach me. I asked God to help me to say the right words.

"I don't think I have anything very interesting to tell, Mademoiselle," I said; "we had quite different pleasures at home from those you are talking about. We were very happy, and yet we never went to dances or theatres, or that sort of thing. I do not think you would care to hear about my holidays."

"Oh yes, we should," said Mademoiselle.
"Come, tell us. It will be a variety, which is

charming to hear of, pleasures which are not dances, not theatricals, and not that sort of thing. Come! I am sure you can make an amusing history for us," said Mademoiselle, pleasantly.

"May I tell you about it to-morrow, Mademoiselle?" I asked. "I should like that so much better!"

"And why to-morrow, if you please," said Mademoiselle, impatiently, "when I ask to have it now? To-morrow we have the lessons, we have the exercises, we have the lectures from the masters. To-morrow we have not time to talk. Come, Olive, begin."

"Please, I would rather not," I said. "Don't think I want to be stupid about it. I will tell you anything to-morrow."

"I would like to know why you are so disobliging?" said Mademoiselle. "Tell us your reason, if you please."

"I had rather not speak of all these things on Sunday."

The girls began to laugh.

"Stuff and nonsense!" said Flora. "I never heard anything so ridiculous in my life."

"I see," said Mademoiselle. "She thinks herself very good, this Miss Olive! Well, we

shall see—we shall see; perhaps it will not last so long, this goodness of hers!"

"I would not sit too near her, Flora, if I were you," said Mary Conder; "you will disturb her in her devotions!"

"She had better go into the next room, if she is going to be disagreeable," said Flora.

"Yes; go, if you please," said Mademoiselle.

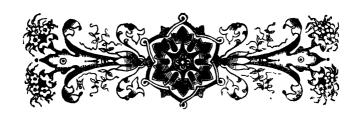
I took up my Bible and obeyed, only too glad to do so. There was no fire in the smaller room, but I chose a place where the sun was streaming in at the window, and opened my Bible to read.

I was turning over the leaves, when these words caught my eye: "And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and when He had found him, He said unto him: Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"

I read the whole story of the blind man, and how they turned him out because he spoke a word for Jesus, who had done so much for him. "And Jesus found him." I wondered if He would find me in the cold schoolroom.

I thought He would.





CHAPTER V.

A MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE.



rter this I had a good deal to bear from one or two of the girls, especially from those of my own age. They made unpleasant remarks about me, and tried in many ways to vex me.

Sometimes I am afraid I felt angry, and showed them that I was vexed and

annoyed. But at other times I remembered my card, and asked myself, "What would Jesus do?" And at those times I never answered them again, but tried to be kind to them instead.

Mother told me one day that God could

make people like us, and could give us favour in their sight if we asked Him, just as He gave Joseph favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison, and Esther in the sight of the cruel King Ahasuerus.

So I asked God every morning when I said my prayers to give me favour, if He saw it was good for me, and I am sure He heard my prayer, for after a few weeks the girls left off teasing me, and were so friendly and kind to me that I began to be very happy and contented in my school life.

As for Miss Maynard, I always loved her; no one could help doing that. And to get a smile from her made me happy for a whole day.

But I want in this little journal to write chiefly of those times when mother's question helped me; and I think the next time was when I had that great trouble. The trouble is all over now, but still it seems very great to me, as I look back to it.

I enjoyed doing my lessons very much, though I was never the first in the class. Mary Conder was so very clever, that I could never get as many marks as she could. But Miss Maynard told us that she meant to give two prizes in our class, and I was very anxious, if

possible, to get the second prize. I thought mother would be so pleased.

So I worked very hard indeed, and hardly wasted a minute; but Flora Morton also wanted to get this prize, and at first she and I almost always had exactly the same number of marks. Sometimes she was a little before me, and at other times I was the first; it seemed very doubtful which of us would win the prize.

We always do our English lessons with Miss Maynard, and our French lessons with Mademoiselle, but there are several masters who come to the school to give us lectures on special subjects. We have an arithmetic master, a drawing master, a music master, a singing master, and a science master. I enjoy the science master's lectures very much indeed; we have three every week, one on zoology, another on botany, and another on geology. It is so very wonderful to learn all about the animals, and plants, and shells, and fishes, and about the curious way in which the soil of the earth was made. We have nothing to learn for Herr Liebstein. He gives us a lecture, and as he speaks, we make our own notes of it, and then the next time he comes he questions us on his last lecture, and gives us marks according to our answers. At the beginning of the term Flora and I almost always got the same number of marks from Herr Liebstein.

But one Tuesday morning we had rather a difficult examination on zoology, and Flora had not prepared for it so well as usual, and when Herr Liebstein gave us marks for it, he gave me eight more than he gave her.

Oh, how vexed Flora looked, and how fretful she was all that day! It made me very unhappy. I almost felt as if I had done something wrong, although of course it could not be wrong just to do my best, and to answer as well as I could.

"Don't be vexed about it, Flora," I said that night, as we were going upstairs to bed; "I could not help it!"

"I'm not vexed about it, Olive!" she said. "How could you think so? I am only tired."

But I could not help feeling sure that she was thinking of it when she looked so cross.

However, the next morning she seemed to have forgotten it, and all went on just as usual till the following Tuesday, when once more I had more marks than Flora. This time she did not seem annoyed, but laughed about it when we spoke of it afterwards. I felt very

glad of this, and hoped that my trouble was over.

But it was not over; it was only just beginning.

The next Monday evening, after tea, we went into the schoolroom, as usual, to learn our lessons. I took my books from the cupboard, and went to the table, and sat down between Flora and Mary. I learnt my English lessons first, and then I wrote my French exercise. When these were done, I looked for my zoology notes, that I might prepare for Herr Liebstein's lecture, but, to my dismay, I could not find them.

We always write our notes on a loose piece of paper, and I generally slip it inside one of the lesson-books which I shall use on Monday evening. I took up my books one by one, and shook them, and turned over the leaves, but no paper was to be seen. I still hoped it might be there, so I went through them again, looking carefully between all the pages, but the lost notes did not appear.

I could do nothing more till the hour for learning our lessons was over, for we were not allowed to speak, or to move from our places, till the clock showed it was half-past seven. But as soon as the silence hour was at an end,

I told the girls of my loss, and Flora and Mary helped me to look through my books again, and to turn out the cupboard and shelf where they were kept; but the notes were nowhere to be found. There was no help for it; I was obliged to do without them.

We were not allowed to borrow each other's notes, so the only thing I could do was to try, as I lay in bed at night, to remember as much as I could of last Tuesday's lecture. But there were many things which I could not possibly recollect, lists of names, and Latin words, which Herr Liebstein had told us to write down and to learn, and many other particulars about the different classes of animals, which we had copied from his dictation, and which he wished us to learn by heart.

Morning came, and I felt very troubled as I went into Herr Liebstein's class, and this I think made me nervous, and I could hardly answer a single question.

her Liebstein seemed surprised, but he said not ing. Flora answered better than usual; all her lists were perfect, all her numbers were correct. At the end of the lesson Herr Liebstein gave her twelve marks, and gave me only four.

Of course, I was very much disappointed that I had done so badly, but I do not think I should

have felt it so much if Miss Maynard, who had been sitting in the room whilst we were at work, had not said to me as we rose from our seats:

- "Are you not well, Olive?"
- "Yes, ma'am," I said, "I am quite well."
- "Then why have you answered so badly to-day?" she said.
- "Please, ma'am, because I lost my notes of the lecture!"
- "Careless child!" said Miss Maynard, "then you deserve to have so few marks!"

It was the first time she had found fault with me, and I felt it very much, for I loved Miss Maynard dearly.

I made up my mind to be very careful of the notes I had just taken. So I put them inside my dictionary, and put the dictionary in a safe place in my cupboard. I felt sure that it would not happen again, and I thought no more of it till the next Monday evening, when I went to collect the books for the silence hour.

Then I found to my great astonishment that my notes were again missing!





CHAPTER VI.

WHO COULD HAVE DONE IT?

everywhere for them, but I could not find them. I turned over every leaf in my dictionary in vain; I asked every girl in the school if she had seen them, but no one could help me.

My heart was beating very fast as I went into Herr Liebstein's class, knowing that once more I should be in disgrace, and that Miss Maynard would be grieved with me and disappointed in me.

Of course I could not answer half the questions that were asked me, and Herr Liebstein said at the end of the lecture that he was very sorry that Miss Olive Stewart had become so inattentive, for he had quite expected that would win the second prize.

- "What is the matter with you, Olive?" asked Miss Maynard.
- "Please, ma'am, it is the notes," I said, bursting into tears. "I could not help it; they are lost again."
- "When will you learn to be careful, Olive? Surely this will be a lesson to you!"
- "If you please, ma'am," I said, through my tears, "I put them so very carefully away in my dictionary, and I have not opened it since."
- "Oh, nonsense, Olive. If you really had put them there, you would have found them there; they cannot have run away! You must really be more thoughtful and less careless, and, above all, do not, my dear child, get into the habit of making excuses for a fault. It is a dangerous thing to make excuses, for we are often led to say what is not strictly true!"

Oh, how miserable I felt when she said this. My dear Miss Maynard evidently thought that I had not only been careless, but also that what I had told her was not true. I cried so much about it that it gave me a very bad headache; I could say none of my lessons correctly, and I was in disgrace all the day.

"What shall I do? What shall I do?" I kept saying over and over to myself. "How shall I show Miss Maynard that I have not been careless and untruthful?"

I went upstairs perplexed and troubled, and asking myself once more, What shall I do?

I went into the bedroom, and my eyes fell on my motto, "What would Jesus do?"

There it stood out before me, in the midst of the wreath of blue forget-me-nots. What would Jesus do in my place? What as our Example did Jesus do when He was on earth?

I took up my Bible before I went to bed, and in the chapter which came in order for my evening reading, was the account of a great multitude coming to Jesus, and wanting to take Him by force to make Him a King, and about His having to send them away. And then about the evening of that day of difficulties, and how He told His disciples to cross the lake without Him, and then how He Himself went up the lonely mountain, and continued all night in prayer to God.

I felt sure that if Jesus had been in my place He would have told God His Father all about it, and would have turned His trouble into prayer.

I thought I would try to do it. So I knelt down and said:

"O Lord, I do want Thy help very much. Please show Miss Maynard that I have not been careless and untruthful, and oh, do Thou help me always to come to Thee, in every time

I felt happier when I had said this, and went to bed, and tried to feel that all would be right.

But all that week Miss Maynard was very grave and silent, and I felt in disgrace.

The girls were very kind to me, especially Alice Marshall, who told me that she was as much disappointed as I was, for she had always wanted me to get the prize. Her indignation was very great when the following Monday evening my notes were again missing!

Alice could hardly keep silent during the silent hour, so anxious was she to speak to me, when she saw the trouble I was in.

Directly we rose from our seats she drew me to the other side of the room and whispered:

"Olive, some one *must* have taken your notes away; I am *sure* of it!"

I really could not help being afraid that she was right, for I had put them away so carefully that it was impossible that I could have lost them. But who could have done such a cruel thing? I could not imagine.

Flora was very anxious to help me to find my notes that night, which I thought was very kind of her, as she was so anxious to get the prize herself. She and I turned out all the things in the closet, but it was of no use, for the notes were not there. afraid Miss Maynard would be angry with me. But, to my surprise, she said nothing about it while the lecture was going on, though she looked very grave the whole time. When it was over, she told us to dress for a walk. I happened to be the last in the schoolroom, for I waited behind the others to put my notes once more safely away.

Miss Maynard came up to me as I was kneeling down by the cupboard, and laid her hand on my shoulder.

"Is that where you put your notes last week, Olive?" she said.

"Yes, Miss Maynard," I said. "I put them just in that place."

"And were they lost again, Olive?"

"Yes, ma'am," I said, sorrowfully; "we could not find them anywhere. Flora helped me to look, but they were not here." Miss Maynard said no more, but went out of the room.

I felt very unhappy when we were walking out, for I did not know what to do, or how to find out what had become of my notes. I had lost all hope of winning the prize, but I did not mind that now, though it had been a great trouble to me at first. What made me most unhappy was that Miss Maynard was displeased with me, and thought me disobedient and

There are some beautiful downs about half a mile from Marlborough Place, and we generally walk there in fine weather when the grass is dry. The air is very fresh and sweet, and the pretty green hills, covered with hawthorn bushes, look bright and pretty at any time of year, but I think they are most lovely in spring, when the bushes are as white as snow with may blossoms, and the larks are singing in the blue sky overhead. We always walk "two and two" through the town, but when we get to the downs, Mademoiselle lets us wander about amongst the bushes as we like.

On the day of which I am writing, I left the other girls gathering large bunches of blue hyacinths, and went wandering on by myself. I did not feel disposed to talk, for I was in very low spirits. It almost seemed as if I was to get no answer to my prayer.

I found myself, after a few minutes, wandering on the side of the downs near the river, and I looked down over the rocks to the stream below.

I thought I was quite alone as I stood there looking and thinking, but to my surprise I heard voices close beside me.

And on the other side of the rock on which I was leaning, I saw, sitting on the grass, a lady and a little girl.



CHAPTER VII.

ON THE DOWNS.



stone, with her lap full of hawthorn, wild hyacinths and wood anemones, which she was making into a bunch to carry home with her. The lady was sitting beside her, reading a letter.

The little girl was very pretty. She had long fair

hair hanging over her shoulders, and beautiful dark blue eyes. I could see the child's face quite well, but the lady had her back turned to me.

Presently she began to read aloud. I was going to turn away, for mother has often told me it is very wrong to listen to any conver-

sation that we are not intended to hear; but before I could move, I heard that she was reading a verse of a hymn, so I thought there could be no harm in my hearing that before I left the place. The first two lines caught my attention. I thought God must have brought me there to hear them:

He will not always tell thee how
He means to grant thy prayer,
He whispers, "Leave it all to Me,
Roll upon Me thy care;"
Lord, I obey, and calmly rest
Till Thou shalt order as is best.

"What a nice verse, mother!" said the little girl. "Is that in father's letter?"

"Yes, darling," said the lady.

I was moving away, when the lady, hearing my steps, turned round, and, for the first time, I saw her face.

Then I stood still for a minute, for I felt sure that I had seen her before, and I felt sure too that she knew me. Where had I seen that kind face, and heard that pleasant voice? I had only to consider for a moment, and then all at once it came into my mind. It was the lady I had seen at the railway station when I arrived at Clinton, and who had been so very kind to me when I was feeling lonely and desolate. I

think she remembered where she had seen me at the very same time, for she said, as she got up to speak to me:

"We have met before, I think; have we not?"

I told her I could never thank her enough for her kindness to me that night. She was very anxious to hear how I got on after I left her; and I told her that Miss Maynard was not in bed when I arrived. She was so pleased, and said she had thought of me, and had wished afterwards that she had gone with me herself, and that she had asked God to take care of me and help me.

I thanked her again, and was going away, when she called me back and asked me if we were ever allowed to spend the day with any friends we might have in Clinton. I told her that the last Saturday in every month was a whole holiday, and that then we might go out, if we were invited to do so.

"I wonder if Miss Maynard would allow you to come to me some Saturday," she said. "If you will give me her address I will call on her."

She wrote Miss Maynard's address on the back of the letter, and then I told her I must go to Mademoiselle, as she would be expecting me.

But I went away from the rock much happier than I had come there. I felt sure now that God would hear my prayer, and would show Miss Maynard that I had not been untruthful or careless.

When we got back to the house we went upstairs at once to prepare for dinner. I met Miss Maynard on one of the landings, and she looked so white and ill, that I was quite frightened, and I even once thought of stopping her, and asking her what was the matter. But somehow I could not get the words out, and she passed quickly by me.

"Did you see Miss Maynard, Maria?" I said, as we were brushing our hair.

"Yes," said Maria, "she looked very bad. What can be the matter with her? Some one must be dead, I think."

A few minutes afterwards the dinner bell rang, and we all went downstairs. Miss Maynard was not at the table, but she sent a message by the servant to Mademoiselle, asking her to take her place. Flora was also absent, but she had a very bad cold, and had not been out with us; so we were not much surprised that her dinner was sent upstairs to her.

We were all very quiet that day at dinner, no one was inclined to speak; we all felt some-

thing must have happened, and none of us had the least idea what it was.

We had our drawing lesson that afternoon. Mr. Curtis the drawing master came as usual, but Miss Maynard never appeared in the schoolroom. We missed her very much, for she generally sits beside us with her work, and every now and then she comes round to see how we are getting on, and to give us kind encouraging words when she thinks we are improving.

It seemed a long afternoon, and we were very glad when it was over.

"Is anything the matter, Mademoiselle?" said Alice Marshall, as we sat round the fire before tea. "Is Miss Maynard ill?"

"That is impossible for me to say, my dear!" said Mademoiselle, mysteriously. "It seems something has happened, but Miss Maynard does not tell me what it is. Well, well! We shall see! we shall see!"

That evening, when the others were learning their lessons, Miss Maynard called me into her sitting-room.

Oh, how fast my heart beat! What could be the matter? It was evidently something in which I was specially interested. A dreadful, terrible thought came into my mind. Could

mother be dead? Had Miss Maynard received a telegram whilst we were out, to ask her to tell me this?

The more I thought of it, the more I felt sure that this must be what was wrong. "Miss Maynard has dreaded telling me," I said to myself, as I followed her downstairs, "and that has made her look so ill. Oh, mother! mother!"

It may seem very strange, but it is quite true, that, in the few moments which passed between my leaving the schoolroom and reaching Miss Maynard's room, all these thoughts passed through my mind, and I felt what a sad and desolate world this would be to me without mother's love. I even remembered a day when we were staying at Ravenscliffe, and when I had spoken crossly to mother, and she had said to me so sadly, and yet so gently, "Oh, Olive! Olive!" And now I thought I should never be able to forgive myself for having ever said or done anything that mother did not like.

Miss Maynard waited for me at the door, and took hold of my hand to lead me into the room. The more kind she was to me, the more miserable it made me feel, for it made me feel still more sure that she had bad news to give me.



CHAPTER VIII.

THE DISCOVERY.



IIAVE found your notes, Olive!" said Miss Maynard, when she had closed the door.

The relief was so great that I burst into tears. "Oh, Miss Maynard," I said, "I thought mother must be dead!"

"Poor child!" she

said. "I had no idea that such a thought would come into your mind. What made you think so?"

"You looked so troubled, Miss Maynard," I answered; "and then you called for me."

"And you thought I must have bad news to give you. I see," she said. "No, dear; it

is no bad news—at least not for you. Look here!"

She took from her pocket a piece of paper and laid it before me. Yes, it was indeed my missing notes! The paper was crushed and crumpled, and one corner of it was burnt.

"Where did you find it, please, Miss Maynard?" I said, as soon as I could speak.

"I caught it out of the fire, just as it was being burnt," she said sadly. "Can you guess the rest, Olive?"

"No, ma'am," I answered, looking up in her face, for I was very much surprised indeed.

She looked more sorrowful and full of trouble than I had ever seen her look before.

"Cannot you guess who put your notes in the fire?"

I did not like to speak the thought which flashed into my mind at that moment.

So she answered for me: "Olive, it was Flora Morton. I came into the room just as she was doing it. She did not hear my step, and I was able to get behind her, and to snatch the paper out of the fire. Oh, Olive, is it not sad?" said Miss Maynard.

I did not speak, so she went on: "It seems Plora has been very anxious indeed to win a prize this term. Her father has promised her

that, if she takes home a prize at Midsummer, he will reward her by taking her abroad, for a tour on the Continent. She quite hoped to be able to win the second science prize, but when you had more marks than she had for two weeks she thought her chance of the prize was gone, and a dreadful temptation came over her to destroy your notes, and thus to make sure of being before you again. Poor Flora, she does not love prayer, and she never asked for God's help to withstand this wicked temptation, and so she fell."

I felt very angry indeed with Flora Morton. What a bad, mean, wicked thing she had done! I thought I could never forgive her!

I did not speak, but I think Miss Maynard guessed my thoughts, for she went on to say:

"I do not wonder that you feel it, Olive, dear. You have been very badly treated, and much wronged. I can make no excuse for Flora; she has been guilty of a great sin both against God and against you. The discovery of it has been a terrible trouble to me, Olive. I feel very deeply grieved. I could never have thought Flora would have been guilty of such a disgraceful action. And yet, Olive," Miss Maynard went on, "badly as she has behaved to you, my dear child, you must pray

for grace to forgive her. I was very much struck by the beautiful motto you have pinned over your bed: 'What would Jesus do?' Ask yourself that question, dear, and I am sure you will feel more grieved for poor Flora's sin against God, than angry with her for her behaviour to yourself. 'Father, forgive them!' Do you remember that prayer, Olive, and how they had treated Him then?"

"Yes, Miss Maynard," I said, "I will try to 'follow His steps;' mother said I was always to do that."

"And following His steps you cannot go wrong, dear child," she said, kissing me. "But now about Flora. I shall be obliged to send her away."

"Send her away, ma'am!" I repeated.

"Yes," said Miss Maynard. "I must not pass over such a dreadful thing as this. I must tell her to-morrow, before the whole school, that she must leave immediately."

"Oh, how dreadful for her," I exclaimed.

"Yes; but it is only right and just that she should be punished for her fault, and it would be very wrong for me to give any small punishment for such a grave offence as this."

• As Miss Maynard spoke, a wicked thought came into my mind. I thought what a good

thing it was Flora was going away, for now I should be able to win several prizes, and it would be so nice to take them home with me at Midsummer. But I was ashamed of that thought the next moment.

"Oh, Miss Maynard," I said, "don't send Flora away. Please try her again. I am sure she will never forget it, and will be very careful not to do anything like it again."

"I do not know what to do, Olive," said Miss Maynard, in a very troubled voice. "I want to do what is right, and I feel that Flora deserves to be expelled, and yet I am very unwilling to send her home. She has no mother, poor girl, and her father is a very worldly man, and her remaining here seems her only chance of being led to think of her soul and of eternity. I do not know what to do; I hope God will give me wisdom to decide rightly!"

"Oh, do let her stay, please, Miss Maynard," I pleaded. "Please do let her stay."

Miss Maynard was silent for some minutes, and sat looking into the fire deep in thought.

At last she said, "Olive, if I let Flora stay it must be for your sake, and because you have asked me. She has sinned against you, and you have suffered a great deal in consequence of her cruel conduct. You have been unjustly

blamed, and reproved, besides having the disappointment of losing your place in the class. As a favour to you, if you like to ask it, perhaps I might be able to let Flora have an opportunity of earning for herself a good character."

"I do ask it, Miss Maynard," I said. "I shall be so very grateful if you will let her stay!"

"Very well, dear," she said, kissing me several times, "you have indeed acted out your motto. Now, you may go upstairs, and tell Flora what I have determined; she is already packing her clothes, and expects to leave Clinton to-morrow. I wish you particularly to tell her, Olive," she added, as I was leaving the room, "that I have changed my mind simply because you have asked me to do so."

I went upstairs, and found Flora sitting on the floor of her room, before a half-packed box, her eyes swollen with crying, and a look of utter wretchedness on her face. She turned away when she saw me, and began to cry again. I went up to her, and put my arms round her neck.

But Flora drew herself away. "Oh, Olive, you don't know about it," she said; "you would not kiss me if you did. I thought Miss Maynard would have told you."

"Yes, she has told me, Flora," I answered, "and she has sent me to tell you that you need not pack any more, for you are not going away."

She turned round, and looked at me in astonishment.

"Not going away. Oh, Olive, can it be true?"

"Yes, it is quite true," I said, "and Miss Maynard wished me to tell you that she had forgiven you, because I asked her to do so."

"Oh, Olive, how could you?" said Flora.
"If I had been you I could never have done such a thing. Oh, Olive, how good of you."

I have not time to write all she said, but I know that she was very grateful. And I know, too, that from that day she has been like a different girl. She was very much humbled and ashamed when she came amongst the girls again, and they have never waited on her or spoilt her since. I do not think she would have let them do so. And I also know that I have not a warmer friend in the whole school, or one who is more ready to do anything and everything she can to please me, than Flora Morton.



CHAPTER IX.

THE HOLIDAY.



RS. D'AUBREY, the kind lady whom I had seen on the downs, did not forget her promise to call on Miss Maynard. After she had gone, Miss Maynard told me that, although she had never seen Mrs. D'Aubrey before, she had often heard of her, and knew her to be a real Christian, and one who was always

ready to help in any good work. Miss Maynard said she had given leave for me to spend the next monthly holiday at Mrs. D'Aubrey's house, for she felt sure it was just the place at which mother would like me to visit.

Oh, how much I looked forward to that Saturday! It would be so pleasant, I thought, to be away from school for a whole day, and to

take a walk without having to walk in line, or to talk French.

At last the day came! It was a bright, sunny morning at the end of May. I woke as soon as it was light, and lay awake, listening to the blackbirds and thrushes singing in the trees close to the house, and wondering where Mrs. D'Aubrey lived, and how we should spend the day. I was very glad when the bell rang for us to get up, and still more glad when breakfast was over, and Miss Maynard told me to go upstairs and get ready to go out.

Whilst I was putting on my hat, Alice Marshall came to tell me to be quick, for Mrs. D'Aubrey had come for me.

As I passed the schoolroom door, on my way downstairs, I heard Mademoiselle's voice, "Olive Stewart, are you going out to-day? Oh, you are. Will you have the goodness to drop this letter in the post-office for me?"

I told her I should be very glad to do so, and put the letter in my pocket. Then I went downstairs, and Mrs. D'Aubrey and I set out together.

Oh, what a happy day that was! We went first through the town, on our way to Mrs. D'Aubrey's house. She had some shopping to do, and she took me into a bookseller's shop

to see a beautiful picture which was being exhibited there.

Then we came to her house. It is such a pretty place. It stands some way from the road, in a small park, and all round the house are different coloured rhododendrons, crimson, pink, lilac, and cream-coloured. These were all in full bloom, and looked very lovely.

Mrs. D'Aubrey's little girl is just seven years old; her name is Christabel. She is the only child, and Mr. D'Aubrey is away now for some time; he has gone to Egypt and Palestine.

I had a biscuit and a glass of milk when I arrived, and then little Christabel took me all round the garden and the park; and we paid a visit to her favourite pony; and to the cows and calves, and chickens, and ducks, and turkeys, and geese, and guinea-pigs.

Then we had dinner, and after dinner the pony-carriage came to the door, and Mrs. D'Aubrey took me a most beautiful drive on the other side of the river, through woods blue with wild hyacinths, and lanes, the hedges of which were full of hawthorn and wild roses.

We came back for tea, and then I went into Mrs. D'Aubrey's room and sat on a low stool beside her, and she put her arm round me just as mother used to do, and talked to me just as

mother used to talk, and, before I left, she knelt down with me, and prayed that I might day by day become more like Jesus, and more fit to dwell with Him in His beautiful home above.

Then it was time to go back to school, and, as I went into Christabel's room to get my hat, I remembered for the first time that I had not posted Mademoiselle's letter. I had been so pleased and excited when I set out with Mrs. D'Aubrey, that I had forgotten all about it. What would Mademoiselle say? What should I do?

"Shall we pass a post-office on our way back, Mrs. D'Aubrey?" I asked.

"Oh yes, several, dear," she said; "but I am afraid it is not of much use posting a letter now; the mail has gone."

"Oh, dear, I am so sorry," I said. "I ought to have posted this letter this morning, and I quite forgot it."

"Well, perhaps we had better put it in the post now," said Mrs. D'Aubrey; "it is possible that there may be an early morning mail, and that it may get off then."

So the letter was posted, but I felt very uncomfortable about it. I was afraid Mademoiselle would be very much vexed and annoyed that I had forgotten it. I tried to comfort myself with the hope that the letter was of no great importance, and that one post would not make so very much difference.

It was nine o'clock when I reached Marlborough Place, and the bread-and-butter and milk for our supper was on the table.

Mademoiselle and the girls were chatting together of the events of the day when I went in, and they asked me how I had enjoyed myself, and where I had been, and what I had seen. Mademoiselle did not mention the letter, and, though my conscience told me that I ought to confess to her that I had forgotten it in the morning, I said nothing. I was afraid of what she might say, and could not bring myself to do it.

However, as we were lighting our candles to go upstairs, she suddenly remembered it, and turning round, she said quickly,

"I hope you posted my letter, Olive Stewart?"

"Yes, Mademoiselle," I said, the colour coming into my face, for I felt that it was only half the truth. And mother has often told me that half the truth is a lie. But again I was afraid.

"Because it is very important," Mademoiselle went on, "very important indeed! That is why I ask vou."

I was going to speak; I meant to tell her the truth, but I waited a moment to think what I should say, and in that moment she was gone. She went downstairs to Miss Maynard's room, and I knew she would not come up again.

I felt very miserable. But I tried to argue with myself that the words I had said were true, quite true. I had posted the letter, I said to myself, and it would not have been true if I said that I had not posted it, and if only Mademoiselle had waited a minute, I would have told her all. Yet though I tried to persuade myself that there was no great harm in what I had said, I felt very uneasy and uncomfortable about it.

Then I went upstairs, and the first thing I saw as I opened my bedroom door was my motto, staring me in the face,—

"What would Jesus do?"





CHAPTER X.

MADEMOISELLE'S LETTER.

a reproof the words were to me that night! Oh, how unlike I had been to Him. His words were always true; He always spoke the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, for was He not the Truth itself? I had indeed lost sight of my Lord's foot-

steps, and had gone astray from the right path. How should I find my way back again? It is so easy to go wrong, and so hard to find our way back into the straight road.

I got into bed, but I could not sleep. I tossed about on my pillow, and my head was hot and aching. I had not been so unhappy

for many months as I was that night. The other girls fell asleep directly. I listened to their quiet breathing, and oh, how I wished that I was like them, and had nothing on my mind to keep me awake. I felt that I had sinned against God, and grieved my best Friend. I could not expect Him to help me or to bless me now, whilst this sin was unconfessed and unforgiven.

At last I could bear it no longer. I jumped out of bed, and knelt down, and told God all about it, and asked Him to forgive me. I thought of that text, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." I prayed very earnestly that He would cleanse me in His precious blood, and take away the sin which was so much troubling me.

Then I rose from my knees, and waited for Mademoiselle to come upstairs. I felt that I could not go to sleep till I had confessed to her about the letter.

The clock had struck ten, so I thought she would soon be coming upstairs, to go to bed. She sleeps in a room on our landing, so I should be able to speak to her as she passed my door. I opened it a little way that I might hear her coming up, and then I sat down on my bed to wait and listen.

Oh, what a long time it seemed to me before she came. I heard the clock on the landing ticking in a very solemn voice, but that was the only sound to be heard in the house.

Then the clock struck half past ten, and a few minutes afterwards I heard the dining-room door shut, and then there was a step on the stairs.

I knew it was Mademoiselle. I had been longing for her to come, and yet, now that she was so near, I trembled all over, and felt very much tempted to get into bed, and not to tell her of the letter until the next morning.

But again my motto helped me.

The Lord Jesus always did what was right, whatever the consequences might be.

With a prayer to Him for help, I stole in my nightgown to the bedroom door.

I do not think Mademoiselle would have seen me if I had not spoken. She was going quickly across the landing to her own room, when I called to her.

"Mademoiselle, Mademoiselle, please stop," I said.

She started and turned round. "Who is it calls me? You Olive Stewart? Why are you not asleep? Are you ill? What is the matter? What do you want with me?"

- "Please, Mademoiselle," I began, and then I stopped, I felt so frightened.
- "Well, be quick!" she said, impatiently. "What is it? You will get your death of the cold, child, out on this landing. What do you want with me?"
- "Please, Mademoiselle," I said, bursting into tears, "it is about your letter."
- "My letter," she repeated in an angry voice, "and what about it I should like to know? You never posted it, I suppose. Well, I will never trust you any more! I will not. I am surprised you should be so careless, and then to tell me yourself you had posted it! I am altogether ashamed of you, Olive Stewart. Well, give me the letter; I will post it myself, in the morning."
 - "I have not got it, Mademoiselle," I said.
- "You have lost it!" she exclaimed, before I could say more. "Child, do not tell me you have lost it!"
- "Oh no, Mademoiselle," I said, quickly, "it is quite safe; I forgot it this morning, but I posted it as I came home. Oh, Mademoiselle, I am so sorry."
- "Well, well," she said, "it cannot be helped. I am glad it is not lost. But why did you keep awake to tell me, child?"

"Because I could not rest "lemoiselle," I said, "I was so unhappy. I felt had not told you what was true, and I could not have gone to sleep till I had confessed it to you."

"Well," she said, kindly, "we will say no more about it; you will be more careful next time. Get into bed now, and go to sleep."

I obeyed her with a very thankful heart. How wonderfully God had helped me! I knelt down, and thanked Him before I got into bed, and then I fell asleep with a light heart.

I remember that it was the morning after that monthly holiday, that I got a nice long letter from Melville. He told me all about his school, and his school friends, and the grand games they had, and about the examination which was getting near, and how he hoped not only to get a prize, but to get his remove into a higher form.

"I know mother will be pleased if I do," said Melville, "and she would be pleased if she knew that I often think of her motto, 'What would Jesus do?' And it has made me change my mind, lots of times, when I have been going to do something wrong. There was one of our fellows wanted me to do something for him the other day. He is a jolly sort of fellow, and it was awfully hard work to tell him I couldn't do

it. But I it would be wrong, and I told him so, and the motto made me stick to it. Don't you think mother would be glad of that?"

And then Melville told me that they have a motto text every year for the school. The doctor preaches on it, the first Sunday of the year, and then they sing in the school chapel the hymn which is printed on the card, below the text. This motto card is hung up in every dormitory, and in all the class-rooms, and the boys' studies, and in the masters' private rooms, too.

I will copy Melville's motto hymn here, for I think it is very much like my own motto, and it will be a great help to me to remember it.

EVEN CHRIST PLEASED NOT HIMSELF.

When Jesus left His throne on high, and came to live on earth and die, His words, His acts, His looks, we find Always unselfish, always kind. Jesus, my Lord, oh, may I be, Each day, each moment, more like Thee.

Though He was often very sad,
He tried to make all others glad,
He went about from day to day,
Shedding bright sunshine on His way.
Jesus, my Lord, oh, may I be,
Each day, each moment, more like Thee.

He never thought the way too long To seek a lost sheep going wrong, He listened to its faintest call, Nor thought about Himself at all. Jesus, my Lord, oh, may I be, Each day, each moment, more like Thee.

Where'er He was, by day, by night, His Father's will was His delight, And He, with truth, could ever say, I do what pleases Him alway. Jesus, my Lord, oh, may I be, Each day, each moment, more like Thee.





CHAPTER XI.

THE PRIZE DAY.

ow anxiously we all looked forward to the examination, at the end of the term. Most of us worked so hard the last week, that we were seldom to be seen without a book in our hands; we

allowed ourselves no time at all for amusement, and every night we carefully counted the days which

must pass before the examination began.

And at last the day arrived, and a very exciting day it was. There were very few of us who could eat any breakfast that morning, and I felt cold and sick as I went into the schoolroom, to take my place at the table, and to wait for Miss Maynard's entrance with the examination papers. But I thought of a little rhyme mother had sent me in her last letter,

because I had told her how much I feared I should not be first in anything.

"Do your best. Leave the rest," mother had said. And she told me that the Lord just requires His children to make every effort they can, to do their work well in His sight, and that then they must leave the result trustfully in His hands.

The examination lasted a whole week, and we were all very tired when it was over. No one talked of anything else the whole time. Little groups of girls used to be seen in the schoolroom in the evening, telling each other what questions they had answered, and what they had left unanswered, and what they had answered wrong, and discussing who would be first in the various subjects, and in the different classes. There seemed no doubt in any one's mind that Mary Conder would carry off nearly all the prizes in our class, and every one said it seemed a great shame, for she never worked a bit, and even this examination week, when we had all been so busy, she had found time to read a new story-book, and to amuse herself in several ways.

We were not to hear the result of the examination that the Wednesday in the following week; there was to be a grand party then, in honour

of the occasion. Miss Maynard invited all her friends, and she allowed the girls to invite any of their friends who could come, to see the prizes given away. Miss Maynard allowed me to invite Mrs. D'Aubrey as my friend, and to my great joy she accepted the invitation.

We had no lessons at all on the Monday and Tuesday of that week, but spent both days in preparing for the grand entertainment. We decorated the two schoolrooms most beautifully with blue, and pink, and black, and silver, and gold paper, cut into different devices, and with wreaths of flowers, basketfuls of which we gathered in the woods across the river. There was a raised platform put up, at one end of the room, covered with crimson cloth, and here there were placed seats for all the visitors, and a small table, on which the prizes were to stand.

We were all very full of spirits when Wednesday morning came—all of us except poor Mary Conder. She had been caught in a very heavy shower the day before, as she was gathering flowers in the wood, and had come home wet through. Miss Maynard made her change her clothes at once, and hoped that she would be no worse for it; but in the middle of the night Mary was seized with a dreadful pair in her chest and side, she could not move at all, and

could scarcely breathe. One of the girls in her room fetched Miss Maynard, and she sent for the doctor. He said Mary must stay in bed for several days, and indeed she could not have got up, even if he had given her leave, for the pain caught her very violently whenever she moved.

Poor girl, it was very trying for her, for she heard us all running up and down stairs, and bustling about to get everything ready for the evening, and she had to lie still, and could not join in any of the fun. It made her very cross and unhappy, and she would hardly speak to any of the girls who went into her room.

As I was dressing, before going downstairs to await the arrival of the company, I thought a great deal about poor Mary, and how sad and desolate it would be for her to be in bed alone, all that long evening, and to hear the singing, and the clapping, and the laughing downstairs, and not to be able to join in it. I felt as if I ought to ask to stay with her, and try to make the time pass a little more pleasantly for her. And yet—and yet—oh, dear, it would be such a disappointment to me to be away from all the excitements of that pleasant evening; for after the prizes were given away, we were to spend the rest of the day in playing games, and in amusements of various kinds.

"Oh, no, I could not miss all that," I said to myself. "I had been looking forward to it for so long. And, after all, Mary Conder was so disagreeable, that perhaps she would hardly thank me if I denied myself to stay with her. I did not think I was obliged to disappoint myself so much for her sake, for she had never been kind or obliging to me, or to any one else."

But as I turned round to take my dress off the bed, my eye fell on the motto; What would Fesus do? and I thought Melville's school motto answered the question for me: Even Christ pleased not Himself. I had a hard struggle with myself, and then I determined to ask Miss Maynard to allow me to stay with Mary. She did not seem willing to consent at first, for she said she wanted me so much to enjoy myself that evening, because (she was kind enough to say) I had worked hard, and well deserved a treat. But when I told her I could not be happy if I remembered poor Mary lying in such pain in bed, she gave me leave to go upstairs to her as soon as the prizes were given away, and to stay with her for the rest of the evening. I thought I would go into Mary's room to tell her this as I went downstairs

"What do you want?" she said, crossly, as I

opened the door," Why do you girls keep coming in and out? Can't you let me be quiet?"

"Mary," I said, "I thought you would be so lonely to-night, and I wanted to stop with you all the time; but Miss Maynard says I must be there when the prizes are given away, so I am coming upstairs directly after, and we will have such a nice time together."

"Oh, no, you must not do that, Olive," she said, in quite a different voice.

"Why not?" I asked.

"Oh, it is too good of you; I could not hear of it." But I gave her a kiss, and told her to look out for me at half-past seven. And then I went downstairs, and, to my great delight, my dear Mrs. D'Aubrey had arrived, and I had a pleasant little talk with her whilst the other visitors were assembling.

I felt so happy and light-hearted, because I had conquered myself, and tried to follow my Lord's footsteps. And if ever a selfish thought came into my mind, as the girls talked of the games and fun with which the evening's entertainment was to end, I said to myself the last two lines of Melville's hymn:

[&]quot;Jesus, my Lord, oh, may I be, Each day, each moment, more like Thee."



CHAPTER XII.

THE SCHOOL-DAYS ENDED.



s soon as all the visitors had arrived, tea was handed round. I managed to get near Mrs. D'Aubrey, and she talked so kindly to me, and so very much as mother would have done, that I loved her better than ever. When tea was over we all went into the schoolroom;

the visitors took their seats on the platform, and the prize-giving began. Miss Maynard first read out the result of the different examinations. I had done much better than I expected in most of them, and Miss Maynard gave me several kind words of praise, as she read out the lists.

Then came the prizes. What a splendid row of handsomely bound books was standing

on the table! Which of us would be so happy as to find her name written in any of them? I did not think that I should get a prize at all, but to my great surprise I was called up to the platform no less than three times, to receive a most beautiful book. The second science prize, the good conduct prize, and the attention prize, were all mine. The attention prize is given to the one who has worked most diligently in every subject throughout the term.

Oh, how pleased mother will be when she gets the letter, to tell her of this, and she would have been still more pleased if she had been present, and could have heard what Miss Maynard said to me, as she gave me the books.

Mary Conder had no less than five prizes; poor Flora had not one. I felt very sorry for her, and she was so humble and quiet, and bore it so very differently from what she would have done a little time before, that I could not help going up to her at the end, and giving her a kiss. "Thank you, Olive, darling," she said; "if it had not been for you, I should not have been here to-day."

Then I asked Miss Maynard if I might take Mary's prizes to her, and I said good-night to Mrs. D'Aubrey, and left the room. It was a little bit hard, just for one moment, as I saw

the girls clearing the room for a round game; but a thought of poor Mary alone in her room, and a thought of the motto over my bed, made me quickly turn my back upon it all, and run upstairs as fast as I could.

"Oh, have you really come?" said Mary, when I went in. "It is good of you, Olive."

Then we looked at our prizes together, and I told her what visitors were downstairs, and described the schoolroom and the prize-giving, and, afterwards, I read one of her prizes aloud to her. It was a very interesting story, and the time passed very quickly as we read it. We were quite surprised when we heard them going down to supper, and knew that it must be ten o'clock.

Miss Maynard sent us our supper upstairs, and I spread it on a little table by Mary's bed, and I ran down to the schoolroom for some flowers to put round the plates, and Mary said it was "the prettiest little set-out she had ever seen!" As we were eating our supper, Mary asked: "What makes you so different from other people, Olive?"

"Oh, Mary," I said, laughing, "what do you mean? I am not different from other people."

"Yes, you are," she said. "No one but you would ever have thought of stopping with me

to-night, and I have often noticed, Olive, that you have done things I never could do—right things, I mean. And sometimes, I wish I was like you. What makes you so different?"

"I am often very bad and selfish. But mother gave me a question to hang up in my room: 'What would Jesus do?' and if ever I do anything right, I think it is because I ask myself that question, and try to act out the answer."

"I suppose it is," said Mary, thoughtfully. "I think I must illuminate a card like that, and hang it up in my room. But no, that would not do!" she went on. "There must be something more than that, Olive. I am afraid my just asking myself that question would never make me do the right thing; it might tell me what I ought to do, but then, very likely, I should not be able to make up my mind to do it."

"Yes," I said, "I see what you mean. I do not think the motto would help you much, unless you really wanted to follow Christ's footsteps. Don't you think we must learn to love Him first, before we shall want to follow Him. Mother says, Jesus has given us two commands: 'Come unto Me,' and 'Follow Me,' and that it is of no use trying to keep the second, till we have obeyed the first. It is of no use

trying to follow His steps, till we have come to Him as our Saviour."

"I see," said Mary. "Please, Olive, will—"

I was turning out my drawers and closets last night as I was preparing to pack, when I came across this poor old book, stowed away in a corner, and covered with dust. It is the book mother gave me before she left home, in which I was to write my little school journal. I find I have not written a single word since the midsummer holidays of my first year at school. The two years of which I wrote on the first page of my journal, and which I thought would never pass away, are now gone, and they seem to have passed away as quickly as a dream, just as mother told me they would do. Now I am packing up to go out to India, to father and mother, and I am nearly wild with joy at the thought of seeing them again.

How good God has been to me all the time I have been at school! That first half-year, of which I wrote in this book, was my hardest time, but He helped me out of all my troubles, and, from that time, my school life was very bright and happy; every one was so good to me, and they all seemed to be determined to spoil me with kindness.

I see that my journal leaves off in the middle of a sentence, and what Mary asked me to do that night I cannot remember. Only I know that, from that time, we had many a long talk together about my school motto, and I had good reason to believe that, before very long, Mary Conder had obeyed both our Lord's commands; that she had come to Him to be saved from her sin, and that she was earnestly endeavouring to follow His steps.

And now my school days are done, and I am to begin quite a new stage of my life.

Oh, that I may never forget all the lessons God has been teaching me! Oh, that, by His grace, I may go out to India, determined to be a comfort to my father and mother, and to glorify God, and to serve Him with all my heart and with all my mind.

I have just finished my packing, and have wrapped my row of prizes carefully in paper, that mother may see them in all their beauty. But there is nothing I possess that I have packed more carefully, nor with greater thankfulness and love, than my school motto,

"WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?"