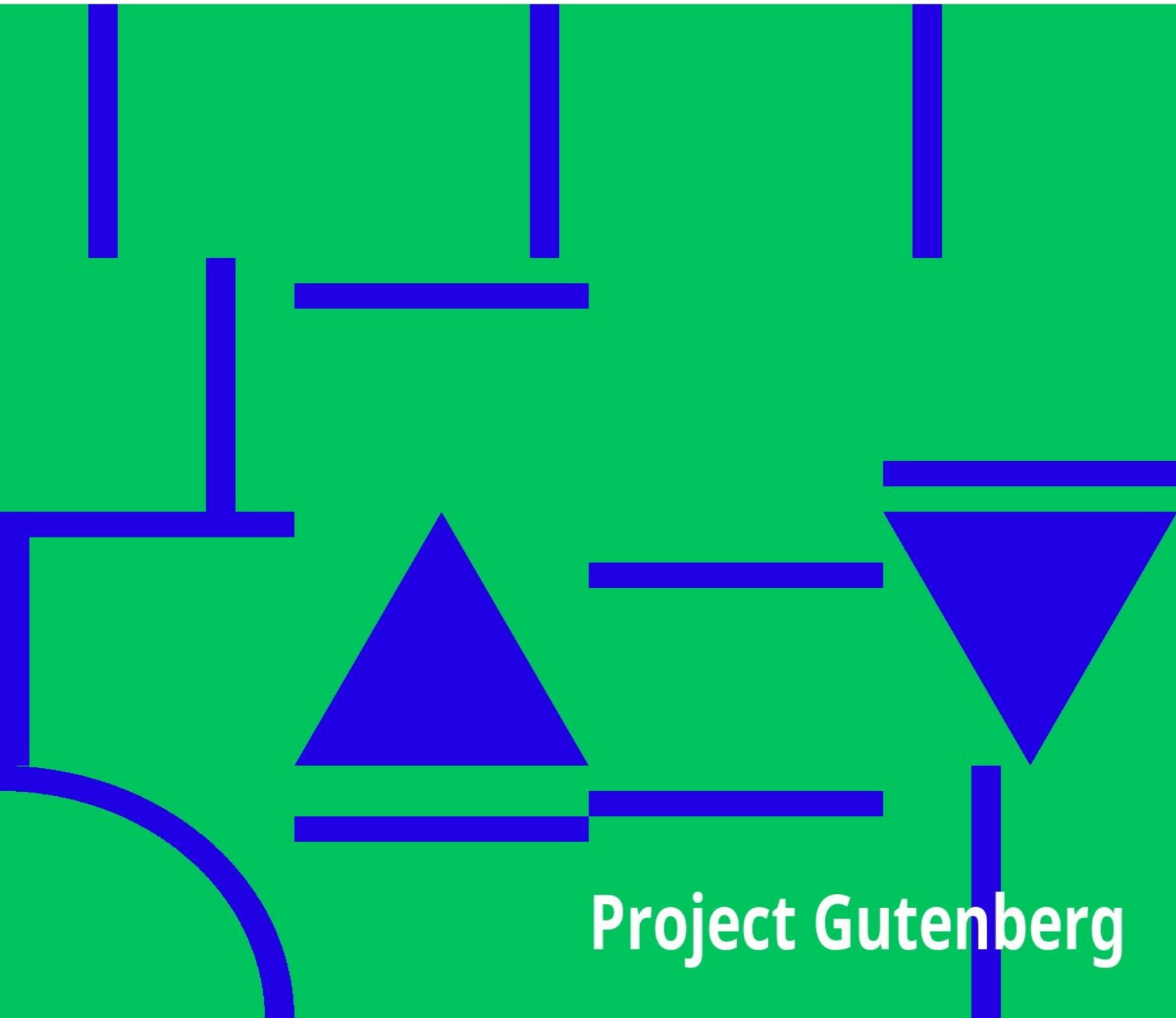
By the Roadside

Katherine M. Yates



Title: By the Roadside

Author: Katherine M. Yates

Release Date: May 17, 2006 [eBook #18409]

Language: English

Character set encoding: ISO-8859-1

E-text prepared by Roger Frank
and the Project Gutenberg Online Distributed Proofreading Team
(http://www.pgdp.net/)

---

book cover

By The Roadside

By

Katherine M. Yates

AUTHOR OF
"UP THE SUNBEAMS"
"ON THE WAY THERE"
"WHAT THE PINE TREE HEARD"
"THROUGH THE WOODS"
"ALONG THE TRAIL"
"ON THE HILL TOP"
"AT THE DOOR"

THE
HARMONY SHOP
PUBLISHERS OF GOOD BOOKS
BOSTON – MASS.

By the Roadside

"It's time to go to work," said the little brown Dream.

"I'm not ready to go to work," said Marjorie, crossly, turning over and snuggling her head more comfortably into her pillow.

The Dream said nothing. He only sat on the foot-board and swung his feet.

By and by Marjorie turned over again,—and then again,—and then at last she sat up, exclaiming angrily: "I wish you wouldn't bother me! I want to go to sleep."

"Well," said the Dream, "how am I preventing you from sleeping?"

"You said it was time to go to work."

"That was half an hour ago," said the Dream. "I haven't spoken since."

"That doesn't make any difference," said Marjorie. "When you once say a thing that I know is true, it stays with me, and you might as well keep shouting it all the time as to have said it once;—I can't get away from it."

"If it is true, why do you want to get away from it?" asked the Dream.

"Because—" Marjorie hesitated, "—because I'm sleepy," she said petulantly.

"There are ever so many sleepy folks in this world," observed the Dream.

"Then one more can't make much difference," said Marjorie.

"That's what the others think,—and that's why there are so many. Suppose every one thought that!"

Marjorie pondered for a moment,—then she laughed. "Just think what a great big alarm-clock it would take to wake them all up!" she said.

The Dream rubbed his chin thoughtfully. "An alarm-clock is a pretty noisy article," he observed, "and it never says anything; and besides, I don't like its name. But one good, wide-awake person—" he looked directly at Marjorie, "—one good, wide-awake person could waken a very great many people—if he wanted to. But go on to sleep if you choose. I won't bother you."

"I'm not sleepy any more," said Marjorie; "and anyway, I slept only a little while after you spoke."

The Dream nodded. "Only a little while,—just long enough to let your work pass you by."

"*My* work?" exclaimed Marjorie. "Why, I hadn't anything in particular to do!"

"Every one has something in particular to do," said the Dream, "if he has his hand ready;—but yours wasn't,—it was under your cheek."

"What was the work?" asked Marjorie.

The Dream pointed up the long hill in front of them; and away, almost at the top, she saw a little girl lifting a basket from the roadside, where she had set it while she was resting. It was a large, heavy basket with a handle at each end, and so it was awkward for one to carry alone. Marjorie started forward impulsively; but the Dream did not stir. "Wait," he said, "you cannot catch up with her now, before she reaches the top of the hill; it is only a little way farther."

"But," cried Marjorie, "I can help her then! That basket must be hard to carry, even on level ground."

"She lives at the top of the hill," said the Dream, quietly. "She has no farther to carry it."

Marjorie bit her lip. "And she was right here when you first spoke?"

"Yes," said the Dream, "she was right here."

"But I didn't see her," protested Marjorie.

"You weren't looking for her," said the Dream.

"I'm sorry," said Marjorie, "but—but—" searching vainly for an excuse; and then a little virtuous tone coming into her voice; "—as likely as not she is better off for having carried it alone,—stronger, you know,—more experienced,—" this last rather lamely, for the Dream was looking at her fixedly. "Don't you think so?" she asked presently, as the Dream made no reply.

"I think," he said at last, "that there was Some One, a long time ago, who spent His entire life helping others, wisely."

"And I suppose you think that I ought to have taken the whole basket and lugged

it up the hill for her, and let her walk along and carry her hands!" exclaimed Marjorie, angrily.

"No," said the Dream, "not unless, for some reason, you thought that you ought to. You are not arguing honestly. You are not called upon to do one thing more than you think, *honestly*, that you ought to. No more than that is your work."

"But I could *make* myself think—" began Marjorie.

"I said *honestly*," said the Dream. "It isn't honest to *make* yourself think anything."

"But mustn't I study about it, and try—"

"Cer-tain-ly! Study about it carefully; but do it fairly. Don't take what some one else says that you 'ought' to do, and try to shave yourself down to fit it. Study it out and think it out for yourself; and then if the other fellow's opinion seems wise, follow it;—and if it doesn't, follow a better one of your own."

"But suppose that some one has a right to tell me what to do?"

"That's different. If you have given some one the right to tell you what to do, it must be because you believe that person understands better than you do. If you believe that, be obedient; if you don't, say so and go your own way. Be honest, that's all,—be honest with you."

"With *me*?"

"Yes, with you. If you are honest with yourself, you are square with the world."

"I see," said Marjorie. "Oh, dear, that is the third stone I've stumbled over in two minutes! I wonder why some one doesn't roll them out of the road,—they are not so very large."

"I wonder why," echoed the Dream, and there was a queer little note in his voice that made Marjorie glance toward him; and then her face flushed and she gave a little laugh.

"Why, of course it's my work!" she exclaimed, stooping and beginning to roll one toward the side of the way. It was rather heavy and awkward to handle; but she kept bravely on, and soon returned for another. As she bent toward it, she happened to glance back down the road, and then she suddenly straightened up. "Oh, look!" she cried. "See all the people dragging that wagon up the hill,—and

just hear them shout! Something must have happened to the horse! I'm going to help!" and she started to run down the hill.

"I thought you were busy," called the Dream, after her.

"Yes," she called back, "I know; but I can do that after a while,—I want to help with the wagon now;" and she ran on down the hill, and squeezing in among the others, she managed to get hold of one of the ropes, although there was scarcely room for her hand to grasp it. Up the hill she came, struggling and panting with the rest, and as she reached the spot where the Dream had remained, she waved her free hand proudly; but just then her foot struck a stone, and she tripped and fell against the person next to her, who let go of the rope in a wild effort to regain his balance; while the man behind her stumbled upon her feet and let go his hold; others stumbled, the rope was jerked from their hands, and in another moment the wagon began to roll slowly backward. Every one made a dash for it; but it was too late, and in an instant it was careening madly down the hill,—then a wheel struck another stone, the tongue turned, and with a great lurch the whole thing went over, scattering potatoes, turnips, and other vegetables in every direction, and sending barrels and boxes rolling and tumbling down the hill with a tremendous clatter.

Marjorie had picked herself up and stood watching it all with great, frightened eyes. "Oh, look, look!" she cried. "It's all my fault, and I was only trying to help! Oh, I'm so sorry! I didn't mean to trip,—I truly didn't!"

"Never mind, never mind," said a man near her, "you weren't to blame. It was all because of those stones in the road,—any one would trip on things like that;—some one else would have stumbled if you hadn't, so don't worry," and he began pitching the stones out of the way.

"Oh," cried Marjorie, in dismay, "then it really was my fault more than I thought! Why didn't I keep on with what I was doing, when it needed to be done, and I was doing it right! Oh, dear, what shall I do now?"

But the man did not understand. "You can't do anything," said he, sending the last stone flying into the ditch. "It isn't your fault; it is the fault of the people who go by here every day and leave these stones lying in the road, when it would take only a few moments to clear them away. Now run along and don't worry,—you couldn't help it."

So Marjorie turned and walked sorrowfully away beside the Dream.

"I don't see why it didn't come out right," she said at last. "I really wanted to help,—I was honest."

"Were you, truly?" asked the Dream.

"Why, yes," said Marjorie, "I—" then she hesitated.

"You saw the need of moving the stones, didn't you?"

"Yes," said Marjorie.

"And you were able to do it?"

"Oh, yes."

"And the people were really bringing the wagon up the hill quite easily, there were so many of them?"

"Yes," admitted Marjorie.

"Then, honestly, why did you leave the stones in order to go and pull on the rope?"

Marjorie stood still and thought, very soberly. "Well," she said at last, "I guess it was because it looked more interesting."

"It wasn't because you actually thought that they needed your help?"

"No-o," admitted Marjorie. "But then, I didn't stop to think of it that way,—I just wanted to do it."

"But you didn't ask yourself why you wanted to do it,—or if it were wise?"

"No-o. It just looked like helping, and I—I wanted to be in with the shouting."

"Yes," said the Dream, "you are not the only one who wants to 'be in with the shouting.' But just let me tell you something:—if you want to be honest with yourself, carry a great big WHY around with you all the time,—and when you have an impulse to do anything, look at that first. Don't just glance at it,—look at it squarely, if for only a moment. When you have answered that honestly, you will know what to do."

The two walked on in silence for quite a distance. By and by Marjorie heaved a little sigh. "I wish that I could find a big work," she said. "I wish that it would be

very, very big,—very, very big and very wonderful."

"Why?" asked the Dream.

"Oh!" cried Marjorie, clasping her hands, "so that years and years from now, people would look at it and say that *I* did it,—and would remember me for it."

"'M-hm," said the Dream.

"Wouldn't that be grand?" went on Marjorie, enthusiastically.

"'M-hm," said the Dream.

Marjorie looked hard at him. "Isn't it right to want to do great and wonderful things?" she asked.

"Yes," said the Dream.

"Then what—" Marjorie stopped.

"When you look at it fairly and squarely," said the Dream, "what do you think of your reason for wanting to do something great?"

Marjorie bit her lip.

"Be honest," said the Dream.

"Well," said Marjorie, at last, "I suppose the reason is just about as small and selfish and useless as a reason could possibly be."

"It is," said the Dream. "Now I'll tell you something. Those who have come to be known for their work are those who have worked for the love that was in them, —not for the name. To really work, is only to help; and those who are helped will see to it that the work and the worker are never separated; for while the work lives, the worker is in and of it. Do you see?"

"Yes, I see," said Marjorie, softly. "I am not honest enough, nor unselfish enough for a great work yet; but the little things will get me into practice, so I must love to do them, and perhaps the other will come when I am ready for it."

They had reached the top of the hill and passed a little school-house before either of them spoke again, and then the Dream broke the silence. "Why did you do that?" he asked; for Marjorie had jumped across the little ditch and was walking in the grass and weeds along the roadside. "The road isn't dusty," he added, "so it

is no pleasanter walking there."

"Well, you see," explained Marjorie, "I noticed that some people had walked along here and made a little path, and it will be much better to walk on a path by and by when the road *is* dusty."

"But your walking there this once can't help much."

"It will help some," said Marjorie, "and it is only a little hard for me; and walking in the dust will be very hard for ever so many after a while, and the weeds and grass would be grown quite high by that time. You see, my walking here presses the grass down and makes it look easier, so that some one else will do the same and help to wear the way. There," pointing backward, "do you see? All of those schoolchildren have come over on to the path because they saw me, and that will help ever so much."

"I guess you're right," said the Dream. "It is a good thing to make every step that you take, do work that will help some one some time."

Presently they came to a cross-roads, and Marjorie hesitated for a moment to see which way to turn; and then she noticed that the wind had blown one of the sign-boards from off its post, and that it lay, face-downward, in the road, covered with mud. Taking it up, she went to the little brook by the wayside and washed it carefully; and then, holding it as high as she could reach, she fastened it to the post, by pounding in the loosened nails with a stone. This had all taken some time, and when she had finished, she stepped back to view her work, wearing an expression of extreme complacence, which quickly changed to one of vexation, as she discovered that she had nailed the sign up side down, so that not only were the words inverted; but it pointed in the wrong direction.

"Oh, dear, see what I've done!" she cried.

"How did you happen to do that?" asked the Dream, looking interested.

"It was just because that little girl over there kept calling and calling to me. I tried not to hear, at first, but she worried me until I didn't know what I was about."

"What was the matter with her?" asked the Dream.

"Oh, she had got her dress caught on the fence when she was climbing over, and spilled some apples or something out of a basket. There, see how she's torn her

dress! It's her own fault! I told her to wait until I got through, and I would help her;—but I was too busy then."

"You told her to wait where? On the fence?"

"Oh, well, *I* couldn't help it,—it wasn't my fault that she caught her dress, she ought to have been more careful,—and, anyway, I had to nail the sign-board,—that was much more important, wasn't it?"

The Dream turned and looked at the sign-board critically. "Yes," he said, "I suppose it did have to be done in a hurry,—sign-boards don't 'keep' very well."

Marjorie flushed. "But some one might have come along who wanted to know the way."

"Yes," assented the Dream, dryly, "it would have been too bad if some one had come along before you got it put up—*that* way."

Marjorie's head drooped.

"As far as I can see," went on the Dream, "the only way to read that sign is to turn it 'tother end to,' in your mind."

"Yes," said Marjorie, in a very low voice.

"And how do you like to go on record as standing for a sign that reads:—'If you want to go right, *don't* follow me?'"

Marjorie's lip was quivering. "I'll take it down," she said, and began to pull upon the board, but it was of no use; for she had driven in the nails so tightly that she could not start them. Her eyes filled with tears. "Oh, what shall I do?" she sobbed. "I can't bear to go away and leave it like that!"

"I suppose that you see your mistake," said the Dream.

"Yes, yes, I know," sobbed Marjorie. "I ought to have stopped and helped the little girl,—I could have set up the sign at the foot of the post while I did it;—but I was interested in what I was doing, and didn't want to be bothered."

Just then the little girl came across the road, carrying the basket of apples which she had picked up, the long rent in her frock gathered together in her hand. "What is the matter?" she asked, looking at Marjorie's wet cheeks.

Marjorie pointed miserably to the sign.

"Oh," said the little girl, "you've made a mistake, haven't you! Let's fix it right."

"We can't," said Marjorie. "I can't get the board off."

"Perhaps both of us, together, can," said the little girl. "Come, let's both pull at once," and setting down her basket, she took a firm hold of the sign. And so Marjorie took hold again, and with much pulling and tugging, together, they soon had it off; and then, together, they nailed it back in place,—right.

When it was done, they stepped back to look at it, breathless and proud. Marjorie's hand crept into that of the little girl. "How good you are to help me," she said softly, "when I had been so unkind to you."

"It was my work, too," said the little girl, "and I was glad to do it;—and you were busy when I called to you."

"I was selfish," said Marjorie; "but I am sorry. Mayn't I help you to fix your dress? I have pins, and it is hard for you to walk with it that way; for you tread on it at every step, unless you carry the torn part."

And so, together, they pinned up the torn skirt; and then, with a loving hand-clasp, the little girl went away up one road, and Marjorie and the Dream turned to follow the other.

"I wish that she was going my way," said Marjorie, at last. "She is so kind, and she didn't keep complaining and talking about how hard it was to do her work, and how much she would rather do something else; and how much pleasanter this road looks than the one she had to take; but she was just loving and sunshiny and helpful."

And now they came to a place where there was a clump of wild roses growing by the wayside, and Marjorie stopped and began to gather some.

"The thorns are troublesome, aren't they?" asked the Dream, presently.

"Yes," said Marjorie, "but these are only little scratches, and I don't mind."

"But why are you gathering the roses?"

"Because there is nothing else to do just here, and I shall soon find some one who will love to have them; and, besides, they will make me happier, as I go along," and she buried her face in the pink petals.

After a time they came to where a little brook wandered across the road. There had been stepping-stones, but some thoughtless youngsters had taken them to one side and built a dam, which caused the water to back up until the way was impassable, if one would cross dry-shod.

Marjorie stood and looked for a moment, and then turned toward the fence where she saw that others had crossed by clinging to the boards. Then she stopped, and laying her roses in the shadow of a clump of bushes, she went to the little dam and began to loosen the stones. They proved to be heavy and slippery, and well embedded in the mud; but she managed, at the expense of wet feet and clothing, to dislodge them at last;—and then came the task of carrying them to where the other stepping-stones were. One she carried, and dropped it into exactly the right place, and then another, and was just returning for a third, when she saw a boy coming along the road. When she saw him, she hurried more eagerly, and was just lifting a very large stone when he came forward, timidly, but with outstretched hands. "Let me help you," he said.

But Marjorie half turned her back, with the heavy stone. "No, no!" she said. "I can do it myself."

"I would like to help you," the boy persisted. "I could make it much easier for you."

"No," said Marjorie, "I don't need you. Please let me pass."

The boy stepped aside with a little sigh. "No one wants me to help," he said, "and I don't seem to find any work of my own. I am not very clever," and he went on, crossing upon the stones which were already laid, and then jumping to the farther side, where he stood, watching.

Marjorie followed with her load, stepping carefully from one stone to another, and then, just as she bent to lower her burden into the stream, it slipped from her hands and dropped with a great splash that deluged the boy on the other side, with muddy water.

"There!" exclaimed Marjorie, impatiently, "I've got you all muddy! I'm sorry, but you shouldn't have waited. I told you that I didn't want help."

"Never mind," said the boy, wiping the mud from his face; and turning away, he walked quietly up the road.

Marjorie looked after him ruefully.

"What is the matter?" asked the Dream.

"I don't exactly know," said Marjorie; "but there is a mistake somewhere."

"Why didn't you let him help you?" asked the Dream.

"I didn't need his help. I could do it alone."

"But perhaps he needed to help you."

Marjorie bit her lip. "I wanted to do it alone," she said. "I thought it was my work. I wanted to work, and I was glad that it was hard, and that the stones were all that I could lift,—it made it seem more like doing something."

The Dream was silent for a moment, and Marjorie stood dabbling the toe of her shoe in the water. At last, "Were you selfish?" asked the Dream.

"Yes," said Marjorie, in a low voice, "I was." Then she went back and gathered up her roses, and she and the Dream walked slowly on, soon finding themselves on the outskirts of a town.

Presently the streets grew dingy and the houses high and narrow. "I don't see anything to do here," said Marjorie. "Couldn't we go back into the country again?"

"Don't you see anything to do?" asked the Dream, and just then Marjorie noticed a little child standing on the curbing, it's hands clasped and it's eyes fixed upon the bunch of roses.

Selecting the largest and most beautiful one, she placed it in the child's hands,—and a little farther on she gave two to a weary-looking woman,—and then a bud to an old man whose eyes moistened, and whose fingers trembled as he placed it in his button-hole,—and then a flower to a ragged, hard-featured boy, who held it awkwardly for a moment, his face transfigured, and then dived into the door of a dismal tenement. And all the way up the squalid street Marjorie distributed her bright blossoms, and always with a cheery word and smile.

At last the houses began to be farther and farther apart, and the yards larger, and presently they found themselves back in the open country once more. The road was very much like the one by which they had approached the town, pleasant and shady, and with a tiny brook running along the side. Marjorie bent over the little stream to wash the grime of the city from her hands, and then stopped for a

moment to splash the bright drops upon some thirsty flowers growing on the bank and leaning as far over as they could. While she was doing this, she heard the sound of a hammer close by, and, glancing around, she saw that she was near a farm-house with a large barn and sheds, and that a boy was busily nailing the pickets on to a fence, the frame of which stood a little way back from the road. Marjorie watched him for a few moments, admiring the evenness with which he placed the pickets, and the sure, firm blows of the hammer; at last, however, she began to grow uneasy. "Look," she said to the Dream, "see how close together he is nailing them. That isn't the right way. Why do you suppose he does it so? He's just spoiling the looks of his fence."

"Probably he does it that way because he wants it that way," said the Dream carelessly.

"But they don't look well that way, and it takes more pickets and more nails and a longer time."

The Dream looked at the boy and the fence, critically. "It's not such a bad fence," he said, dryly; "and the boy looks fairly smart, doesn't he?—and he handles his tools as if he had built fences before. Perhaps he knows what he is about."

"Y-e-s, he looks smart enough," agreed Marjorie; "but he is certainly making a mistake now, and I think I ought to tell him about it."

"All right," said the Dream. "Go ahead."

So Marjorie approached the boy, who stopped hammering and looked up at her pleasantly. "I thought that I would better tell you—" began Marjorie, somewhat embarrassed, "that—that—" she found it more difficult than she had expected, "—well, you see, you are making a mistake."

"What do you mean?" asked the boy glancing along the trim row of palings.

"Why, you are putting the pickets too close together," said Marjorie. "They don't look well that way, and they are too near the ground, besides. I was just speaking to my friend about it, and I thought that I ought to tell you, as well."

"Thank you," said the boy, gravely; and then:—"Do you know what I am building this fence for?"

"No-o," said Marjorie. "I supposed it was just—just a fence."

"Well," said the boy, "a fence usually has some particular purpose; and, as a general thing, the person building it knows that purpose better than any one else, and just what sort of a fence is best in that especial case."

Marjorie said nothing, and the boy went on.

"I am fencing in a place for some white rabbits. Some of them are very small, and so I had to put the pickets near together and close to the ground. Do you see?"

"Oh," said Marjorie, "I didn't know what you were going to keep inside! Of course you would have to build it this way for the little rabbits. If I had known what it was for, I wouldn't have said anything."

"Was it necessary for you to know?" asked the boy. "It is *my* fence."

Marjorie flushed, "I don't think that you are very grateful," she said; "and, anyway, the pickets don't look well so close together, even if you do have to have it that way," and she turned and went back to the road.

"Well?" said the Dream, as she approached.

"He was disagreeable," said Marjorie, "and acted as if I had no right to tell him of his mistake."

"But is he going to change the pickets?"

"No," said Marjorie, "he has to have them that way to keep some rabbits inside. I told him it didn't look well, anyway."

"Of course that helped some," said the Dream, "since he must have them so, whether they look well or not."

"Yes," said Marjorie. "See, he has come out into the road to look at them. I guess what I said sort of worried him. I don't think those pickets are a good shape, either. I like them better where they are cut sort of curly on top, instead of just plain points."

"Yes," said the Dream. "And did you tell him about that too?"

"No," said Marjorie, "I didn't think about it then; but—say—where do you suppose those rabbits are now? You don't think that they are shut up in that little dark shed over there, do you? Wouldn't that be dreadful? There, those people

heard what I said, and they are wondering too. See them look,—and I suppose that they will tell others about it. Isn't it too bad? And he's such a nice appearing boy too. I'm sure he doesn't mean to be cruel. I think that some one ought to speak to him. Poor little things, shut up in the dark on a beautiful day like this! It ought not to be allowed. I'm going to talk to him!" and Marjorie ran across the road again.

The boy glanced up as she approached; but waited for her to speak. Marjorie looked him straight in the eye. "Where are your rabbits?" she asked, severely.

"In the shed," he replied, motioning with his head in the direction of the building she had noticed.

"What!" she exclaimed. "A lot of lovely white rabbits shut up in that little dark shed! Oh, how can you be so unkind?"

"They have been there only about two hours," said the boy, "and I shall let them out as soon as I have nailed on these last few pickets. It will be only a little while; and besides, the shed is not dark, there is a big window on the other side, and they have cabbage and things to eat, and a great armful of clover."

"But they are shut up!" cried Marjorie. "How would you like to be shut up in jail, even if you did have a lot of cabbage and clover? You ought to let them out right away. Don't you love them at all?"

"Of course I love them," said the boy; "but can't you see that if I let them out now I will lose them? And, besides, they are tame rabbits and don't know how to take care of themselves, and would get into all sorts of trouble, and probably spoil all of the gardens in the neighborhood."

Marjorie looked unconvinced. "Your arguments sound all right," she said; "but I am sure that they must be wrong somewhere, because it certainly isn't right for those poor, dear little rabbits to be shut up that way. They ought to be let out right now. The fence is nearly done and they wouldn't try to go through the opening while you are working on it; they would be afraid. If you don't let them out, every one will be talking about how cruel you are. I suppose that is what those people are talking about now," and Marjorie pointed to the persons who had overheard her comments a few moments before.

The boy glanced toward them anxiously, and then toward the shed. "Well," he said at last, doubtfully, "perhaps I can manage it;—if only they won't go through

the gap before I can get back to it after opening the door," and he turned and walked unwilling toward the shed.

"I'll watch the gap," called Marjorie after him.

When he reached the building, he hesitated for an instant, and then he drew the bolt and threw open the door; but before he had time to turn and head them off, out scrambled a white wave of rabbits; big and little, fat and thin; and with one accord made straight for the opening in the fence. The boy ran after them, calling excitedly to Marjorie to stand firm and not let them through; and for a moment Marjorie did stand firm before the oncoming army of waving ears and flying feet; but when she felt the first scrambling of paws about her ankles, she lost her nerve, and in a sudden panic she fled wildly across the road and on to the top rail of the fence on the other side; and by the time that the boy reached the opening, the rabbits were scattered in every direction up and down the road and over the fields. For a few moments he stood, looking after them, and then, without glancing toward Marjorie, he took up in his arms one trembling little white fellow who had failed to find the opening, and turned toward the shed with it.

Marjorie climbed slowly down from the fence and walked along the road, silently and with her head down.

Presently the Dream spoke. "Was it your work that the boy was doing?" he asked.

"No," said Marjorie.

"Was he worried and uncertain when you came along? Did he ask for your opinion or advice?"

"No," said Marjorie.

"And what did you do?"

Marjorie spoke in a very low voice, but very steadily. "I criticised him unjustly; I talked about him in the hearing of other people, and some of them will never know that he was right and I was wrong; and I interfered, and now—" Marjorie stopped and swallowed hard.

"And now—what?" asked the Dream.

"I am sorry," said Marjorie humbly.

"So is the boy," said the Dream.

Marjorie said nothing.

"Aren't you afraid you'll get the habit?" asked the Dream, presently.

"What habit?"

"You've said 'I'm sorry,'—how many times to-day?"

Marjorie shook her head. "It seems as if I have said it oftener than anything else. But I ought to be sorry when I make mistakes, oughtn't I?"

"Yes. Only don't hold on to it after you have learned your lesson, that's all. The lesson is the only good thing about being sorry;—and you and the boy, each, had a lesson this time."

"Yes," said Marjorie, "and mine is that other people's work—"

"Make it short," said the Dream. "Call it 'mind your own business.'"

Marjorie nodded gravely. "And the boy's lesson is—"

"'Be sure you're right, then go ahead,
'Don't mind what people say.'"

hummed the Dream.

Marjorie nodded again. "But it is so hard to 'be sure you're right,' when other people think that you are wrong."

"Not if you keep an honest WHY in sight," said the Dream.

"Listen," said Marjorie, "I hear singing," and she looked all about her eagerly, but could see no one. "How sweet it sounds," she said; "there must be quite a number singing together. Oh, there they are!" and she pointed to where a group of five or six children were just emerging from a shady lane and turning into the road, all singing gaily to a tune which Marjorie knew very well. "Come," she cried, "let's catch up. I'd love to sing with them," and she hurried her steps.

As she came up behind the children, several turned and saw her. "Come and sing with us," called one of them.

"Thank you," said Marjorie. "I was just wishing you'd ask me," and she eagerly

joined the group. However, as they took up the song again, Marjorie did not take part in it; but, instead, a little wrinkle came between her eyebrows, and she glanced anxiously at the Dream, who did not seem to be looking in her direction at all.

Presently, one of the children who was walking beside her, stopped singing and turned toward her. "Why don't you sing?" he asked.

"I—I don't know those words," said Marjorie.

"Do you know the tune?" asked the boy.

"Oh, yes," said Marjorie; "but I always sang different words to it."

"Well, you can learn these easily," said the boy. "I'll teach them to you."

Marjorie hesitated. "You are very kind," she said; "but—but—"

"But—what?" said the boy.

"Well—" Marjorie was thinking hard, "—I am not sure but that I ought to be going on—"

"You said that you wanted to sing," said the boy.

Suddenly Marjorie's face brightened. "Oh, I know!" she exclaimed. "Did you ever try singing the multiplication table to that tune? It's lots of fun. Let's try it."

"All right," said the boy, "only I don't know it all."

"This will help you to learn it," said Marjorie. "I remember it, so you just follow me. We'll begin with the fives, because they're easy;" and they dropped a little way behind the others and began to sing, softly, putting their own words to the tune. The boy was delighted to find how easily the words fitted, and presently they went on to the "Sixes," and began to sing a little louder; and then another of the children dropped back to find what they were doing, and joined in, with gusto. This attracted the attention of others, who gradually joined them, until soon the words of the multiplication table rose high above the silly and senseless words of the song which they had been singing;—and Marjorie's voice led them, singing true to note and to the facts of the table.

"Good!" said the boy who was walking beside Marjorie, as they stopped for breath. "I always thought the 'Sixes' were hard; but they are easy this way; for

the tune makes me think of the right words to put in. Now let's try the 'Sevens.'"

And so they tried the "Sevens" and the "Eights," some of the children stumbling badly at first; but soon getting into the swing of the tune and the words, until their voices all blended smoothly and sweetly. By and by the children began dropping out of the group, as they came to their homes on the road; each one calling a cheery good-by to Marjorie, and going away singing by himself.

"I'm going to teach it to my brother and sister," called one, as he turned in at his gate, "so that we can sing it together at home."

"And so am I," "And so am I," called the others; "and we'll sing it coming from school every night until we know it all."

When Marjorie and the Dream were again alone, Marjorie continued humming the little tune, happily.

"The world is more beautiful than it was. Don't you think so?" said the Dream, presently.

"Yes," said Marjorie.

"I suppose you know what was the best thing that you did there?" said the Dream.

"Yes," said Marjorie. "It was putting something true into their song, in place of what was silly and meaningless and untrue."

"And you did it without making one of them feel cross or contrary. You only showed them something better than they had, and did it without being obtrusive. Every one wants what is better than he has;—if he is allowed to take it of his own accord, and doesn't have it thrust upon him."

After this they walked along in silence for quite a long way, until they came to the top of a hill, and sat down to rest for a few moments. Marjorie heaved a sigh as she looked away over the low, green hills, the shady woods, and the winding stream. "I've come a long way," she said, "and I haven't done much;—but I wanted to,—you don't know how I wanted to."

"And what are you going to do now?" asked the Dream.

"Keep on," said Marjorie, bravely.

"In just the same way?"

"No. I've learned some things,—and I shall learn some more. I've made ever so many mistakes—"

"But you've seen them," said the Dream.

"Yes. I don't think I'll make the same ones again;—and I'll try to watch and think, so that I will not make so many as I have,—and—but I wanted, so much, to find some real work to do!"

"Do you remember what I told you, a while ago, that real work is?"

"Yes. Just helping, wisely."

"And how can you help best?"

Marjorie mused for a moment. "By loving, and living love," she said; "and having your hand ready." And then, after a moment, "Do you suppose that I will ever find something big to do, instead of just the little bits by the wayside?"

"It is all 'by the wayside,'" said the Dream; "and the big things will come,—when you are big enough for them."

---

owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg-tm trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, "Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation."

- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg-tm License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg-tm works.

- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.

- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg-tm works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg-tm electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from both the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and Michael Hart, the owner of the Project Gutenberg-tm trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread public domain works in creating the Project Gutenberg-tm collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain "Defects," such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the "Right of Replacement or Refund" described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg-tm trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg-tm electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH F3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you

received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you 'AS-IS,' WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTIBILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg-tm work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg-tm work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg-tm

Project Gutenberg-tm is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need, is critical to reaching Project Gutenberg-tm's goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg-tm collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg-tm and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation web page at http://www.gutenberg.org/fundraising/pglaf.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's principal office is located at 4557 Melan Dr. S. Fairbanks, AK, 99712., but its volunteers and employees are scattered throughout numerous locations. Its business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887, email business@pglaf.org. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's web site and official page at http://www.gutenberg.org/about/contact

For additional contact information:
Dr. Gregory B. Newby
Chief Executive and Director
gbnewby@pglaf.org

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg-tm depends upon and cannot survive without wide spread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations ($1 to $5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit http://www.gutenberg.org/fundraising/pglaf

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg Web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: http://www.gutenberg.org/fundraising/donate

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works.

Professor Michael S. Hart is the originator of the Project Gutenberg-tm concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For thirty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg-tm eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg-tm eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as Public Domain in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Each eBook is in a subdirectory of the same number as the eBook's eBook number, often in several formats including plain vanilla ASCII, compressed (zipped), HTML and others.

Corrected EDITIONS of our eBooks replace the old file and take over
the old filename and etext number. The replaced older file is renamed.
VERSIONS based on separate sources are treated as new eBooks receiving
new filenames and etext numbers.

Most people start at our Web site which has the main PG search facility:

http://www.gutenberg.org
This Web site includes information about Project Gutenberg-tm,
including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary
Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to
subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.

EBooks posted prior to November 2003, with eBook numbers BELOW #10000,
are filed in directories based on their release date. If you want to
download any of these eBooks directly, rather than using the regular
search system you may utilize the following addresses and just
download by the etext year.

http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext06/
    (Or /etext 05, 04, 03, 02, 01, 00, 99,
     98, 97, 96, 95, 94, 93, 92, 92, 91 or 90)

EBooks posted since November 2003, with etext numbers OVER #10000, are
filed in a different way. The year of a release date is no longer part
of the directory path. The path is based on the etext number (which is
identical to the filename). The path to the file is made up of single
digits corresponding to all but the last digit in the filename. For
example an eBook of filename 10234 would be found at:

http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/1/0/2/3/10234

or filename 24689 would be found at:
http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/2/4/6/8/24689

An alternative method of locating eBooks:
http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/GUTINDEX.ALL
*** END: FULL LICENSE ***