

The Family Circle

HER LABOR DAY.

Up for the early breakfast,
That the toilers may get away;
Mussn't be late at the office,
Tardiness does not pay.
Then comes getting the children
Ready for school, and so
The days of a woman's labor
Endlessly come and go.

House to tidy and straighten,
Sewing to do for the girls;
Little one coming all tousled
For mother to put up her curls;
Mending and sweeping and baking,
Dinner at noon on time;
Every way turning and twisting
To keep things as sweet as a chime.

Supper at six, what a hustle,
Little ones weary and cross;
Still to keep smiling and trusting,
Still to be brave in her loss;
Singing and humming and smiling,
To bed with a song and a kiss
The days of a woman's labor
Are generally much like this.

WHAT HAPPENED TO FANNY'S HOOD.

'There, mamma! my handkerchief is all hemmed. Did I do it nicely?' Dorothy danced across the room to where her mother sat mending a big basket of stockings and laid the much-soiled square of linen on top of the basket for inspection.

Mamma smiled at the happy little face and pronounced the stitches very even.

'Now the story,' reminded Dorothy.

'O, yes, I promised to tell you a story when the handkerchief was finished, didn't I?'

'A story about when you were a little girl seven years old,' prompted Dorothy.

Mamma folded up brother Arthur's mended socks and threaded her needle for baby's tiny blue heeled ones before she began:

'Aunt Harriet—your great-aunt Harriet was making me a warm hood of cream-white saxony yarn. Several of the girls had new saxony hoods, but none quite so pretty as mine was to be, I thought. Aunt Harriet loved to make fancy things and had put a great deal of soft, fluffy trimming on the hood, with tiny scallops about the edges.

'One night I rushed home from school and burst into the house, "O, Aunt Harry, will my hood be ready to wear to the sleighing party to-night?" I breathlessly inquired.

'For answer Aunt Harriet held up the beautiful, soft, woolly thing. "All done but the ribbon. What color are you going to have?"

"Pink," I answered promptly. "I think pink is the very prettiest color of all. Did you get my ribbon to-day, mother?"

"I didn't get time to go out to-day, Fanny," replied mother, "but you may go down to the store after supper and select just what you want. Aunt Harriet will sew it on before the sleigh comes."

Two hours later I unrolled a small package under the light of the kerosene lamp. "There! isn't that a pretty shade of pink?" I demanded. "He had blue and red and all colors, but I wouldn't have anything but pink, and just this shade of pink."

'Well, I wore the hood to the party, and proud enough I was. After the ride we were to go to my cousin Clara Walker's for games and taffy-pulling and I was to stay with Clara all night and go with her to school next day. There were some eight or ten girls in the party.

'We came flocking into Aunt Lucy's house, laughing and chatting, and piled our wraps together on the bed in the spare bedroom. My precious hood met with some generous compliments and some envious glances. When the party broke up I was intent on a game of checkers with Uncle William and did not see them off except to call a general good-night to the boys and girls as they passed us in a jostling bunch on their way out.

'Clara and I slept together in the kitchen chamber. The next morning when it came time to start for school, I went to the spare room for my wraps. There on the bed lay my flannel-lined coat, yarn mittens, and woollen scarf, but where was my pink-ribboned hood, and where did that hood with ugly yellow ribbons come from?

"Someone has taken my lovely hood and left this homely thing in its place!" I declared angrily. "I'm almost sure it was May Simpson. I didn't notice what she wore, but she's just mean enough to change purposely."

"Why, it's just like yours, Fan, all but the ribbon!" cried Clara, coming close to examine. "I didn't know any of the girls had one like it."

'But I flung the hood down, hotly persisting: "I s'pose she thinks I'll wear her ugly old thing to school and then she'll be ready to change back and say she's played a great joke on me. But I sha'n't wear the thing. I'll leave it right where I found it and just wear my scarf over my head. What a horrid shade of yellow! I always hated it!"

'Aunt Lucy had gone into a neighbor's and no one heard my spiteful words but Clara, who was too much perplexed over the matter to offer any suggestion; so we set out for school.

'But May Simpson did not come that day, and I forbade Clara's mentioning my trouble to any other girl, for I knew I really had no good reason for suspecting May. Then, too, I thought that if any of the other girls were playing a trick on me I would not give them satisfaction by noticing it.

'I was wretched all day, because I was angry, because I had spoken hastily and hotly, because I was sorely perplexed over the mystery, and because I must wait so long before I could tell mother about it.

'But 4 o'clock came at last. I ran every step of the way home. I told my story so fast that my words tumbled over each other and I choked over the tale. Before I had finished I was as angry as I had been in the beginning. I wound up by declaring that I positively knew that May Simpson had played the mean trick on me.

'I remember how sternly mother made me take back my words and admit that I had not the slightest reason for suspecting poor May. Then she very quietly told me that Aunt Lucy had been at the house and brought my hood, saying that I had forgotten it. As mother spoke she opened the closet door and brought out the hood with ugly yellow ribbons.

"Why, mother! That isn't my hood! Don't you know it isn't?" I cried passionately and burst into tears.

"There, Fanny, we'll not talk about it now." Mother's voice was firm. "Come downstairs with me and bring the hood." I meekly obeyed. "Lay it on the table in the sitting-room and lie down here on the couch and keep an eye on it. When it gets too dark to see it plainly, call me."

'What in the world did mother mean? Was there something mysterious about that hood? I was almost afraid of it.

The short winter day was closing. It was already growing dark and soon I could scarce distinguish objects on the table.

"Mother!" I called. Immediately mother entered.

"Come here," she said. I went and stood by the table while she lighted the hanging lamp above it. Then I blinked in astonishment. The ugly yellow ribbons were the beautiful shade of pink I had selected the evening before!

YOUR BOY IS AWAY!!

Wouldn't you like a nice Enlargement from his photograph? Let us do one for you, we never fail to please,

GAZE & CO., PHOTOGRAPHERS, HAMILTON