

to arrange a variety of odd pieces of furniture, dragged by Minnie from their place of concealment in a large attic, where such things were allowed to accumulate, and supplemented by various old benches, which the gardener had been only too glad to get rid of.

These had been transported to their place of consignment by him during the early hours of the morning, when the lazy inhabitants were still wrapped in slumber, the hour being discriminately chosen to avoid the notice of such miners as might be going or returning from the pit.

These arrangements being successfully carried out by Thursday evening, Minnie paid a visit to all the houses which contained children, and asked leave that they might attend a small treat which they intended to provide for their enjoyment on the following Saturday.

Various were the forms of reception which she received. Some regarded the proposal with contempt, enquiring with ironical interest what manner of "treat" they were going to stand, and whether they would not include parents also in their invitations. Others affected anger, and wondered what the "likes of them" had to do coming among poor folk's bairns, and stuffing their heads with their "high and mighty nonsense," whatever style of absurdity such a term might be held to describe.

However, she won over most of them with her bright winning manner, and sweet, unaffected graciousness, and seemed when she left their dirty and untidy dwellings to leave something behind in them that had never been there before.