OURS.

The very stars are ours; those seas of gloom
In wide expansion
Are but the stars that lead from room to room
In the same mansion.
—Charles Lawrence Ford.

MODERATION

Heat not a furnace for your foe so hot
That it do singe yourself. We may outrun,
By violent swiftness, that which we run at,
And lose by over running.
—Shakespeare.

TEN MINUTES A DAY.

Mollie had given up her music. Every one regretted it. Mamma missed the light touch of her daughter's fingers on the piano, which sometimes stood silent for weeks, and rejoiced when Mollie declared herself to be in a musical mood, though she only played snatches of her old pieces, and those indifferently well; and papa's requests for his favorite melodies were too often met with the unsatisfactory answer that "Mollie couldn't play them now—she was all out of practice." Brother Tom grumbled when she failed in his accompaniments, "that, after all the time she had spent drumming on that old piano, if she could not play simple things like those it was a pity." His sister fully agreed with him, and did not change her mind as time passed on and she was asked to play at several little gatherings of her friends, where "Mollie's music" had always been one of the pleasantest features of the evening, and she was obliged to decline on the tiresome plea of "not playing without her notes."

"I think it's too bad," exclaimed Bessie Arlington, one of her special cronies. "Mollie used to play so lovely, and she was always so nice and obliging about it, and played whenever she was asked; and there's no one to take her place but Eva Harris, and she has to be teased so long before she will strike a note that it spoils all the pleasure."

"So it does," said another voice. "And now that Mollie's out of school she ought to have time to practice three hours a day, if she wanted to."

"Oh, Rose Newton!" cried Amy Leslie, "you don't know anything about it. Just wait till you leave school, and see how many hours you practice or do anything regularly. It's awfully hard. You don't accomplish as much in a year as you would in three months of school."

"All owing to a lack of system," said Bessie, with the tone and manner of one who had been through varied experiences and acquired vast stores of wisdom therefrom. The girls laughed.

"I suppose it's so," said Amy, "but Mollie is systematic; rather, at least, she means to be," she added, not feeling quite sure of her ground. "And she is busy almost all the time."

"She is a dear girl, anyway," said her friend Helen Starr. "And I know she is too busy to practice, for it does take a lot of time. Only it seems a pity."

So it did, and no one realized it more than Mollie. When she left school the year before, she had congratulated herself on the fact that her time was her own, and she could spend it as she pleased. But, for that reason she would not waste it; she would be very diligent, and though she should not study in the summer, she would continue her music. She had a fair touch, was a rapid reader, and played with expression and accuracy; her one great failing was a dislike to steady practice—a lack of perseverance. Such being the case, perhaps it was not strange that, amid the vacation gayeties, her hours of practice grew less and less frequent, and finally ceased altogether, and she trusted to her memory and former instruction for her present skill. And so the days slipped by, bright with pleasures, that by and by would have glided into joyful memories; and the autumn came, and Mollie returned to her home, but the music was not resumed. "It seemed as if she never had any time;" which often meant she did not take it. But, to Mollie's credit, be it said hers was a busy winter; she studied French and German, attended a literature class, and was a member of a Shakespeare club; and it is probable she might not have realized that her musical talent was decreasing, but that one day, when she was playing to her friends, she broke down in the middle of her piece and had to leave the piano. Faithful practice was the one thing needful, and Mollie knew it; but, like many older and wiser souls, she resolved and planned, and failed to execute.

And the months rolled on, until one day in December she awoke with a start to the fact that the last day of the year had arrived, and that she was utterly unable to play a single piece correctly. For fifteen minutes she sat silent, wrapped in a brown study; then she took from the table a note book and pencil, and, as the result of her reverie, wrote down the following

RESOLVE:

"That I, Mollie Winthrop, aged 18, on this 31st day of December, will, on each day of the year, commencing to-morrow, devote ten minutes to the practice of five finger exercises and scales.

"In the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and eighty-five."

Mollie read the paragraph aloud, with an amused expression. "It sounds as if I were making my will," she murmured. "Well, so I am—disposing of my time instead of my money, for my own benefit instead of other people's." She laid the note book aside, and turned to the "Merchant of Venice," the next subject for the Shakespeare club. She had read but a few minutes when she heard light footsteps on the stairs and the sound of girlish laughter, and presently her three special friends entered the room.

"Well, Mollie, my dear, how are you?" said Amy Leslie. "I have not seen you for a perfect age. What have you been doing with yourself all this long day?"

Whereupon Mollie produced her note-book and read them her "Resolve." It met with Amy's cordial approval; Helen echoed her opinion, but Bessie looked incredulous. In answer to Mollie's questioning glance she said, bluntly, "I don't believe you'll keep it, and I don't see the use of it if you do."

"Why, Bessie Arlington!" cried Amy. "Of course she'll keep it!"

"I suppose you've made resolves before?" said Bessie, shortly.

"Yes," said Mollie.

"And broken them?"

"Yes," said Mollie again. "But I really mean to keep this one, and I think I shall."

Bessie's bright eyes softened at the look of determination on her friend's face. "I hope you will," she answered. "But I don't see the use of it now. I should think you would want to learn to play your lovely old pieces"——

"And new ones, too," interrupted Helen.

"Why, so I do," returned Mollie. "And that's the very reason I'm going to practice pieces occasionally, I shall 'keep my hand in,' as people say, and not lose anything, if I don't gain much."

"Of course," answered Helen.

"But," persisted Bessie, "ten minutes is not any time at all. You ought to practice an hour at the very least, and I can see you are too busy to do that."

"Ten minutes is better than nothing," argued Mollie. "And you can do a good deal in even that time if you give your mind to it, and really work and don't fuss. And another thing—I just detest those scales, and I think it's kind of weak minded to hate a thing you have to do every day of your life, and so I'm going to try and like them. Perhaps by the end of the year I shall quite enjoy them. Who knows?"

Bessie looked at her with admiring eyes. She often opposed her for the sake of getting her into an argument, for she liked to hear Mollie talk. "Do you know what my brother Harry said about you the other day? He called you 'a real little enthusiast.'"

Mollie looked slightly puzzled. "I don't know whether to take that as a compliment or not," she said. "He might have thought I made too much fuss over little things."

The girls laughed. "I should call it a decided compliment," said Helen, "and I should be charmed if any one said it about me."

"Don't be alarmed, they never will," said Bessie.

Helen sighed. "I know it," she answered, in a mock melancholy tone. "No one appreciates me. Nobody understands me. When I leave this dreary world I shall have the inscription on my tombstone:

"She hath done what she could
And been misunderstood."

When the small breeze excited by Helen's nonsense had subsided, Bessie inquired, with provoking coolness, "Mollie, what would you do if you should go out camping as you did last summer, where you cannot by any possibility have a piano?"

This was a question, and for a minute an omnious silence ensued. Then Mollie said, with cheerful vagueness: "Oh, I shall find some way, I am sure."

"Might practice on an old tin pan," put in Bessie, sarcastically.

"Yes," said Mollie, gravely. "That's a good idea, and I'll remember it. Or I might take some paper and mark off a keyboard of an octave or two and paste it on a plank. I could play beautifully on that, and it would at least keep my fingers limber."

"Bravo!" cried Amy. "Mollie, you're a genius."

"So she is, and I should love to enjoy her edifying company longer, but I suppose I must go to my old painting lesson," sighed Helen.

"Old painting lesson," echoed Mollie, "I thought you liked it."

"So I should, if I could paint flowers and people and things, but as for sitting and looking at an old vase for two hours, gazing along a pencil to get the proportions, I think it's stupid," growled Helen. "I know I could paint ten times better if I did the things that I liked."

"When you converse upon topics beyond your comprehension, Miss Starr, you do not create an impression of your knowledge, but only expose your profound ignorance," prosed Mollie, in a grandiose manner.

"Well, I shan't stay here to be laughed at," said Helen. "It's time I was there, this very minute"—glancing at the clock. "Good by, Mollie." And giving her a hasty kiss she took Bessie's arm, and the three girls hurried from the room.

During the months that followed Mollie had abundant opportunity to test the strength of her resolution. At first the sense of novelty and the enthusiasm that always accompanies a new idea made her self imposed task an easy one, but gradually this died away, and many times was the music neglected until almost bed time, when she reluctantly left the pleasant game or fascinating book to do what, with a little forethought, might have been an agreeable duty. Mamma had been told of the plan, and had laughed at the formally worded "Resolve," but heartily approved of it, and now, though she sometimes wondered at her daughter's forgetfulness, she held her peace, remembering that it was Mollie's affair, and knowing that, if the girl did once really neglect it, her wounded pride and the sense of failure would be a sufficient punishment. And by and by Mollie discovered the value of a little system, and then she might have been seen every morning, directly after breakfast, practicing with an energy and determination that went far toward conquering the difficulties of the complicated exercises.

At last the time arrived for Mollie's summer flitting, and one pleasant day in June the four girls were gathered together in her little sanctum for a "good-by talk."

"Oh, dear!" sighed Helen. "It does not seem any time since winter, and now it's summer again, and I shall miss you so dreadfully."

"Ditto," answered Mollie, brightly. "But perhaps it won't seem any time till autumn, and then I shall be back, you know. And you will not miss me long, for in another month you will be revelling in the treasures of Martha's Vineyard."

"I know it," groaned Helen. "But a whole month in this dreadful city, with the thermometer over eighty, and every soul away, and nothing to do—oh!"

"Come, Helen," cried Amy, "don't look so doleful, or you'll give us all the blues. You've made even Mollie look sober."

Mollie contradicted this statement by a beaming smile that was reflected in the faces of the others. Even Helen looked more cheerful. "You are the most comfortable girl," she said. "I don't believe you ever were homesick in your life."

"Wasn't," said Mollie, promptly. "I have tried hard enough."

The girls broke into a chorus of laughter. "Tried to be homesick! What do you mean?"

"Just what I said," answered Mollie, stoutly. "You know last summer mamma went to Europe, and left me with Aunt Linda? Well, everybody kept saying: 'Poor little girl, how you must miss your mother! Aren't you dreadfully homesick?' until I began to feel really troubled because I wasn't. And one night I tried to cry myself to sleep thinking about it. But 'twas no use. I never did cry easy, and I thought I was the most heartless creature alive. So I wrote to mamma that everybody seemed to expect me to be homesick, but I wasn't, and I hoped she would not feel hurt, for I tried real hard, but I was having such a good time that I couldn't."

"Well," said Bessie, laughing, "that's an original idea. But, to change the subject, are your things all packed?"

"All except my ribbons and laces, and those go in the top tray, you know?"

"And the music?" asked Bessie, mischievously.

Mollie's ready answer. "Waiting to be taken out the minute I reach Elsie's to-morrow afternoon."

"Oh, Helen," exclaimed Amy, "do tell us about Daisy Bliss' party. I have not heard a word, and I am just longing to know."

Consequently Helen launched into one of those lengthy and comprehensive descriptions so delightful to girlish hearts. And as she felt quite in her native element, and no interesting detail had escaped her observant eyes, it bid fair to rival "the story without an end," and was only concluded by the ringing of the tea bell, which was followed by a general leave taking, when, after repeated kisses and caresses and many earnest entreaties to "write real often and tell us everything," the girls departed.

It is needless to relate the varied pleasures of the next three months; suffice it that Mollie considered it the loveliest summer she had ever spent, and the few minutes' practice had become such a matter of course that she felt no temptation to neglect it.

The months glided rapidly by, and, almost before she knew it, Mollie found herself on the threshold of another year. She was playing over some of her old pieces, with a happy sense of her recovered power, when Bessie Arlington appeared, followed by Amy and Helen.

"We're the visiting committee," she explained. "Come to inquire into the state of your accomplishments. I suppose you've not forgotten that your year is up?"

"No," said Mollie, laughing. "But I shall commence another one to-morrow."

"Good!" cried Amy. "That's what I call perseverance."

"Hush!" cried Bessie. "I'm the chair woman. Come, girls, let's proceed to business. Mollie, you never know what things are worth until they are tested, and so we are going to test you."

"Have pity on me!" pleaded Mollie, in mock despair. "Is it to be by the ordeal of fire, or thumbscrews, or what?"

"No," said Bessie, gravely. "We are not quite educated up to that yet. But I want to see if your practicing this past year has amounted to anything, and so I have brought over this sonata for you to play as a kind of examination, you know." And Bessie seated herself in an easy-chair, with what was intended for a look of judicial severity.

"But I've never seen it before," faltered Mollie. "And I know I can't play it nicely if I feel you are all watching me."

"'Tisn't very hard," whispered Amy, encouragingly.

"I think it's awful," sighed Helen. "I tried it this morning, and I couldn't get through six measures."

Mollie settled herself on the piano stool, turned up the corners of the leaves and began to play at first slowly and with hesitation, and then with increasing clearness and strength, and, as she became more interested, with a nicety of touch and an intelligence of expression that revealed the benefit of the past year's careful practice. As she struck the last chord she faced her small audience with an air of pardonable pride, and asked triumphantly: "Well, Bessie, what do you think of ten minutes a day now?"

Bessie's look of severity vanished, and she sprang from her chair and gave her friend a most undignified hug. "You've done beautifully," she cried. "I knew you would all the time. But it's in me to be perverse, and I thought it might inspire you to have an unbelieving creature like me around. I did it for your good, my dear," she added sagely.

That night, when Mollie retired to her room, she noticed on her bureau two small drawings that bore the marks of Helen's pencil. One was the picture of a little girl perched on a high piano stool and practicing, with marvelously long fingers, and an expression that was evidently intended for fierce determination. This rather weak looking portrait was entitled "Past Perseverance." The other was the figure of a tall and striking young lady in a much beribboned and beflowered gown, standing by a piano, in the act of making a profound courtesy to an unseen audience, while bouquets of enormous proportions were falling at her feet. This truly extraordinary work of art was labeled "Future Fame." Mollie had hardly examined them when she caught sight of a paper fastened to a pin cushion and bearing these words, in Amy's delicate handwriting, but signed with Bessie's name:

Ye lads and lassies musical,
Come, listen while ye may;
The only way to learn to play
Is to practice every day.

This is Miss Mollie Winthrop,
Who practiced faithfully,
And now she's the greatest prodigy
The world did ever see.

And if you would be like her,
You must with patience play,
Your scales and exercises
Ten minutes every day.

Mollie laughed merrily over these characteristic verses, and then she said, thoughtfully, "Yes, it's really been a success, and it's such a very little thing to do. Oh, I wish every girl would try it! I'm sure they would if they only knew how well it's paid."—Christian Union.

A Novelist's Wasted Youth.

Opie Ried, editor of The Arkansaw Traveler and author of the forthcoming novel, "Len Gansett," tells me an interesting story about Thomas Nelson Page, who was made famous by the charming little story, "Meh Lady," published two or three years ago in The Century. Page was a poor boy struggling against his very nature to learn to be a lawyer in a Virginia town. He had the itch to write, and he did write this story, "Meh Lady." Some of his friends said that it was well told, and he thought so himself, so he sent it to the Scribners, who were then publishing The Century. He never heard from them and could not fetch an answer to any of the letters he wrote about the matter. Supposing they had thrown his manuscript away, and knowing the story was as good as any he could write, he gave up the idea of writing and pushed on in the law as best he could, making a very scant living. Twelve years after that he was surprised to receive a check from The Century for the story, which was then printed. Twelve years that struggling young man's fame lay tucked away in the dust of a pigeon hole, and he, unconscious that it was there, felt satisfied that he was a failure as a writer. Twelve years, the best years of his life, he wriggled along, making a sort of living in a profession for which he had not a genius, while he might have been writing beautiful stories for the pleasure and profit of the reading world.—Chicago Times.

New Musical Instrument.

A new musical instrument, the Clavi harp, the invention of M. Dielz, of Brussels, has passed a successful private trial. It has a keyboard like a piano, but the mechanism plucks the strings like a harp instead of striking them. Any pianist can play it.—New York Sun.

THE HOWLING DERVISHES.

EXCITING CEREMONIES WITNESSED BY A CORRESPONDENT.

Religionists Who Exercise a Powerful Influence in Turkey—A Frenzied Child of 3 Years—A Human Corduroy Road, Trying to Nerves.

We set out after an early lunch to witness some of the religious rites of the Reface, or the howling dervishes. These are but one of the numerous orders of dervishes who wield an irresistible influence over the public mind in Turkey. Their notable Take is a low, weather beaten old building, standing on the edge of the great cypress shaded Turkish cemetery that crowns the heights of Scutorie, and is almost as dilapidated as most of the monuments and gravestones that surround it. When we entered we found the best seats for observation nearly all appropriated by a large party of American tourists with guide books in hand, fully determined to "take it all in."

The space allotted to the "howlers" was also well filled, yet a good many, both of young and old, were still coming, and after going forward to where the high priest sat, they reverentially bowed to the dust, then taking the priest's hand, gently kissed it and retired. Directly behind the priest was a small alcove, painted a bright green, and filled with a variety of antique small arms, swords, daggers, battle axes, etc. On the walls were many mottoes or sentences in frames, and some prayer rugs. A small brazen censer containing burning frankincense and spices, filled the room with aromatic fragrance.

ROWS OF SPECTATORS.

Around three sides of the room were galleries, some closely latticed and occupied by Turkish women; others open and filled with curious spectators like ourselves. The best location was reserved for Turkish gentlemen and soldiers. Beneath these galleries was still another, elevated a step or two above the main floor, and separated from it by a low railing, and furnished with seats for spectators. On the main floor were spread many rugs of Angora goatskin, on which were seated old men, regular patriarchs in appearance, while two groups of little children were ranged behind them. Seated close to the low railing were rows of men clothed in the flowing Dervish mantle and tan colored "garaph," a tall, brimless felt hat, strongly resembling an inverted flower pot, bound round the head by a long black scarf, with ends left flowing. These ends were at intervals in the course of the service tenderly pressed to the lips. At other times the eyes were carefully wiped with these mourning badges.

Conspicuous before the high priest stood a lithe figure, with a pale, cadaverous countenance, but a keen, penetrating eye, who was slowly manipulating a long, white scarf. He first threw it around his shoulders, thus symbolizing the all embracing love of Allah; then, binding it tightly about his waist, he began tying and untying it, each knot having a particular significance. His whispered words will bear this interpretation: "I tie up greed; I untie charity. I tie up hate; I untie love. I tie up pride; I untie humility." And so on through a long list. Then began a monotonous chant that soon swelled to a tremendous howl. All rose to their feet and kept time with swaying body and jerking head in a frantic manner.

The old and feeble among them gradually dropped out of the circle and took seats on the rugs near the center of the room, beside the rows of standing children. At length the eyes of the spectators became riveted upon the face and figure of a little 3-year old baby, who stood for two long hours swaying its frail body in perfect unison with the dervishes, and with his rosy, cherub mouth uttering the same indescribably impressive cry of Allah! When the rude throng had at length worked themselves up to a state of religious frenzy the little boy also rolled his bright eyes about as if beholding a heavenly vision.

ENDURANCE OF INFANTS.

I can compare this worship to nothing I have ever witnessed, except it be the intense excitement exhibited at meetings among the "colored brethren" on a southern plantation in the old "slave times" in our own country. One who has seen those impressionable people jumping, shouting and falling down with "the power" can imagine something of the harrowing spectacle before us today.

To my mind nothing was so impressive as the power of endurance shown by the infants on exhibition. I shudder when I think of the torture they must have been subjected to in the private drill necessary to prepare them for such a performance in public. Some of the children seemed free to pass in and out as will, but the tiny boy spoken of above and a little girl (a hunchback) never left their posts a minute nor ceased to sway their bodies and shout until the performance was concluded by a louder clapping and howling, more violent jerking of the head and wilder tumult than before. Then a sudden hush, when, without a signal or look from any one, this lovely little baby demurely marched up to the high priest to receive his blessing, then laid him down, his face to the ground before the venerable man. Another, who appeared to be a high chief of the order, now took the stalwart priest by the hand while he placed both feet on the body of this frail infant and stood with his face turned upward, while he muttered what appeared to be a prayer. Then other children followed. First came the little hunchback, then three or four at a time, finally ten or twelve laid down, forming a human "corduroy road" for the high priest to walk over, until at least twenty children had thus received his blessing and had the evil spirit driven out of them. This ceremony is supposed to be a panacea, and there are always invalids brought to the Take during services to be cured of real or imaginary ills. One aged man laid down to be walked upon today, and one little boy, who was brought in by his devout and devoted father, refused utterly to be comforted in this manner, and was carried out most boisterously victorious.

If you are a novice you leave this scene with nerves so strained and brain so confused that you are ready to question your own identity, and are almost persuaded you have been witnessing the demoniacal incantations of wizards, instead of reasonable beings worshiping their creator.—J. A. Ledyard in San Francisco Chronicle.

In the Sick Room.

Writing on the care of sick people a professional nurse says: "First let us caution those who enter a sick room against sitting down familiarly on the bedside. Oftimes every movement made by the sitter is a dagger thrust to the invalid. Neither should they ever rest their hand upon any portion of the bedstead for support. A girl who had inflammatory rheumatism told me she suffered untold agonies through thoughtlessness of visitors and caretakers in this way.—Philadelphia Press.

If your wife should tell you what she really thinks about you you would have a [illegible]