

"I don't think," continued Minnie, "that we were ever so near quarrelling as we were that day about those very curtains. Well, that was all because I wished to make a show before the girls, not to have them enjoy themselves. Now it is quite different. We don't mind at all what like the things about us are, as long as the things we make are good, and the children enjoy themselves."

"That reminds me," said Mabel, "that we have forgotten to provide ourselves with confections—they will doubtless be in great request."

"Of course, what could we be thinking about! We must see after them immediately—or stay! Perhaps you could get them when you are coming back—don't you think that would do?"

"I am sure it would, and would save time which is precious," agreed Mabel, and so it was settled.

Their preparations being completed about two o'clock, they repaired to their respective homes, locking the door upon their possessions with a delightful sense of proprietorship and satisfaction, after a solemn mutual reminder concerning the necessity of being back sharp at four, as the festivity was arranged to take place at five prompt.

Minnie found her father and four brothers in the parlour when she came in, flushed and breathless with her run home.

"Hallo, Min!" Exclaimed Charlie, the eldest of her brothers, a young man of about twenty-two. Aren't you ashamed of yourself, rushing off directly breakfast's over and leaving your poor unhappy encumbrances of brothers to