

dividual, must be work—unless age or infirmity intervenes; and those who are charitably disposed do the greatest service to the needy by providing for them tasks of a useful character for which a moderate payment can be made.



## The Will of a Pauper

By Emily Huntington Miller

In Two Parts—II.

The room into which the Squire was ushered was not in the wing set apart as the special quarters of the town poor. It opened directly from the keeping-room, and was set out with all the bravest of Sally's housewifely furnishings—high-post bedstead, mahogany bureau with fluted glass knobs for handles, tall, narrow mirror shaded with asparagus-boughs, and high mantel bearing upon each end a plaster vase filled with a marvelous assortment of peaches, oranges, grapes, and tomatoes, and in the middle the family daguerreotypes, set open and grouped about the silver coffin-plates of two departed members. Sally had resigned this stately room to her gasping charge with a brief pang, but the sacrifice was so immense that she felt bound to justify it to herself by the plea that she must have him "handy."

Really it was that the room was cool and airy, and had a pleasant outlook over the fields to the pine woods beyond the river. The river itself was not visible, but you knew it was there, and when the air was hot and lifeless it was good to think of it, moving noiselessly under the black shadow of its pines, or foaming over rocks and tumbling into cool, plashing falls. That is, if you were not a pauper, and had any claim to imaginary comforts.

With his tawny face bleached by sickness, and his hair smoothed and softened by Sally's motherly tendance, the sick man looked altogether a different person from the discouraged laborer whose slow, slouching gait was familiar to the Squire. His gray eyes glowed from deep hollows, and his weak chin and womanish mouth were half hidden by a growth of yellow beard, for whose offensive presence Sally scarcely felt sickness to be an excuse. Propped up with pillows, his skinny hands locked together upon the red and green parrots of the gorgeous quilt, he watched every movement with a pathetic air of patient waiting.

The poormaster drew forward a chair, tipping it a little to spill out a black and yellow cat coiled upon the cushion, and, with a nod at Sandy, the Squire seated himself, hitching his chair a little closer to the bed, and laying his papers upon a three-legged stand, already occupied by vials and powders.

Sally laid in her lap the dingy little book from which she had been reading aloud, and kept on waving her turkey-feather fan, while Jason seated himself on the foot of the bed, hitting it occasionally with his restless legs, at which the sick man winced nervously, as his betters might have done, but spoke no word of remonstrance.

"I think," said the Squire, rubbing his hands over his knees, "I had better have a consultation with my client in private."

"Hey?" said Jason. "Don't want no witnesses? Wa'al, it's all right if *he* says so," and he looked at Sandy with an amused appreciation of the joke which set him up as a "client."

"He" did say so, with an air of apology for making so much trouble, whispering hoarsely to Sally: "Bring me the papers first—the ones I gave you to keep."

Sally opened the top drawer of the bureau, and took out a thin packet, securely tied and sealed, yet much worn at the corners, and exhaling, in spite of its recent embalming in rose-leaves and lavender, only the fragrance of ancient tobacco-smoke. She laid it within easy reach of the feeble fingers, smiled assuringly into the wan face that made grateful protest at any small service, and stopped to shake the pillows and crowd them a little closer to the bent shoulders before she followed her husband from the room.

The sight of the packet set all the Squire's professional instincts on the scent of business. Sandy clutched the papers, drew up his knees under the gay quilt till he could

rest his chin upon them, and fixed his burning eyes upon the Squire, till even that unimpressible being grew uneasy under their intense gaze.

"I want to know," he slowly panted, "if there's any law to stop a man leaving his lawfle prop'ty any way he likes—takin' no 'count of kin?"

"Certainly not, if he is of sound and disposing mind."

"Then I want you t' draw me up a will, 'n' give all my prop'ty to Jason an' Sally Hicks, both of 'em ekal, an' the one that's lef' ef ary one was t' die. It's a good piece away from here; mebby 't won't do 'em much good, then ag'in mebby 't might—folks can't be sure where they're goin' t' locate 'n this worl' much more'n th' nex'."

If the Squire felt any astonishment, he did not betray it, but went on cutting the nibs of his goose-quill and trying it on his thumb-nail; then, clearing his throat sharply and adjusting his spectacles, he scratched on through the opening phrases, as familiar to him as his alphabet.

"As hereinafter described—how shall I describe this property?"

"Write 'all my prop'ty,'" said the sick man, his fevered eyes fixed on the Squire's stubby fingers as if to hasten them in their task, "'includin' six hundred 'n' forty acres of land in Sacramento County, California, with all the buildin's 'n' any stock 't may lawf'ly b'long t' me, bein' th' ranch I bought of Abram Crashaw, July, '52, 'n' described 'n th' deed drawed up time o' sale.'"

He fumbled at the wrappers, but, though the seals were broken, he could not untie the string, and finally thrust the papers towards the Squire, whose quick eye ran through the maze of legal phrases and gathered that here was a deed signed by Abram Crashaw and his wife Mary, transferring to Alexander Fergurson, his heirs and assigns forever, a certain carefully described property, in consideration of a sum of money, whose receipt was hereby acknowledged.

He turned it over, looked at the date, examined the signatures of the witnesses, held the notary's seal to the light, and turned his small eyes expectantly upon Sandy. The faintest trace of a smile lurked about Sandy's sad mouth, and his abject, apologizing air seemed to have been laid aside, as if belonging to a character he had no longer any occasion for.

"Didn't take me fur a man of prop'ty, did ye, Square? Y' know I went t' th' mines."

"I—had that impression," admitted the Squire.

"Yes, 'n' I was lucky—struck it rich 'n' kep' on, but y' cahn't keep thet sort of money in yer pu's'—comes too easy. Feller out thar f'm State er Maine kep' at me t' buy land; said the' was plaguy sight more money raisin' stock 'n minin', take it in the long run, an' the long run's what a man's gotter consider. Minin' claps the taxes on a man's constertooshun putty heavy, 'n' fust y' know yer sold up. Well, sir, one day when I hed a pocket full I come acrost a man up country wanted to sell an' git back to his folks in Injeanny. I never stopped to think twict. We rode up to th' settlement, 'n' hed the papers drawed, 'n' I went my way 'n' he went his'n. He was to stay on 'n' git in his crops, 'n' settle up."

The sick man lay back against the pillows, his thin blue nostrils dilating and contracting with every panting breath as he slowly gasped:

"He—never did; throwed f'm 'is hoss, brought home dead. I—I—*married th' widder.*"

The Squire rubbed his head vigorously, and a look of grim sarcasm spread over the sick man's face, as if, at this distance, he saw the humor of the situation.

"She felt so bad—no frien's, only his folks; no home, 'less I giv' up the prop'ty. I couldn't turn her out, 'n' I hed to do it—she—she—"

A long spasm of coughing threatened to permanently stop the story, but with his first full breath Sandy Fergurson raised his skeleton finger and beckoned the Squire closer, saying, in a choking whisper:

"She—*was the devil!*"

"Bless my soul!" said the Squire, starting back involuntarily as the vehement sentence was shot at him, followed by a rattle as if the organs of speech were running down.

He busied himself with engrossing "together with all and singular," until his client was somewhat restored.

"Dead?" he asked, looking up inquiringly.

"I reckon," said Sandy, indifferently.

"Children?"

Sandy shook his head.

"The' was the pootiest little creeter they'd 'dopted out of 'n emigrant wagon—ef she'd lived I'd stayed on."

The sad mouth twitched, and two great drops rolled out from his eyes and lay in the dusky hollows beneath them.

"Do y' reckon, Square, folks recko'nize each other when they git to heaven, so 's to know them they hain't seed f'r a good spell?"

"I—really, that is a matter concerning which we—a—have no direct revelation, and it would be presumptuous to attempt to fathom the mysteries of heaven. Theologians are divided."

"Yes," said the sick man, wearily, "they're allus divided about what a man reely wants t' know. I don't see's it's any more presumptuous tryin' t' look into the myst'ries of heaven th'n hell, but folks th't claim to be 's well posted 'bout thet place 's if they'd staked it out 'n' hed a tax-list of all th' residen's, talk about heaven in a way to make a man dead lonesome to think of."

The Squire disapproved of this irreverent criticism of the fathers whose survey of the future state was to him the end of all controversy, but he finished his work, thrust his quill behind his ear, and got up briskly, saying:

"Now, if we can find proper witnesses—"

"Call Jason and Sally—I don't want anybody else."

"That won't do; being interested parties." And the Squire opened the door and beckoned to Jason Hicks.

The poormaster dropped his long legs from the window-sill and sauntered in, chewing a corner of the almanac which he had been perusing as the only secular reading allowable on Sunday.

"Wa'al, Sandy, fixed y' up all right, hey?" he inquired, good-naturedly; but Sally went straight to her patient, shook up his pillows, felt his damp forehead, and proceeded to administer a reviving dose.

"We want two credible witnesses," began the Squire; "some of the town-folks 'll do."

Sally's eyes flashed dangerously, and her husband looked as if there might be an end even to his forbearance.

"Ef Sally 'n' me ain't as credible 's any of th' town poor—"

Every feature of the sick man looked an eloquent protest at Sally, but the Squire said, loftily:

"It's only a technicality; better call some one else. Where's old man Jackson? he'll do."

"Jackson ain't 'round; jes' gone f'r th' cows. Tim Baker might do, mebby; hain't got but one leg, but the's 'nough on 'im lef' f'r a witness 's long 's he kin put it 'n writin'. Tim couldn't tell the truth with his tongue, not ef he had six legs."

The sound of a wagon rumbling along the road solved the difficulty.

"Hey, there! hold on," shouted the poormaster, thrusting his head from the window in such haste that he snapped off the top of the tallest hollyhock, though only the sick man noticed it. He had watched the yellow blossoms day after day, poised airily, like butterflies, on the sides of the stalk. He liked to hear the bumblebees come trumpeting to them in the morning. It made him think of a time, ages and ages ago, when a little boy he knew used to stand on tiptoe to catch the bees, with soft, cruel fingers, in just such silken blossoms, and a busy woman used to pause in her work to scold him, in a voice that somehow could not help being sweet and coaxing. He had seen every flower open, and watched the stalk stretch itself slowly upward from the place where now was a ripe seed at the level of the window-sill, to the one that shook out its crumpled leaves that very morning. There were a good many buds left—they seemed to keep coming—no matter; he should not miss them much longer.

The poormaster came back from the gate, followed by two men, who tried to walk softly, but only succeeded in prolonging a little the screech of their Sunday boots. Both

attempted to look becomingly solemn, but surprise and curiosity defeated their well-meant efforts.

Sandy's eyes were fast losing their brightness, but he roused himself to grasp the pen which the Squire handed him, and trace his signature.

"There," said he, "I want Cap'n Cady, 'n' John Barrett, 'n' all on ye, to witness 't this is my las' will 'n' testim'nt, exactly 's I want it, 'n' I've signed it hevin' all th' senses th' Lord ever gin me."

His hand trembled as he gave up the pen, and one tiny drop fell on the quilt. John Barrett, the village store-keeper, and Cap'n Cady, one of the selectmen, signed as witnesses, and the Squire completed the document, looking instinctively for his sand-box, and then waving the paper in the air to dry it.

"I suppose I had better keep these until—for the present," he said, gathering up all the papers.

"Give 'em to Sally," said the sick man.

"It would hardly be a regular proceeding; I should advise, under the circumstances—"

"Give 'em to Sally," said Sandy, with a sick man's petulant determination; and the Squire laid the papers on the stand, and took up his hat with dignity. He shook hands with the two witnesses, and finally with Sandy, though with an air of conferring an unmerited favor, and then every one went out but Sally.

The poormaster was deeply hurt at being shut out from the last confidences of his poor friend, but he was not the man to allow his feelings to interfere with hospitality.

"Se' down, Square; take a seat, Cap'n; John, hold on till I fetch y' out a cheer. Got a new bar'l russet cider open; I'll go down 'n' draw some."

No one refused the invitation, and Jason, arming himself with a candlestick and a fat brown pitcher, disappeared down the cellar-way.

"Russet cider," remarked the Squire, "is getting proper skerce since the old orchards are dying out."

"Jes' so," assented the Cap'n; "dying out, as you say. There's th' Eb Clapp place, hain't got a good bearin' tree left, 'n' th' Jeremiah Dow farm, useter be good for five or six hunder' bushels, clear run out. Wa'al, Square, we're gittin' old, too, same's th' trees—'place 't now knows us sh'll know us no more.'"

The Squire did not answer. He was listening to the pleasant swish and gurgle that came up the open stairway; and when the head of the poormaster rose above the sloping doors, he took the quid of tobacco from his cheek and smacked his lips expectantly.

"There, Square," said Jason, handing him a generous mug, "that's genooine russet cider, an' not a drop of wum-juice in it. Sandy 'n' me picked them apples by hand."

"Poor Sandy!" sighed the Cap'n; "seems kinder unfeelin' we should set here drinkin' the cider he helped make, an' he jest a—jest a—thank ye, Jason—"

The Cap'n took a deep draught from the mug before he concluded—"on a narrer neck o' land, as 'twere."

"It's the common course of life, Cap'n," said the Squire, who was deliberately making the most of his cider. "Other men labor, and we enter into their labors, and *vicy versey*."

"Sandy was good help," put in John Barrett; "willin' an' stiddy, though 't took a lot of vittles to fill him up; an' I allus said he knowed more'n folks give him credit f'r."

"Sandy Fergusson knew as much as you or—" the Squire hesitated; he had nearly said "you or I," but, not wishing to be extravagant, compromised by saying "you or the majority of our fellow-beings," and went on sipping his cider.

It hurt the poormaster that they all spoke of Sandy in the past tense, as if he no longer had a place in the world. It seemed to him heartless to be in such haste to shut the door of this warm, tangible life upon him, and thrust him away into some strange region. He sat silent until the Squire finished his cider and set the mug on the bench.

"'Mazin' good cider, Jason; best cider I've tasted for fifteen years."

He took up his cane and nodded a good-by to his companions.

"Afternoon, Jason; let me know if—anything happens."

The dog lying under the bench lifted his red eyes in-



quivering, crawled out between Cap'n Cady's legs, and paced meditatively after his master.

"See here, Square," said Jason, following him down the path, "I told Sandy I'd see this thing through if 'twas any satisfaction to him, 'n' I cal'late to stick to my word. Here's yer money."

He drew from the depths of his trousers pocket a silver half-dollar, the utmost limit of his conception of a fee; but the Squire waved it off.

"Never mind that now, Jason; there may be some other services. I never transact unnecessary business on Sunday."

"Jes' 's you say, Square; it's ready f'r ye any time y' say so."

"Won't ye ride, Square?" called out John Barrett. "We can manage by settin' clost."

"Bleeged to ye, John; I'll go back 'cross lots," answered the cunning Squire, who saw in this tardy civility only a desire to learn something about the mystery of the will.

"Might 's well go down to th' berryin'-ground, 'n' try to git noos out of a cawps, 's outer Square Weaver," grumbled the Cap'n, looking with a morose air into the empty pitcher which John had already drained; "reely seems 's if 'twas my dooty, bein' one of th' s'lectmen, to see thet will."

"Now, Cap'n, if you 'n' John 'll excuse me, I'll go 'n' set by Sandy, so 's Sally can 'tend to th' milk."

The poormaster disappeared without waiting for any response, and his visitors had no choice but to go.

"By crackey!" said John Barrett, turning the old mare's nose away from the post.

"Sing'lar pr'ceedin', very," responded the Cap'n; "fust time I ever heerd of a town pauper makin' a will."

"Suthin' queer about it, no mistake. My 'pinion Hicks 'n' his wife hev made a good thing on 't. Why didn't they sign fer witnesses, 'nless they was int'rested parties?"

"Hey? Wa'al, there is suthin' in thet idee; looks s'picious, too, him bein' set up in th' bes' bedroom 'n' waited on so p'ticklar."

"They did jes' th' same f'r old Nance, though, you rec'lect, Cap'n; Jase 'n' his wife are queer."

"That's so, but 'tain't in natur' to go on doin' fer folks year out an' year in; why, lemme see—Sandy Fergusson come back 'long about—must 'a' been the year I built my swill-house—I rec'lect he helped shave th' shingles—coughin' bad he was, too."

"Don't say so! I shouldn't 'a' said 'twas so fur back. Wa'al, he hes held out."

"An' you may depend, Jase 'n' his wife hes knowed all long how th' land lay. That prop'ty ought by rights to come to the town."

"Y' know he wa'n't reely on th' town—never got a permit. Jason took him in his own fahm'ly."

"What fahm'ly hes he got *but* the town poor? But then prob'ly the 'ain't any prop'ty to speak of."

"Shoh, Cap'n, when you ketch old Square Weaver drawin' up a will f'r a man 't hain't got prop'ty t' dispose of, you'll ketch a weasel asleep; but I s'pose we may as well keep close 'bout it f'r the time bein'."

"May's well; 'specially 's we hain't got inf'mation 'nough to pay f'r takin' out."

Having made his will, there seemed no possible reason why Sandy Fergusson should not die; to go on living seemed like indefinitely prolonging a visit after you had taken leave of your host. But when the poormaster came back, even his unobservant eyes recognized a new expression of repose on the sick man's face, that had been wont to look up in silent apology for staying so long in the way.

"Why, Sandy," he called, cheerfully, "yer better a'ready; 'clare for 't, I b'lieve ye'll git well: wish't I'd hed the Square up sooner."

"Them two gone?" asked Sally.

"Jes' startin' off."

"What'd they come snoopin' round for?"

"Come 'cause they was called, mos' likely."

"Needn' tell me; they heerd you called the Square."

Cap'n Cady'd like to hev all the town 'bleeged to come to him fer leave to sneeze."

Sally gathered up the papers, laid them in the drawer, and went to the window to roll the green paper shade higher.

"There's that old hen squattin' herself down ag'in amongst my merrygools—shoo, there! you c'ntrary old simpleton! Shaw! here's that yellow hollyhawk broke square off, 'n' I hain't saved a mite of seed."

She reached out for the dangling top and began breaking the husk from a seed to try if it was ripe.

"Let me have the blow," said Sandy, and she broke off the yellow blossom and laid it in his trembling hand.

"It's a nice color, but they don't smell; I'll fetch ye some 'old-man' when I get the milk strained."

She laid the broken stem behind one of the plaster vases, and went out of the room; and Sandy lay so still that presently the poormaster tiptoed after her, dropping his knife, and jarring the stand as he stooped to pick it up, so that the bottles clashed together.

"He's 'sleep," he said, in a noisy, penetrative whisper, at which Sandy smiled. He moved his fingers to touch the tips of the soft petals; he even managed to gather them together and raise the flower towards his ear; and then a strange look stole over his face. His eyes did not move from the window which looked towards the river. The sun was setting behind the pine woods, and one little rosy fleck of cloud drifted like a boat above the tree-tops. The cows had come up from the meadow, but the oxen, enjoying their Sunday rest, were still feeding on the short, bunchy grass. He could hear an impatient low from old Sukey in the lane, the slow creak of the pump-handle, and the water pouring into the trough, and he knew how the horses were drinking, their wide nostrils flaring and their liquid eyes full of quiet content. The rosy boat had drifted away, and in its place were golden islands and cliffs purple with shadows. His eyes wavered and dropped away from the far-off splendor. The room was growing dusky, but something faintly luminous wavered through the darkness like a soft, transparent curtain blown into billowy folds by the night air. The wind freshened, and the narrow, flag-bottomed chair rocked a little, very slowly. There was a faint humming in the yellow blossom, a low, complaining cry of something imprisoned and struggling for freedom. He felt it beat like a pulse against his fingers. His eyes, suddenly bright, looked expectantly upward; his fingers loosened; the crumpled flower fell away from them, and Sandy lay on his pillow, smiling, as a child smiles in a dream.

"I found him jest that way," said Sally, rehearsing the story to a neighbor who had come in to borrow some "emp'tin's;" "he lay there as peaceable as a baby, an' I never mistrusted he was dead. I'd picked him a bunch of old-man, 'n' I walked right up 'n' held it to his nose to smell—you see, 'twas kinder dark in the bedroom—"

"Makes me feel creepy to think of it. I s'pose you didn't see nothin', did ye? Old Mis' Babcock went off that way, and when Em'line come in to the bedroom suthin' breshed past her, goin' out."

"No, I didn't see anything, but I took notice of that chair you're settin' in: it was rockin' kind of slow, as if somebody had jest riz up from it. The's a sight of things we don't understand."

"Yis 'n deed, Mis' Hicks. Wa'al, I must be goin'. An' you ain't goin' to do nothin' about that will? hev it proba-ted, or whatever?"

"No, we ain't. Square Weaver he's been up, an' Cap'n Cady's kep' a-naggin' at Mr. Hicks till he says if 'twa'n't a State's prison 'fense he'd tear it up. Sandy set a dretfle sight by Mr. Hicks, an' he'd been glad to give us the hull world, but, lawfe sakes, what'd we want of land in Californy? Might's well be in Africky."

"An' I s'pose Mr. Hicks 'd be li'ble for the taxes, and road-tax, too, f's I know?"

"Like's anyway. I told Mr. Hicks seemed a pity to waste all that writin'—the Square's a reel nice writer—an' he said he guessed he'd put a coddercil to it 'n' leave it to the town poor."

## The Home

### Social Weeds

We all have them in our circle of acquaintances—those people who, in public, present the appearance of being intimates with us. Chance reference to incidents that the listeners may not understand; whispered conferences about nothing; voicing your opinion as if you had delegated to them the authority to speak for you, are joined with frank comments on your appearance and belongings. It is this type of person that is continually throwing you into doubtful relations by repeating half-sentences, telling half-truths, misinterpreting you to your friends and the wider circle of acquaintances. And all this is done with such an appearance of innocence that they almost convince you that they are true. If only they would do something tangible, something that you could grasp firmly in your own mind, that would justify you in dropping them because they were dangerous! Alas! they keep within the pale of endurance, and play upon your credulity each time, and you, at least while in their presence, accept their statement, listen to their misinterpretation, half believing they have repented of the error of their ways, and are truthful at last.

At first the individual discovers them, and after a time the circle, and then their day of power is over. It only shows us how helpless we are—mere straws on the social current. We cannot live our ideals except in our own souls; the dear public must take the reflection that, not our friends, but our acquaintances, hold up. We cannot control the false impression conveyed by these mirrors—some representing us tall and cadaverous, some short and broad to the point of grotesqueness: both caricatures.

The friction comes if we do not accept these misinterpreters as the natural phenomena of untrained morals and manners. They are social weeds whose immortality protects them from being uprooted from the social soil.



### The Outsider in the Home

By Margaret E. Sangster

"It seems to be clearly our duty," wrote a friend the other day, "to invite Mrs. — into our home for the winter. John and I have had a good many consultations over it, our little household being so sweet and harmonious, and our children developing so beautifully, that we dread the introduction of a disturbing element, and poor Mrs. — has had such a hard life, it has made her irritable and sharp. We dread it a little, but it does seem so plainly a divine appointment for us that we mean to be cheery about it, and let it make our home the richer."

There spoke the true Christian spirit, the spirit that takes up the cross and straightway hides it under the flowers of meekness and tender love. In my childhood it happened that, at different periods, somebody, distinctly an outsider, became for a while a member of our family. I did not then understand, as I do now, how much these visitations, extending sometimes over many months, added to the cares of my delicate little mother, nor how brave she was in receiving each person, woman or man, belonging to kinsfolk or acquaintance, as it might be, with simple and cordial hospitality. One such temporary inmate, a stranger in the land, friendless and solitary, was taken ill under our roof, died there, and was buried in our family plot, my parents commiserating his loneliness even in death. I remember that we children thought very kindly and tenderly of this man, who had been tethered to us by a tenuous thread of association from over the sea, and were glad that he was not all alone in the cemetery, on windy nights when the rain fell.

Another inmate of our home, one who spent several winters with us, was a droll little maiden lady, a tailoress, who sometimes did her work in her room, and sometimes went out by the day, to make down "father's trousers for little Benjamin" in the home of a neighbor or in some thrifty household where the means were limited and the people above false pride. There would Miss Mary turn and press and retrim with buttons and braid father's own top-coat—a heavy piece of work, to be tackled only by valiant and capable hands—or, if need were, put quilts in the frame, or something else that was to be done.

I possess two much-prized mementos of this little lady. One is her tailor's press-board, narrow at one end and broad at the other, smooth with use and dark with age. The other hangs on my bedroom wall, a piece of worsted work, wrought by my own little childish hands under her supervision, an accomplished fact at last, of which we were both very proud, and which the girls of to-day laugh at very merrily when they survey it now.

This friend married from our house, and her wedding was the first I ever attended. She wore a gown of changeable silk, and looked very splendid. Only a few years ago, in her widowhood and ripe old age, she passed away; but as long as she lived she came and went in my home as she had in my mother's, at her own will, and always welcome.

Another and less agreeable outsider who spent a year in my girlhood's home was a remote connection who had outlived all her own people, and drifted at seventy into the safe harbor of our domicile. Fretful, crotchety, perverse beyond belief, this old gentlewoman greatly taxed my dear mother's almost invincible patience, but it stood the strain, not breaking down even on the memorable morning when Grandma, as we called her by courtesy, did not come to breakfast nor to prayers. We knocked at her door. Dead silence within. We listened. A hush as of the grave! We pried open the lock, our hearts beating with awe and fear. Tableau! There sat Grandma, fully dressed in black bombazine, white fluted cap over her brown false front (a woman with natural gray hair would not have behaved so, I am sure), white kerchief crossed over her ample breast, spectacles on, Bible in her hand. Forestalling speech of ours, the dame severely said, as soon as our heads appeared in the doorway:

"What is the meaning, may I ask, of this remarkable intrusion? Am I not to be permitted to enjoy my devotions in peace?"

I hold firmly to the belief that there are two sides to every question that can possibly be presented to a human being. *This* question has, perhaps, three or four sides. *Imprimis*, we generally conceive of the ideal home as being composed of father, mother, and children. When the children are in the nursery, in the time of all others susceptible to impressions, and of all others formative, we do prefer for them the molding hand only of those to whom God has committed their care. Yet a grandmother, an aunt, a dear kinsman, is often directly helpful and of great advantage in a child's life. And perhaps an outsider, not so close as these, may be by way of a liberal education to the little ones and young people in the home.

An outsider brings in, for one thing, another point of view. It is always well to get the point of view of others than one's immediate relatives. Our own people may have excellent notions and admirable ways, but it does not follow that these will not be improved by some modification, some new influence from without. Just as travel broadens and enlarges the mind of the traveler, so the stay-at-home person may be broadened by the daily intercourse with somebody whose experiences are entirely opposite from his own.

The presence of an outsider in the home is apt to repress certain candors and familiarities which do not tend to peace. There is less friction where there is the practice of courteous conventionalities than where people allow themselves to find fault unchecked, or to utter hasty words, which may soon be repented of, but leave a sting, nevertheless, and a scar.

An outsider probably helps to bring the housekeeping up to a high-water mark of uniform painstaking. Spotted