

and complete the disgrace they had wrought on the fair face of nature.

Mabel and Minnie walked along the entire row, as the empty cottage stood at the further end, looking with a new interest at the faces with which they were both well acquainted by sight, and being rewarded by stares of stony indifference. They went into the empty cottage, and Mabel cried out with pleasure, as she looked round the bright, cheerful apartments, wondering how anyone could feel anything but pride and interest in keeping such a house in order.

"Why," she said, "I would not wish any pleasanter place to live in myself, nor any lovelier view to feast my eyes on."

Minnie laughed and said that her papa always said these houses should belong to her some day, and when that time came she would make this one a present to Mabel, unless indeed, she would allow her to share it. After that, they took their leave, convinced that it would answer their purpose exactly.

Minnie made a message into one of the cottages on their way back to make inquiries concerning one of the children whom she knew to be ill.

This house was about the most respectable in the entire row, and yet it might have borne a great deal in the way of improvement. The child's mother was quite a young woman, probably not over twenty-two, yet there were two other children playing on the floor, while she herself sat sewing the braid of her skirt with white thread in great uneven stitches, the dishes and remains of dinner still upon the table.