

# YONGE CHARLOTTE MARY

SOWING AND SEWING: A  
SEXAGESIMA STORY

Charlotte Yonge

**Sowing and Sewing:  
A Sexagesima Story**

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**Yonge C.**

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# **Charlotte M. Yonge**

## **Sowing and Sewing: A Sexagesima Story**

### **PREFACE**

Perhaps some may read allusions to a sacred Parable underlying this little story. If so, I hope they will not think it an irreverent mode of applying the lesson.

*C. M. YONGE.*

## CHAPTER I

### THE SERMON

Four girls were together in a pleasant cottage room with a large window, over which fluttered some dry sticks, which would in due time bear clematis and Virginia creeper leaves.

Three of them were Miss Lee's apprentices, and this room had been built out at the back of the baker's shop for them. The place was the property of the Lee family themselves, and nobody in Langley was more respected than they were. Ambrose Lee, whose name was over the baker's shop, and who kept a horse and cart, was always called Mr. Lee.

He had married a pretty, delicate young girl, who had soon fallen into such hopeless ill-health, that his sister Charlotte was obliged to live at home to attend to her and to the shop. And when young Mrs. Lee died, leaving three small children, another sister, Rose, gave up her place to help in the care of her old father and the little ones.

Rose Lee had been a sewing maid, and, being clever, had become a very fair dressmaker; so she took in needlework from the first, and when good old master Lee died, and the children had grown old enough to be more off her hands, she became the dressmaker and sempstress of the place, since there was no doubt that all she took in hand would be thoroughly well turned out of hand, from a child's under garment up to Mrs. and Miss Manners's dresses. "For," as her sister Charlotte proudly said of her, "the ladies had everything made down here, except one or two dresses from London for the fashion." Her nephews were both from home, one as a pupil-teacher, the other at a baker's with a superior business, and her niece, Amy, the only girl of the family, had begun as a pupil-teacher, but she had such bad headaches at the end of her first year that her father was afraid to let her go on studying for examinations, and cancelled her engagement, and thus she became an assistant to her aunt. Then Jessie Hollis, from the shop, came home from her aunt's, unwilling to go to service, and begged Miss Lee to take her and teach her dressmaking; and, having thus begun, she consented, rather less willingly, to take likewise Florence Cray from the Manners Arms, chiefly because she had known her mother all her life, and believed her to be careful of the girl; besides which, it was a very respectable house.

As plain work, as well as dressmaking, was done, there was quite enough employment for all the hands, as well as for the sewing machine, at which Amy, a fair, delicate-looking girl, was whirring away, while Jessie was making the button-holes of a long *princesse* dress, and Florence tacking in some lining; or rather each was pausing a little in her work to answer Grace Hollis, Jessie's sister, a businesslike-looking young person, dressed in her town-going hat and jacket, who had stepped in, on her way to meet the Minsterham omnibus, to ask whether Miss Lee wanted to have anything done for her, and likewise how many yards of narrow black velvet would be wanted for the trimming of her own and Jessie's spring dresses.

Miss Lee was gone up to the house for a grand measuring of all the children for their new frocks; but Amy began to calculate and ask questions about the width and number of rows, and Jessie presently said—

"After all, I think mine will look very well without any round the skirt."

"Why, Jessie, I thought you said the dress you saw looked so genteel with the three rows—"

"Yes," said Jessie; "but I have thought since—" and she hesitated and blushed.

Amy got up from the machine, came towards her, and, laying her hand on her, said, gently—

"I know, Jessie."

"And I know, though you wanted to keep it a secret!" cried Florence. "I was at church too last night!"

"Oh, yes, I saw you, Florence; and wasn't it beautiful?" said Amy, earnestly.

"Most lovely! It is worth something to have a stranger here sometimes to get a fresh hint from!" said Florence.

"I call that more than a hint," said Jessie, in a low voice. "I am so glad you felt it as I did, Flossy."

"Felt it! You don't mean that you got hold of it? Then you can tell whether it was cut on the bias, and how the little puffs were put on!"

"Why, what are you thinking of, Flossy?" exclaimed Amy. "Bias—puffs! One would think you were talking of a dress!"

"Well, of course I was. Of that lovely self-trimming on that cashmere dress of the lady that came with Miss Manners. What—what are you laughing at, Grace?"

"Oh! Florence," said Amy, in a disappointed tone; "we thought you meant the sermon."

"The sermon?" said Florence, half annoyed, half puzzled; "well, it was a very good one; but—"

"It did make one feel—oh, I don't know how!" said Jessie, much too eager to share her feelings with the other girls, even to perceive that Florence wanted to go off to the trimming.

"Wasn't it beautiful—most beautiful—when he said it was not enough only just not to be weeds, or to be only flowers, gay and lovely to the eye?" said Amy.

"Yes," went on Jessie; "he said that we might see there were some flowers just for beauty, all double, and with no fruit or good at all in them, but dying off into a foul mass of decay."

"Ay," said Grace; "I thought of your dahlias, that, what with the rain and the frost, were—pah! —the nastiest mess at last."

"Then he said," proceeded Jessie, "that there were some fair and comely, some not, but only bringing forth just their own seeds, not doing any real good, like people that keep themselves to themselves, and think it is enough to be out of mischief and do good to themselves and their families."

"And didn't you like it," broke in Amy, "when he said that was not what God asked of us? He wanted us to be like the wheat, or the vine, or the apple, or the strawberry, some plain in blossom, some fair and lovely to look at, but valued for the fruit they bring forth, not selfishly, just to keep up their own stock, but for the support and joy and blessing of all!"

"One's heart just burnt within one," continued Jessie, "when he bade us each one to go home and think what we could do to bring forth fruit for the Master, some thirty, some sixty, some an hundredfold. Not only just keeping oneself straight, but doing something for Christ through His members."

"Only think of its being for Christ Himself," said Amy softly.

"Well," said Grace, "I thought we might take turns to go to Miss Manners's missionary working parties. I never gave in to them before, but I shall not be comfortable now unless I do something. And was that what you meant about the velvet trimming, Jessie? It will save—"

"Fifteen pence," said Jessie.

"Very well—or you may say threepence more. So we can put that into the box, if you like. I must be going now, and look sharp if I'm to catch the bus. So good-bye, all of you."

"Oh! but won't you have the self-trimming," broke in Florence. "Perhaps she'll be there on Friday night, and then we might amongst us make out how it is done."

"Florence Cray, for shame!" said Grace. "I do believe you minded nothing but that dress all through that sermon."

"Well," said Florence, who was a good-humoured girl, "there was no helping it, when there it was just opposite in the aisle, and I'd never seen one like it; and as to the sermon, you've just given it to me over again, you've got it so pat; and I'll go to the missionary work meeting too, Grace, and very like the young lady will be there, and I can see her trimming."

"If you go for that, I would go to a fashion-book at once," said Grace; "but I must really be off now, I've not another minute to stop."

"Oh dear, I forgot," cried Florence, jumping up, "I was to ask you to call for our best tea-pot at Bilson's. And my mother wants a dozen—" and there her voice was lost as she followed Grace out of the room through the shop, and even along the road, discoursing on her commissions.

Amy and Jessie were left together, and Amy stood up and said:

"Dear, I am so glad you felt it as I did!"

"One could not help it, if one listened at all," said Jessie. "Amy, I must be doing something for His sake. I can't rest now without it. You teach at the Sunday school. Don't you think I might?"

Amy meditated a little.

"I think they would make up a class for you. When Miss Pemberton's niece goes away, the class she takes has to be joined to her aunt's, and that makes a large one."

"Then will you speak to Miss Manners for me?" asked Jessie. "Are they little girls or big ones?"

"Oh, that's the second class. They would be sure not to give you that," said Amy, as if she thought the aspiration very high, not to say presumptuous. "Perhaps Margaret Roller, the pupil-teacher, you know, may take that. Then I should have hers and you mine. They are dear little girls, some of them, only Susan Bray always wants a tight hand over her, Polly Smithers is so stupid, and Fanny Morris is so sly, one always has to be on the watch."

"Here she comes," said Florence, who was the nearest to the window, and the entrance of Aunt Rose, a brisk, fair little woman, young looking for her age, recalled all her "young ladies," as Florence and Jessie, and perhaps Amy likewise, preferred being called, to recollect that stitching was, at that moment at least, the first thing to be attended to.

## CHAPTER II

### THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

Perhaps Amy's business-like tone about the school classes fell a little flat upon Jessie's ear. She had not been to a Sunday school in her childhood. Her father had been a prosperous upholsterer's foreman in Minsterham, and Grace and Jessie had gone to an "academy" till, when they were sixteen and fourteen years old, their father died of a fever, and their mother, who had a cottage of her own at Langley, resolved on coming back and setting up a small shop there for all sorts of wares, with Clementina Hollis over the door.

Jessie was about eighteen, two years younger than her sister. She had always been a bright, quick, lively girl, but never very thoughtful, and much too inquisitive, till her curiosity had brought on her a terrible accident, which had kept her laid up in a hospital for many weeks. She had come home quite well at last, and much improved. A fellow patient, and likewise a lady who had visited her and lent her books, had both made much impression on her. She cared about right and wrong as she had never done before, was more useful at home, and tried to restrain her inclination to find out all about everything; she said her prayers more carefully, went to Church more often, and heeded more what she heard; and altogether she was what her mother called an altered girl. This was Lent, and a clergyman was staying with Mr. Somers to preach a course of sermons on the Friday evenings, and it was one of these that had so much struck these young girls, and had put into their minds for the first time, with any real force, the full sense that the true Christian must seek to work for the good of the household of Christ as well as his own household, and that "bringing forth good fruit" does not simply mean taking care of oneself, and trying to save one's own soul.

The language had been beautiful and stirring, and there was a burning desire in more than one heart to be doing something for Christ's sake. The first thing that Jessie thought of was the Sunday school. She had read books about it, and her fellow patient was full of ardour about "training little lambs," as she called it, so that it seemed the most beautiful and suitable task she could undertake.

Amy Lee, on the other hand, hardly knew how to spend a Sunday without the school. She had been a scholar there until she had quite outgrown the first class, and had been more than a year confirmed, and then she had become a teacher of the little ones. She liked the employment, and was fond of the children; she would have been sorry to drop the connection with Miss Manners or with Miss Joy, the mistress, and the rest of the school staff; she was pleased to work for and with Mr. Somers and Miss Manners, and she had been trained to be reverent and attentive; but it had never occurred to her to think of it as more than a nice and good thing to do, or to look on it as a work undertaken for Christ's sake.

"Teaching at school, I do that already," she said to herself, when Aunt Rose's entrance had made her work her machine more and her tongue less. "I must get something more to do. Oh! I know. There's poor old half-blind Mrs. Long. She is left to herself terribly, they do say, and I'll go and tidy her up, and see to her and read to her every day. I could do it before my work and after. Maybe I might get her to be a better old woman than she ever has been. Books say that nothing so softens an old woman as a nice, bright young girl coming in to make much of her, and I'm sure I'm nice and bright—not so much in myself, but compared with the whole lot of Longs."

So Amy told her plan to her aunts, as soon as Florence and Jessie had gone home to dinner.

The two aunts looked at one another, and Aunt Charlotte said, "Did the sermon make you think of that?" in rather a doubtful tone.

"Yes," said Amy. "One seemed to long to be doing some good, not be only an empty flower, as he said."

"Mrs. Long," said Aunt Rose; "she ain't a very nice person to fix upon."

"But no one wants it so much, aunt," said Amy.

"That's true," said Aunt Charlotte. "Well, Amy, we must think about it, and speak to your father. Run out now, and gather a bit of parsley for his cheese."

Amy knew it was to get her out of the way, and felt rather disappointed that the proposal was not seized upon at once, and applauded.

"She's a good girl," said Aunt Rose.

"Well, so she is, and I don't like to stand in her way," said Aunt Charlotte.

"But to pitch on old Sally Long of all folk in the world!" said Rose.

"There's no doubt but she does want something done for her; but I misdoubt me if she will choose our Amy to do it. Besides, I don't like her tongue. That's what daunts me most."

"Yes. If she took it kind of the girl, she would never be satisfied without talking to her of all the old backbiting tales that ever was! And we that have kept our girl up from hearing of all evil just like a lady—"

"What is it?" said Ambrose Lee, himself coming in, after putting up his cart.

"Why, that sermon last night has worked upon our Amy, so that she wants to do something extra," said Aunt Rose.

"A right down good sermon it was," said the father; "a bit flowery, to suit the maidens, I suppose."

"And she said it all off to me, quite beautiful," said Rose, who had stayed at home.

"And what does the child want to be doing? I won't have her go back to her books again, to worry her head into aching."

"No, that's not what she wants. Her notion is to run in and out and see to old Widow Long."

"Widow Long!" exclaimed the baker. "Why, she's got as slandering a tongue as any in the parish! Give the poor old soul a loaf or a sup of broth if you like, but I'll not have my girl running in and out to hear all the gossip of the place, and worse."

"I knew you would say so, Ambrose," returned Charlotte. "All the same, the child's thought shames me that I've never done anything for the poor old thing; and she won't harm me."

Ambrose chuckled a little. "I don't know but aunt likes a spice of gossip as much as her niece. 'Tis she tells us all the news."

"Well, I can get plenty of that in the shop, without going to Dame Long for it," said Charlotte, laughing. "I like the real article, genuine and unadulterated."

They were laughing at Aunt Charlotte's wit when Amy came in, and she looked from one to the other, afraid they were laughing at her project, and ready to be offended or hurt. She did not like it when her father said, "Look here, my girl, Aunt Charlotte says Dame Long's dish of tongue is too spicy for you, and she must have it for herself."

"I don't know what you mean, father," said Amy, nearly crying, "I didn't want it for that."

"No, you didn't, child," said Charlotte; "but come along here, I want you to help me dish up."

Amy came with the tears standing in her eyes into the back kitchen, vexed, angered, and ready to be cross. Her aunt set her to prepare the dish for the Irish stew, while she said, "Father was at his jokes with me, Amy. He don't like you to be running in and out to old Sally Long by yourself; no more does your Aunt Rosy nor I; but the poor old body didn't ought to be neglected, and the sermon was just as much for me as for you, so I've made up my mind to look after her a bit, and you may come in with me sometimes if you like."

"That was not what I meant," said Amy, rather fretfully.

"I dare say not. There, mind what you are about, or you'll have that dish down. Where's the flour? Come, now, Amy, don't be daunted, if you can't do good quite in your own way; why shouldn't you ask Miss Dora now?"

Amy muttered and pouted. "I'm not such a child now!"

"Ain't you then, to be making such a pout at not getting just your own way."

Down came the dish with a bounce on the table, and away ran Amy up the stairs, where she cried and choked, and thought how hard it was that she should be hindered, and laughed at, and scolded, when she wanted to do good, and bring forth the fruit of good works.

She heard Aunt Rose ask where she was, and her Aunt Charlotte answer, "Oh! she will be down in a minute."

She felt it kind that no one said that she was in the sulks. The relief did her good; she could not bear that any one should guess what was amiss. So she washed her face in haste, tidied her hair and collar, and hoped that she looked as if she had gone up for nothing else.

Perhaps her father had had a hint, and she was his great pet, so he took care that the apprentices should not suspect that Amy had been "upset." So he began to tell what had made him late at home. He had overtaken poor Widow Smithers in much trouble, for she had had a note from the hospital to say that her little boy, Edwin, must be discharged as incurable. It was a hip complaint, and he could not walk, and she had not been able to find any way of getting him home.

It so happened that all the gentlefolks were out for the day, and she did not get her letter in time before the market people set off. She was indeed too poor to hire a conveyance, and was going in, fearing that she might have to carry this nine-year-old boy herself five miles unless she could get a lift. So Mr. Lee had driven her into the town, and after doing his work there, had come up to the hospital, and had taken her in with poor little Edwin, who was laid on a shawl in the cart, but cried a good deal at the jolting. The doctors said that they could do no more for the poor little fellow, and she would have to take him home and do the best she could for him.

It fell very hard upon her, poor woman, for she was obliged to go out to work every day, since she had four children, and only Harry, the one who was older than Edwin, earned anything—and indeed he only got three shillings a week for minding some cows on the common. The two girls *must* go to school, and indeed they were too young to be of much use and the boy would have to be left alone all day, except for the dinner hour, as he had been before the hospital had been tried for him.

"There, Amy," said Aunt Charlotte, as they were clearing away the dinner things after the menfolk had gone out, "there's something you could do. It would be a real kindness to go in and see after that poor little man."

"Yes," added Rose; "you might run in at dinner time, and I'd spare you a little time then, and you might read to him, and cheer him up—yes, and teach him a bit too."

"Edwin Smithers was always a very tiresome, stupid little boy," said Amy, rather crossly, from her infant school recollections.

"Then he will want help all the more," said Aunt Rose, and it sounded almost like mimicry of what Amy had said of old Mrs. Long.

She did not like it at all. It is the devices of our own heart that we prefer to follow, whether for good or harm, and specially when we think them good. And yet we specially pray that we may do all such good works as our Lord hath *prepared for us to walk in*, as if we were to rejoice in having our opportunities set out before us, yet the teaching a dull little boy of whom she had had experience in the infant school, did not seem to her half such interesting work as converting an old woman of whom strange things were said.

However, Amy was on the whole a good girl, though she had her little tempers, and did not guard against them as she ought, thinking that what was soon over did not signify.

By and by, Jessie came back radiant with gladness, and found a moment to say, before Florence Cray came in, that her mother was quite agreeable to her teaching in the Sunday school, if Miss Manners liked it. She had gone there herself for some years when she and Miss Manners were both young, and she was well pleased that her daughter should be helpful there.

Amy, who was fond of Jessie, was delighted to think of having her company all the way to school, and her little fit of displeasure melted quite away. But when Florence was heard coming in,

both girls were silent on their plans, knowing that she would only laugh at their wishing to do anything so dull.

## CHAPTER III

### THE WORKING PARTY

"Are these fruits of the sermon on Friday night?" said Miss Manners to Mr. Somers, as they finished winding up their parish accounts on Monday morning. "Not only, as you know, here is Grace Hollis wanting to join Mrs. Somers's Tuesday working parties, Jessie begging to help at the Sunday school; but I find that good little Amy Lee went and sat with poor Edwin Smithers for half an hour on Sunday after church, showing him pictures, and she has promised his mother to come and look in on him every day. It is very nice of the Lees to have thought of it, and to spare her."

"Yes," said Mrs. Somers, "the Lees are always anxious to do right."

"I had a talk with Charlotte just now. She came to get some flannel for Mrs. Long. She says she will make it up for her, if the old woman can have it out of the club. Well, she says it is quite striking how all those girls have been moved by Mr. Soulsby's sermon on Friday evening. Amy came home and nearly said it all off to her Aunt Rose, and the girls were all talking about it in the workroom in the morning, full of earnestness to make some effort."

"I saw they were looking very attentive," said Mr. Somers. "Shall you accept Jessie Hollis's help?"

"I think I can make a class up for her."

"I suppose it would be a pity to check her, but do you imagine that she knows anything?"

"I don't know; but she is not at all a stupid girl, and she cannot go far wrong with the questions on the Catechism and Gospels that I shall give her. Indeed I had thought of asking her and Margaret Roller, and, perhaps, Amy Lee, to come and prepare the lessons here on Friday evenings after church."

"A good plan," said Mr. Somers, "if it be not giving you too much to do."

"Not a bit, especially at this time of year, when nobody wants me in the evenings. My only doubt is whether it is not keeping the girls out too late, but I will see whether it can be managed. The children might be better taught, and the teachers might learn something themselves in this indirect way."

Perhaps this was Miss Dora's way of acting on the sermon, but she could not begin that week, as a friend was coming to spend the Friday with her.

Meantime Grace Hollis had joined the working party that met every Tuesday afternoon for an hour to make clothes for a very poor district in London. She had been sometimes known to say that it was all waste of time to make things and send them away to thriftless, shiftless folk; but she had heard something of the love of our neighbour, and our membership with the rest of our Lord's Body, which had touched her heart. So she brought her thimble and needle, to join the working party who sat round the Rectory dining-table. Mrs. Somers and Miss Manners shook hands, made her welcome, and found her a seat and some work. Grace looked about her to be sure who the party were. Mrs. Nowell, the gardener's wife, sat next to her. Then came little Miss Agnes from the Hall, sewing hard away, and Lucy Drew from Chalk-pit Farm, who was about her age, next to her, and old Miss Pemberton knitting.

"A mixed lot," said Grace to herself, and then her eye lit upon deformed Naomi Norris, of whom she did not approve at all. Did not the girl come of a low dissenting family, and had not her father the presumption to keep a little shop in Hazel Lane which took away half the custom, especially as they pretended to make toffee? Meanwhile here was Miss Wenlock, the governess at the squire's, and Miss Dora reading aloud to the party in turn. It was the history of some mission work in London, and Miss Lee, who was there, listened with great pleasure, as did many of the others. Indeed she well might, for her eldest sister's son hoped one day to be a missionary. But Grace was not used to being read to, and, as she said, "it fidgeted her sadly," and she was wondering all the time what mistakes

mother would make in the shop without her, and she began to be haunted with a doubt whether she had put out a parcel of raisins that Farmer Drew's man was to call for. The worry about it prevented her from attending to a word that was read; indeed she could hardly keep herself from jumping up, making up an excuse, and rushing home to see about the raisins!

Then she greatly disapproved of the shape of the bedgown she had been set to make, and did not believe it would sit properly. It was ladies' cutting towards which she felt contemptuous, and yet she would have thought it impolite to interfere. Besides, it might make the whole sitting go on longer, and Grace was burning to get home. At last the reading ended, but oh! my patience, that creature Naomi was actually putting herself forward to ask some nonsensical question, where some place was, and Miss Agnes must needs get a map, and every one go and look at it—Grace too, not to be behindhand or uncivil to the young ladies; but had not she had enough of maps and such useless stupid things long ago when she left school at Miss Perkins's?

When at last this was over, Mrs. Somers came and spoke to her while she was putting on her hat, and thanked her pleasantly, saying that she was afraid that beginning in the middle of a book made it less interesting, but that one day more would finish it. Then she added "I don't like the pattern of that bedgown, do you?"

"No, Mrs. Somers, not at all," replied Grace. "It quite went against me to put good work into it."

"I wonder whether you could help us to a better shape next time," said Mrs. Somers. "We should be very much obliged to you. This pattern came out of a needlework book, and I am not satisfied about it."

Grace promised, and went away in better humour, but more because she had been made important than because she cared for what she had been doing. She was glad no one could say she had been behindhand with her service, but it was a burthen to her, and she did not open her mind to enter into it so as to make it otherwise.

Indeed, her mind was more full of her accounts and the bad debts, and of the cheapest way of getting in her groceries than of anything else. As she walked back through the village she wondered whether Mrs. Somers and Miss Manners would send to her mother's for their brown sugar this summer. That would make it worth while to go to a better but more expensive place, and have in a larger stock; and Grace went on reckoning the risk all the time, and wondering whether the going to the working parties would secure the ladies' custom. In that case the time would not be wasted. It did not come into Grace's head whether what she had thought of for the service of God she might be turning to the service of Mammon, if she only just endured it for the sake of standing well with the gentry. But then, was it not her duty to consider her shop and her mother's interest?

She was quite vexed and angry when she saw Jessie go and fetch the big Family Bible that evening, turning off the whole pile of lesson-books to which it formed the base.

"Now what can you be doing that for?" she said sharply.

"I want to prepare my lesson for to-morrow," said Jessie.

"And is not a little Bible good enough for you, without upsetting the whole table?"

"My Bible has got no references," said Jessie.

"And what do little children like that want of references? If you are to be turning the house upside down and wasting time like that over preparing as you call it, I don't know as ma will let you undertake it."

"I have ironed all the collars and cuffs, Grace," said Jessie; "yes, and looked over the stockings."

Grace had no more to say; she knew Jessie had wonderful eyes for a ladder or a hole; but it worried her and gave her a sense of disrespect that the pyramid which surmounted the big Bible should be interfered with, or that the Book itself should have its repose interfered with "for a pack of dirty children," when it had never been opened before except to register christenings, or to be spread out and read when some near relation died, as part of the mourning ceremony.

It really made her feel as if something unfortunate had happened to see the large print pages on the little round table, and her sister peering into the references and looking them out in her own little Bible, then diligently marking them.

Her mother, too, asked what Jessie was about, and though she did not say anything against her employment, their looking on, and the expression on Grace's face, worried Jessie so much that she could not think, and only put a slip of paper into her own book at each she found. The chapter she had chosen was the Parable of the Sower, on which she had once heard a sermon. She was amazed to find how many parallel passages there were, and how beautifully they explained one another when she made time for comparing them on Sunday morning. She saw herself beforehand expounding them to the children, and winning their hearts, as her friend in the hospital had described, and she was quite ready in her neat black silk and fur jacket, with a little blue velvet hat, when Amy Lee came to call for her, in her grey merino, black cloth coat, and little hat to match.

They met Miss Manners at the school door, and were pleasantly greeted, and taken into the large cheerful room, all hung round with maps and pictures, where the classes were assembling, and one or two of the other teachers had come.

The bell was heard ringing, and while the children trooped in, Miss Manners showed Jessie a chair with some books laid open upon it, the class register on the top, and said:

"I am sorry there has not been time to talk over your work this week; but I have laid out the books for you, and if you are in any difficulty come and ask me."

By this time the children had come in and taken their places, and Jessie was pleased to see that her class was of children of eight or nine years old—not such little ones as Amy had threatened her with. Miss Manners went to the harmonium and gave out a Sunday morning hymn, which was very sweetly sung, and then she read prayers, everybody kneeling, and making the responses, so that Jessie enjoyed it greatly, and felt quite refreshed by the prayer for a blessing on the teachers and the taught. Then Miss Manners told the eight little girls who stood in a row that Miss Hollis would teach them, and she hoped they would be very good and steady and obedient, and say their lessons perfectly.

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