

***E. PRENTISS***



***STEPPING  
HEAVENWARD***

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# **Stepping Heavenward**

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Contact: [DigiCat@okpublishing.info](mailto:DigiCat@okpublishing.info)



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# Chapter 1

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### I.

January 15, 1831.

How dreadfully old I am getting! Sixteen! Well, I don't see as I can help it. There it is in the big Bible in father's own hand: "Katherine, born Jan. 15, 1815."

I meant to get up early this morning, but it looked dismally cold out of doors, and felt delightfully warm in bed. So I covered myself up, and made ever so many good resolutions.

I determined, in the first place, to begin this Journal. To be sure, I have begun half a dozen, and got tired of them after a while. Not tired of writing them, but disgusted with what I had to say of myself. But this time I mean to go on, in spite of everything. It will do me good to read it over, and see what a creature I am.

Then I resolved to do more to please mother than I have done.

And I determined to make one more effort to conquer my hasty temper. I thought, too, I would be self-denying this winter, like the people one reads about in books. I fancied how surprised and pleased everybody would be to see me so much improved!

Time passed quickly amid these agreeable thoughts, and I was quite startled to hear the bell ring for prayers. I jumped up in a great flurry and dressed as quickly as I could. Everything conspired together to plague me. I could not find a clean collar, or a handkerchief. It is always just so. Susan is forever poking my things into out-of-the-way places! When at last I went down, they were all at breakfast.

"I hoped you would celebrate your birthday, dear, by coming down in good season," said mother.

I do hate to be found fault with, so I fired up in an instant.

"If people hide my things so that I can't find them, of course I have to be late," I said. And I rather think I said it in a very cross way, for mother sighed a little. I wish mother wouldn't sigh. I would rather be called names out and out.

The moment breakfast was over I had to hurry off to school. Just as I was going out mother said, "Have you your overshoes, dear?"

"Oh, mother, don't hinder me! I shall be late," I said. "I don't need overshoes."

"It snowed all night, and I think you do need them," mother said.

"I don't know where they are. I hate overshoes. Do let me go, mother," I cried. "I do wish I could ever have my own way."

"You shall have it now, my child," mother said, and went away.

Now what was the use of her calling me "my child" in such a tone, I should like to know.

I hurried off, and just as I got to the door of the schoolroom it flashed into my mind that I had not said my

prayers! A nice way to begin on one's birthday, to be sure! Well, I had not time. And perhaps my good resolutions pleased God almost as much as one of my rambling stupid prayers could. For I must own I can't make good prayers. I can't think of anything to say. I often wonder what mother finds to say when she is shut up by the hour together.

I had a pretty good time at school. My teachers praised me, and Amelia seemed so fond of me! She brought me a birthday present of a purse that she had knit for me herself, and a net for my hair. Nets are just coming into fashion. It will save a good deal of time my having this one. Instead of combing and combing and combing my old hair to get it glossy enough to suit mother, I can just give it one twist and one squeeze and the whole thing will be settled for the day.

Amelia wrote me a dear little note, with her presents. I do really believe she loves me dearly. It is so nice to have people love you!

When I got home mother called me into her room. She looked as if she had been crying. She said I gave her a great deal of pain by my self-will and ill temper and conceit.

"Conceit!" I screamed out. "Oh, mother, if you only knew how horrid I think I am!"

Mother smiled a little. Then she went on with her list till she made me out the worst creature in the world. I burst out crying, and was running off to my room, but she made me come back and hear the rest. She said my character would be essentially formed by the time I reached my twentieth year, and left it to me to say if I wished to be as a woman what I was now as a girl. I felt sulky, and would not answer. I was shocked to think I had got only four years in which to

improve, but after all a good deal could be done in that time. Of course I don't want to be always exactly what I am now.

Mother went on to say that I had in me the elements of a fine character if I would only conquer some of my faults. "You are frank and truthful," she said, "and in some things conscientious. I hope you are really a child of God, and are trying to please Him. And it is my daily prayer that you may become a lovely, loving, useful woman."

I made no answer. I wanted to say something, but my tongue wouldn't move. I was angry with mother, and angry with myself. At last everything came out all in a rush, mixed up with such floods of tears that I thought mother's heart would melt, and that she would take back what she had said.

"Amelia's mother never talks so to her!" I said. "She praises her, and tells her what a comfort she is to her. But just as I am trying as hard as I can to be good, and making resolutions, and all that, you scold me and discourage me!"

Mother's voice was very soft and gentle as she asked, "Do you call this 'scolding,' my child?"

"And I don't like to be called conceited," I went on. "I know I am perfectly horrid, and I am just as unhappy as I can be."

"I am very sorry for you, dear," mother replied. "But you must bear with me. Other people will see your faults, but only your mother will have the courage to speak of them. Now go to your own room, and wipe away the traces of your tears that the rest of the family may not know that you have been crying on your birthday." She kissed me but I did not

kiss her. I really believe Satan himself hindered me. I ran across the hall to my room, slammed the door, and locked myself in. I was going to throw myself on the bed and cry till I was sick. Then I should look pale and tired, and they would all pity me. I do like so to be pitied! But on the table, by the window, I saw a beautiful new desk in place of the old clumsy thing I had been spattering and spoiling so many years. A little note, full of love, said it was from mother, and begged me to read and reflect upon a few verses of a tastefully bound copy of the Bible, which accompanied it every day of my life. "A few verses," she said, "carefully read and pondered, instead of a chapter or two read for mere form's sake." I looked at my desk, which contained exactly what I wanted, plenty of paper, seals, wax and pens. I always use wax. Wafers are vulgar. Then I opened the Bible at random, and lighted on these words:

"Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." There was nothing very cheering in that. I felt a real repugnance to be always on the watch, thinking I might die at any moment. I am sure I am not fit to die. Besides I want to have a good time, with nothing to worry me. I hope I shall live ever so long. Perhaps in the course of forty or fifty years I may get tired of this world and want to leave it. And I hope by that time I shall be a great deal better than I am now, and fit to go to heaven.

I wrote a note to mother on my new desk, and thanked her for it I told her she was the best mother in the world, and that I was the worst daughter. When it was done I did not like it, and so I wrote another. Then I went down to dinner and felt better. We had such a nice dinner!



Everything I liked best was on the table. Mother had not forgotten one of all the dainties I like. Amelia was there too. Mother had invited her to give me a little surprise. It is bedtime now, and I must say my prayers and go to bed. I have got all chilled through, writing here in the cold. I believe I will say my prayers in bed, just for this once. I do not feel sleepy, but I am sure I ought not to sit up another moment.

JAN. 30.-Here I am at my desk once more. There is a fire in my room, and mother is sitting by it, reading. I can't see what book it is, but I have no doubt it is Thomas A Kempis. How she can go on reading it so year after year, I cannot imagine. For my part I like something new. But I must go back to where I left off.

That night when I stopped writing, I hurried to bed as fast as I could, for I felt cold and tired. I remember saying, "Oh, God, I am ashamed to pray," and then I began to think of all the things that had happened that day, and never knew another thing till the rising bell rang and I found it was morning. I am sure I did not mean to go to sleep. I think now it was wrong for me to be such a coward as to try to say my prayers in bed because of the cold. While I was writing I did not once think how I felt. Well, I jumped up as soon as I heard the bell, but found I had a dreadful pain in my side, and a cough. Susan says I coughed all night. I remembered then that I had just such a cough and just such a pain the last time I walked in the snow without overshoes. I crept back to bed feeling about as mean as I could. Mother sent up to know why I did not come down, and I had to own that I was sick. She came up directly looking so anxious! And here

I have been shut up ever since; only to day I am sitting up a little. Poor mother has had trouble enough with me; I know I have been cross and unreasonable, and it was all my own fault that I was ill. Another time I will do as mother says.

JAN. 31.-How easy it is to make good resolutions, and how easy it is to break them! Just as I had got so far, yesterday, mother spoke for the third time about my exerting myself so much. And just at that moment I fainted away, and she had a great time all alone there with me. I did not realize how long I had been writing, nor how weak I was. I do wonder if I shall ever really learn that mother knows more than I do!

Feb. 17.-It is more than a month since I took that cold, and here I still am, shut up in the house. To be sure the doctor lets me go down stairs, but then he won't listen to a word about school. Oh, dear! All the girls will get ahead of me.

This is Sunday, and everybody has gone to church. I thought I ought to make a good use of the time while they were gone, so I took the Memoir of Henry Martyn, and read a little in that.

I am afraid I am not much like him. Then I knelt down and tried to pray. But my mind was full of all sorts of things, so I thought I would wait till I was in a better frame. At noon I disputed with James about the name of an apple. He was very provoking, and said he was thankful he had not got such a temper as I had. I cried, and mother reproved him for teasing me, saying my illness had left me nervous and irritable. James replied that it had left me where it found me, then. I cried a good while, lying on the sofa, and then I fell

asleep. I don't see as I am any the better for this Sunday, it has only made me feel unhappy and out of sorts. I am sure I pray to God to make me better, and why doesn't He?

Feb. 20.-It has been quite a mild day for the season, and the doctor said I might drive out. I enjoyed getting the air very much. I feel just well as ever, and long to get back to school. I think God has been very good to me in making me well again, and wish I loved Him better. But, oh, I am not sure I do love Him! I hate to own it to myself, and to write it down here, but I will. I do not love to pray. I am always eager to get it over with and out of the way so as to have leisure to enjoy myself. I mean that this is usually so. This morning I cried a good deal while I was on my knees, and felt sorry for my quick temper and all my bad ways. If I always felt so, perhaps praying would not be such a task. I wish I knew whether anybody exactly as bad as I am ever got to heaven at last. I have read ever so many memoirs, and they were all about people who were too good to live, and so died; or else went on a mission. I am not at all like any of them.

March 26.-I have been so busy that I have not said much to you, you poor old journal, you, have I? Somehow I have been behaving quite nicely lately. Everything has gone on exactly to my mind. Mother has not found fault with me once, and father has praised my drawings and seemed proud of me. He says he shall not tell me what my teachers say of me lest it should make me vain. And once or twice when he has met me singing and frisking about the house he has kissed me and called me his dear little Flibbertigibbet, if that's the way to spell it. When he says

that I know he is very fond of me. We are all very happy together when nothing goes wrong. In the long evenings we all sit around the table with our books and our work, and one of us reads aloud. Mother chooses the book and takes her turn in reading. She reads beautifully. Of course the readings do not begin till the lessons are all learned. As to me, my lessons just take no time at all. I have only to read them over once, and there they are. So I have a good deal of time to read, and I devour all the poetry I can get hold of. I would rather read "Pollok's Course of Time" than read nothing at all.

APRIL 2.-There are three of mother's friends living near us, each having lots of little children. It is perfectly ridiculous how much those creatures are sick. They send for mother if so much as a pimple comes out on one of their faces. When I have children I don't mean to have such goings on. I shall be careful about what they eat, and keep them from getting cold, and they will keep well of their own accord. Mrs. Jones has just sent for mother to see her Tommy. It was so provoking. I had coaxed her into letting me have a black silk apron; they are all the fashion now, embroidered in floss silk. I had drawn a lovely vine for mine entirely out of my own head, and mother was going to arrange the pattern for me when that message came, and she had to go. I don't believe anything ails the child! a great chubby thing!

April 3.-Poor Mrs. Jones! Her dear little Tommy is dead! I stayed at home from school to-day and had all the other children here to get them out of their mother's way. How dreadfully she must feel! Mother cried when she told me how the dear little fellow suffered in his last moments. It

reminded her of my little brothers who died in the same way, just before I was born. Dear mother! I wonder I ever forget what troubles she has had, and am not always sweet and loving. She has gone now, where she always goes when she feels sad, straight to God. Of course she did not say so, but I know mother.

April 25.-I have not been down in season once this week. I have persuaded mother to let me read some of Scott's novels, and have sat up late and been sleepy in the morning. I wish I could get along with mother as nicely as James does. He is late far oftener than I am, but he never gets into such scrapes about it as I do. This is what happens. He comes down when it suits him.

Mother begins.-"James, I am very much displeased with you."

James.-"I should think you would be, mother."

Mother, mollified.-"I don't think you deserve any breakfast."

James, hypocritically.-"No, I don't think I do, mother."

Then mother hurries off and gets something extra for his breakfast.

Now let us see how things go on when I am late.

Mother.-"Katherine" (she always calls me Katherine when she is displeased, and spells it with a K), "Katherine, you are late again; how can you annoy your father so?"

Katherine.-"Of course I don't do it to annoy father or anybody else.

But if I oversleep myself, it is not my fault."

Mother.-"I would go to bed at eight o'clock rather than be late as often as you. How should you like it if I were not

down to prayers?"

Katherine, muttering.-"Of course that is very different. I don't see why I should be blamed for oversleeping any more than James. I get all the scoldings."

Mother sighs and goes off.

I prowl round and get what scraps of breakfast I can.

May 12.-The weather is getting perfectly delicious. I am sitting with my window open, and my bird is singing with all his heart. I wish I was as gay as he is.

I have been thinking lately that it was about time to begin on some of those pieces of self-denial I resolved on upon my birthday. I could not think of anything great enough for a long time. At last an idea popped into my head. Half the girls at school envy me because Amelia is so fond of me, and Jane Underhill, in particular, is just crazy to get intimate with her. But I have kept Amelia all to myself. To-day I said to her, Amelia, Jane Underhill admires you above all things. I have a good mind to let you be as intimate with her as you are with me. It will be a great piece of self-denial, but I think it is my duty. She is a stranger, and nobody seems to like her much.

"You dear thing, you!" cried Amelia, kissing me. "I liked Jane Underhill the moment I saw her. She has such a sweet face and such pleasant manners. But you are so jealous that I never dared to show how I liked her. Don't be vexed, dearie; if you are jealous it is your only fault!"

She then rushed off, and I saw her kiss that girl exactly as she kisses me!

This was in recess. I went to my desk and made believe I was studying. Pretty soon Amelia came back.

"She is a sweet girl," she said, "and only to think! She writes poetry! Just hear this! It is a little poem addressed to me. Isn't it nice of her?"

I pretended not to hear her. I was as full of all sorts of horrid feelings as I could hold. It enraged me to think that Amelia, after all her professions of love to me, should snatch at the first chance of getting a new friend. Then I was mortified because I was enraged, and I could have torn myself to pieces for being such a fool as to let Amelia see how silly I was.

"I don't know what to make of you, Katy," she said, putting her arms round me. "Have I done anything to vex you? Come, let us make up and be friends, whatever it is. I will read you these sweet verses; I am sure you will like them."

She read them in her clear, pleasant voice.

"How can you have the vanity to read such stuff?" I cried. Amelia colored a little.

"You have said and written much more flattering things to me," she replied. "Perhaps it has turned my head, and made me too ready to believe what other people say." She folded the paper, and put it into her pocket. We walked home together, after school, as usual, but neither of us spoke a word. And now here I sit, unhappy enough. All my resolutions fail. But I did not think Amelia would take me at my word, and rush after that stuck-up, smirking piece.

May 20.-I seem to have got back into all my bad ways again. Mother is quite out of patience with me. I have not prayed for a long time. It does not do any good.

May 21.-It seems this Underhill thing is here for health, though she looks as well as any of us. She is an orphan, and has been adopted by a rich old uncle, who makes a perfect fool of her. Such dresses and such finery as she wears! Last night she had Amelia there to tea, without inviting me, though she knows I am her best friend. She gave her a bracelet made of her own hair. I wonder Amelia's mother lets her accept presents from strangers. My mother would not let me. On the whole, there is nobody like one's own mother. Amelia has been cold and distant to me of late, but no matter what I do or say to my darling, precious mother, she is always kind and loving. She noticed how I moped about to-day, and begged me to tell her what was the matter. I was ashamed to do that. I told her that it was a little quarrel I had had with Amelia.

"Dear child," she said, "how I pity you that you have inherited my quick, irritable temper."

"Yours, mother!" I cried out; "what can you mean?"

Mother smiled a little at my surprise.

"It is even so," she said.

"Then how did you cure yourself of it? Tell me quick, mother, and let me cure myself of mine."

"My dear Katy," she said, "I wish I could make you see that God is just as willing, and just as able to sanctify, as He is to redeem us. It would save you so much weary, disappointing work. But God has opened my eyes at last."

"I wish He would open mine, then," I said, "for all I see now is that I am just as horrid as I can be, and that the more I pray the worse I grow."



"That is not true, dear," she replied; "go on praying-pray without ceasing."

I sat pulling my handkerchief this way and that, and at last rolled it up into a ball and threw it across the room. I wished I could toss my bad feelings into a corner with it.

"I do wish I could make you love to pray, my darling child," mother went on. "If you only knew the strength, and the light, and the joy you might have for the simple asking. God attaches no conditions to His gifts. He only says, 'Ask!'"

"This may be true, but it is hard work to pray. It tires me. And I do wish there was some easy way of growing good. In fact I should like to have God send a sweet temper to me just as He sent bread and meat to Elijah. I don't believe Elijah had to kneel down and pray for them."

## **Chapter 2.**

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II. June 1.

LAST Sunday Dr. Cabot preached to the young. He first addressed those who knew they did not love God. It did not seem to me that I belonged to that class. Then he spoke to those who knew they did. I felt sure I was not one of those. Last of all he spoke affectionately to those who did not know what to think, and I was frightened and ashamed to feel tears running down my cheeks, when he said that he believed that most of his hearers who were in this doubtful state did really love their Master, only their love was something as new and as tender and perhaps as

unobserved as the tiny point of green that, forcing its way through the earth, is yet unconscious of its own existence, but promises a thrifty plant. I don't suppose I express it very well, but I know what he meant. He then invited those belonging to each class to meet him on three successive Saturday afternoons. I shall certainly go.

July 19.-I went to the meeting, and so did Amelia. A great many young people were there and a few children. Dr. Cabot went about from seat to seat speaking to each one separately. When he came to us I expected he would say something about the way in which I had been brought up, and reproach me for not profiting more by the instructions and example I had at home. Instead of that he said, in a cheerful voice,

"Well, my dear, I cannot see into your heart and positively tell whether there is love to God there or not. But I suppose you have come here to-day in order to let me help you to find out?"

I said, "Yes"; that was all I could get out.

"Let me see, then," he went on. "Do you love your mother?"

I said "Yes," once more.

"But prove to me that you do. How do you know it?"

I tried to think. Then I said,

"I feel that I love her. I love to love her, I like to be with her. I like to hear people praise her. And I try—sometimes at least—to do things to please her. But I don't try half as hard as I ought, and I do and say a great many things to displease her."

"Yes, yes," he said, "I know."

"Has mother told you?" I cried out.

"No, dear, no indeed. But I know what human nature is after having one of my own fifty years, and six of my children's to encounter."

Somehow I felt more courage after he said that.

"In the first place, then, you feel that you love your mother? But you never feel that you love your God and Saviour?"

"I often try, and try, but I never do," I said.

"Love won't be forced," he said, quickly.

"Then what shall I do?"

"In the second place, you like to be with your mother. But you never like to be with the Friend who loves you so much better than she does?"

"I don't know, I never was with Him. Sometimes I think that when Mary sat at His feet and heard Him talk, she must have been very happy."

"We come to the third test, then. You like to hear people praise your mother. And have you ever rejoiced to hear the Lord magnified?"

I shook my head sorrowfully enough.

"Let us then try the last test. You know you love your mother because you try to do things to please her. That is to do what you know she wishes you to do? Very well. Have you never tried to do anything God wishes you to do?"

"Oh yes; often. But not so often as I ought."

"Of course not. No one does that. But come now, why do you try to do what you think will please Him? Because it is easy? Because you like to do what He likes rather than what you like yourself?"

I tried to think, and got puzzled.

"Never mind," said Dr. Cabot, "I have come now to the point I was aiming at. You cannot prove to yourself that you love God by examining your feelings towards Him. They are indefinite and they fluctuate. But just as far as you obey Him, just so far, depend upon it, you love Him. It is not natural to us sinful, ungrateful human beings to prefer His pleasure to our own, or to follow His way instead of our own way, and nothing, nothing but love to Him can or does make us obedient to Him."

"Couldn't we obey Him from fear?" Amelia now asked. She had been listening all this time in silence.

"Yes; and so you might obey your mother from fear, but only for a season. If you had no real love for her you would gradually cease to dread her displeasure, whereas it is in the very nature of love to grow stronger and more influential every hour."

"You mean, then, that if we want to know whether we love God, we must find out whether we are obeying Him?" Amelia asked.

"I mean exactly that. 'He that keepeth my commandments he it is that loveth me.' But I cannot talk with you any longer now. There are many others still waiting. You can come to see me some day next week, if you have any more questions to ask."

When we got out into the street, Amelia and I got hold of each other's hands. We did not speak a word till we reached the door, but we knew that we were as good friends as ever.

"I understand all Dr. Cabot said," Amelia whispered, as we separated. But I felt like one in a fog. I cannot see how it

is possible to love God, and yet feel as stupid as I do when I think of Him. Still, I am determined to do one thing, and that is to pray, regularly instead of now and then, as I have got the habit of doing lately.

July 25.-School has closed for the season. I took the first prize for drawing, and my composition was read aloud on examination day, and everybody praised it. Mother could not possibly help showing, in her face, that she was very much pleased. I am pleased myself. We are now getting ready to take a journey. I do not think I shall go to see Dr. Cabot again. My head is so full of other things, and there is so much to do before we go. I am having four new dresses made, and I can't imagine how to have them trimmed. I mean to run down to Amelia's and ask her.

July 27.-I was rushing through the hall just after I wrote that, and met mother.

"I am going to Amelia's," I said, hurrying past her.

"Stop one minute, dear. Dr. Cabot is downstairs. He says he has been expecting a visit from you, and that as you did not come to him, he has come to you."

"I wish he would mind his own business," I said.

"I think he is minding it, dear," mother answered. "His Master's business is his, and that has brought him here. Go to him, my darling child; I am sure you crave something better than prizes and compliments and new dresses and journeys."

If anybody but mother had said that, my heart would have melted at once, and I should have gone right down to Dr. Cabot to be moulded in his hand to almost any shape. But as it was I brushed past, ran into my room, and locked

my door. Oh, what makes me act so! I hate myself for it, I don't want to do it!

Last week I dined with Mrs. Jones. Her little Tommy was very fond of me, and that, I suppose, makes her have me there so often. Lucy was at the table, and very fractious. She cried first for one thing and then for another. At last her mother in a gentle, but very decided way put her down from the table. Then she cried louder than ever. But when her mother offered to take her back if she would be good, she screamed yet more. She wanted to come and wouldn't let herself come. I almost hated her when I saw her act so, and now I am behaving ten times worse and I am just as miserable as I can be.

July 29.-Amelia has been here. She has had her talk with Dr. Cabot and is perfectly happy. She says it is so easy to be a Christian! It may be easy for her; everything is. She never has any of my dreadful feelings, and does not understand them when I try to explain them to her. Well, if I am fated to be miserable, I must try to bear it.

Oct. 3.-Summer is over, school has begun again, and I am so busy that I have not much time to think, to be low spirited. We had a delightful journey, and I feel well and bright, and even gay. I never enjoyed my studies as I do those of this year. Everything goes on pleasantly here at home. But James has gone away to school, and we miss him sadly. I wish I had a sister. Though I dare say I should quarrel with her, if I had.

Oct 23.-I am so glad that my studies are harder this year, as I am never happy except when every moment is occupied. However, I do not study all the time, by any

means. Mrs. Gordon grows more and more fond of me, and has me there to dinner or to tea continually. She has a much higher opinion of me than mother has, and is always saying the sort of things that make you feel nice. She holds me up to Amelia as an example, begging her to imitate me in my fidelity about my lessons, and declaring there is nothing she so much desires as to have a daughter bright and original like me. Amelia only laughs, and goes and purrs in her mother's ears when she hears such talk. It costs her nothing to be pleasant. She was born so. For my part, I think myself lucky to have such a friend. She gets along with my odd, hateful ways better than any one else does. Mother, when I boast of this, says she has no penetration into character, and that she would be fond of almost any one fond of her; and that the fury with which I love her deserves some response. I really don't know what to make of mother. Most people are proud of their children when they see others admire them; but she does say such pokey things! Of course I know that having a gift for music, and a taste for drawing, and a reputation for saying witty, bright things isn't enough. But when she doesn't find fault with me, and nothing happens to keep me down, I am the gayest creature on earth. I do love to get with a lot of nice girls, and carry on! I have got enough fun in me to keep a houseful merry. And mother needn't say anything. I inherited it from her.

Evening.-I knew it was coming! Mother has been in to see what I was about, and to give me a bit of her mind. She says she loves to see me gay and cheerful, as is natural at my age, but that levity quite upsets and disorders the mind, indisposing it for serious thoughts.

"But, mother," I said, "didn't you carry on when you were a young girl?"

"Of course I did," she said, smiling. "But I do not think I was quite so thoughtless as you are."

"Thoughtless" indeed! I wish I were! But am I not always full of uneasy, reproachful thoughts when the moment of excitement is over? Other girls, who seem less trifling than I, are really more so. Their heads are full of dresses and parties and beaux, and all that sort of nonsense. I wonder if that ever worries their mothers, or whether mine is the only one who weeps in secret? Well, I shall be young but once, and while I am, do let me have a good time!

Sunday, Nov. 20.-Oh, the difference between this day and the day I wrote that! There are no good times in this dreadful world. I have hardly courage or strength to write down the history of the past few weeks. The day after I had deliberately made up my mind to enjoy myself, cost what it might, my dear father called me to him, kissed me, pulled my ears a little, and gave me some money.

"We have had to keep you rather low in funds," he said laughing. "But I recovered this amount yesterday, and as it was a little debt I had given up, I can spare it to you. For girls like pin-money, I know, and you may spend this just as you please."

I was delighted. I want to take more drawing-lessons, but did not feel sure he could afford it. Besides—I am a little ashamed to write it down—I knew somebody had been praising me or father would not have seemed so fond of me. I wondered who it was, and felt a good deal puffed up. "After-all," I said to myself, "some people like me if I have



got my faults." I threw my arms around his neck and kissed him, though that cost me a great effort. I never like to show what I feel. But, oh! how thankful I am for it now.

As to mother, I know father never goes out without kissing her good-by.

I went out with her to take a walk at three o'clock. We had just reached the corner of Orange Street, when I saw a carriage driving slowly towards us; it appeared to be full of sailors. Then I saw our friend, Mr. Freeman, among them. When he saw us he jumped out and came up to us. I do not know what he said. I saw mother turn pale and catch at his arm as if she were afraid of falling. But she did not speak a word.

"Oh! Mr. Freeman, what is it?" I cried out. "Has anything happened to father? Is he hurt? Where is he?"

"He is in the carriage," he said. "We are taking him home. He has had a fall."

Then we went on in silence. The sailors were carrying father in as we reached the house. They laid him on the sofa, we saw his poor head...

Nov. 23.-I will try to write the rest now. Father was alive but insensible. He had fallen down into the hold of the ship, and the sailors heard him groaning there. He lived three hours after they brought him home. Mr. Freeman and all our friends were very kind. But we like best to be alone, we three, mother and James and I. Poor mother looks twenty years older, but she is so patient, and so concerned for us, and has such a smile of welcome for every one that comes in, that it breaks my heart to see her.

Nov. 25.-Mother spoke to me very seriously to-day, about controlling myself more. She said she knew this was my first real sorrow, and how hard it was to bear it. But that she was afraid I should become insane some time, if I indulged myself in such passions of grief. And she said, too, that when friends came to see us, full of sympathy and eager to say or do something for our comfort, it was our duty to receive them with as much cheerfulness as possible.

I said they, none of them, had anything to say that did not provoke me.

"It is always a trying task to visit the afflicted," mother said, "and you make it doubly hard to your friends by putting on a gloomy, forbidding air, and by refusing to talk of your dear father, as if you were resolved to keep your sorrow all to yourself."

"I can't smile when I am so unhappy," I said.

A good many people have been here to-day. Mother has seen them all, though she looked ready to drop. Mrs. Bates said to me, in her little, weak, watery voice:

"Your mother is wonderfully sustained, dear. I hope you feel reconciled to God's will. Rebellion is most displeasing to Him, dear."

I made no answer. It is very easy for people to preach. Let me see how they behave when they their turn to lose their friends.

Mrs. Morris said this was a very mysterious dispensation. But that she was happy to see that Mother was meeting it with so much firmness. "As for myself," she went on, "I was quite broken down by my dear husband's death. I did not eat as much as would feed a bird, for nearly a week. But

some people have so much feeling; then again others are so firm. Your mother is so busy talking with Mrs. March that I won't interrupt her to say good-bye. I came prepared to suggest several things that I thought would comfort her; but perhaps she has thought of them herself."

I could have knocked her down. Firm, indeed! Poor mother.

After they had all gone, I made her lie down, she looked so tired and worn out.

Then, I could not help telling her what Mrs. Morris had said.

She only smiled a little, but said nothing.

"I wish you would ever flare up, mother," I said.

She smiled again, and said she had nothing to "flare up" about.

"Then I shall do it for you!" I cried. "To hear that namby-pamby woman, who is about as capable of understanding you as an old cat, talking about your being firm! You see what you get by being quiet and patient! People would like you much better if you refused to be comforted, and wore a sad countenance."

"Dear Katy," said mother, "it is not my first object in life to make people like me."

By this time she looked so pale that I was frightened. Though she is so cheerful, and things go on much as they did before, I believe she has got her death-blow. If she has, then I hope I have got mine. And yet I am not fit to die. I wish I was, and I wish I could die. I have lost all interest in everything, and don't care what becomes of me.

Nov. 23.-I believe I shall go crazy unless people stop coming here, hurling volleys of texts at mother and at me. When soldiers drop wounded on the battle-field, they are taken up tenderly and carried "to the rear," which means, I suppose, out of sight and sound. Is anybody mad enough to suppose it will do them any good to hear Scripture quoted sermons launched at them before their open, bleeding wounds are staunched?

Mother assents, in a mild way, when I talk so and says, "Yes, yes, we are indeed lying wounded on the battle-field of life, and in no condition to listen to any words save those of pity. But, dear Katy, we must interpret aright all the well-meant attempts of our friends to comfort us. They mean sympathy, however awkwardly they express it."

And then she sighed, with a long, deep sigh, that told how it all wearied her.

Dec. 14.-Mother keeps saying I spend too much time in brooding over my sorrow. As for her, she seems to live in heaven. Not that she has long prosy talks about it, but little words that she lets drop now and then show where her thoughts are, and where she would like to be. She seems to think everybody is as eager to go there as she is. For my part, I am not eager at all. I can't make myself feel that it will be nice to sit in rows, all the time singing, fond as I am of music. And when I say to myself, "Of course we shall not always sit in rows singing," then I fancy a multitude of shadowy, phantom-like beings, dressed in white, moving to and fro in golden streets, doing nothing in particular, and having a dreary time, without anything to look forward to.

I told mother so. She said earnestly, and yet in her sweetest, tenderest way,

"Oh, my darling Katy! What you need is such a living, personal love to Christ as shall make the thought of being where He is so delightful as to fill your mind with that single thought!"

What is "personal love to Christ?"

Oh, dear, dear! Why need my father have been snatched away from me, when so many other girls have theirs spared to them? He loved me so! He indulged me so much! He was so proud of me! What have I done that I should have this dreadful thing happen to me? I shall never be as happy as I was before. Now I shall always be expecting trouble. Yes, I dare say mother will go next. Why shouldn't I brood over this sorrow? I like to brood over it; I like to think how wretched I am; I like to have long, furious fits of crying, lying on my face on the bed.

Jan. 1, 1832.-People talk a great deal about the blessed effects of sorrow. But I do not see any good it has done me to lose my dear father, and as to mother she was good enough before.

We are going to leave our pleasant home, where all of us children were born, and move into a house in an out-of-the-way street. By selling this, and renting a smaller one, mother hopes, with economy, to carry James through college. And I must go to Miss Higgins' school because it is less expensive than Mr. Stone's. Miss Higgins, indeed! I never could bear her! A few months ago, how I should have cried and stormed at the idea of her school. But the great sorrow swallows up the little trial.

I tried once more, this morning, as it is the first day of the year, to force myself to begin to love God.

I want to do it; I know I ought to do it; but I cannot. I go through the form of saying something that I try to pass off as praying, every day now. But I take no pleasure in it, as good people say they do, and as I am sure mother does. Nobody could live in the house with her, and doubt that.

Jan. 10.-We are in our new home now, and it is quite a cozy little place. James is at home for the long vacation and we are together all the time I am out of school. We study and sing together and now and then, when we forget that dear father has gone, we are as full of fun as ever. If it is so nice to have a brother, what must it be to have a sister! Dear old Jim! He is the very pleasantest, dearest fellow in the world!

Jan. 15.-I have come to another birthday and am seventeen. Mother has celebrated it just as usual, though I know all these anniversaries which used to be so pleasant, must be sad days to her now my dear father has gone. She has been cheerful-and loving, and entered into all my pleasures exactly as if nothing had happened. I wonder at myself that I do not enter more into her sorrows, but though at times the remembrance of our loss overwhelms me, my natural elasticity soon makes me rise above and forget it. And I am absorbed with these school-days, that come one after another, in such quick succession that I am all the time running to keep up with them. And as long as I do that I forget that death has crossed our threshold, and may do it again. But to night I feel very sad, and as if I would give almost any thing to live in a world where nothing painful