

the sunshine only made the dark, lonely water look more gloomy. A few rushes grew just at the edge, and a single white waterlily was in blossom there, but most of the water—which looked very much like dusty ink—had nothing growing in or moving on it. Katie shuddered when she saw it. But presently she picked up a pebble, and whispered to Mary, "Will you count?" Mary burst out laughing. "Oh, you little silly! And you that want to pretend that you know about grown-up things. But I'll count, that will be some fun."

Katie dropped in her stone, and half turning away her head, clung to Mary, who, with one arm round a tree, hung over to count the bubbles. "Here they come,—one—two—three—four—five—six—seven—no—there's no more. Well, that *is* funny. If it had been to tell how old you were, instead of how old you will be when you die, it would have been just right. Your birthday's the day after to-morrow, and you will be seven then, you know. But that wasn't it, so, of course, it's all nonsense. Fancy your dying the day after to-morrow, and ever so much younger than me, for I shall be nine next birthday—it's perfectly ridiculous."

That night when Mary and Katie were lying in their beds in their pretty little farmhouse bedroom, where the roses tapped at their old-fashioned, latticed window in the morning to wake them, Katie began to talk, just as Mary was going to sleep.

"Do hold your tongue, Katie," said Mary; "I'm so tired, and it is such nonsense."

But when Katie went on talking louder than ever—a strange jumble about the Witch's Pool and every other place she had

seen that day—Mary was frightened, and she was very frightened when she got out of bed and found that her sister did not know her, though she was sure that Katie was awake. She called up the farmer's wife, and when she came to Katie with a light, *she* was so frightened that she called up one of the farm-boys, and bade him put the bridle on the pony, and go at full gallop to fetch the doctor, who lived six miles away. And when the doctor came again in the morning, Katie was so much worse that her mamma and papa were sent for, and the next day Katie died.

After that the people about there believed more than ever in the Witch's Pool. But all that the seven bubbles had to do with Katie's death on her seventh birthday, I think, was this. She had been fevered and then suddenly chilled before she got to the pool, and was going to be ill anyhow; under these circumstances she saw the seven bubbles, and as she was a morbidly impressionable little girl, who had long brooded over the thought that she would die young, they made her illness worse.

Mary told her mamma and papa what Katie had said about the churchyard, and she was buried there. Her little grave is just where she sat; and when Mary is at the farmhouse she sometimes goes to sit beside it, though Mary is still so practical that she cannot quite "see the use of it." But I think it is of some use to *her*, at any rate. She thinks of the little girl with whom she sat there on that bright morning, and whom she will never see again on earth; and thoughts of that kind are just the ones to do Mary good.

CHARLES CAMDEN.

THE FRENCH DOLL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HESTER KIRTON."

PART I.

MRS. SMITH'S is a very nice school. There are usually about twenty girls there, big and little, and sometimes quite grown-up young women are there for a time, as parlour-boarders. The parlour-boarders do not go into the class-rooms; they get private lessons from the masters in their own study.

I was in this study one day hard at work at a German exercise, when Mrs. Smith came in. She looked worried.

"You have lived in France, Miss Tyrel,"

she said, "and it seems to me you are fond of children." I bowed. "Well then, you can be very kind if you will;—we expect a new pupil to-day, a little French girl, and I am afraid the poor child will be so strange at first."

I was just seventeen, very intent on perfecting my education, and I thought it a great infliction to be saddled with a troublesome child.

"Very well," I said; "I'll do what I can. But don't you think, Mrs. Smith, children