

## ELLEN'S WORK

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**E**LLLEN!"

"Yes'm!"

"Ellen! Come at once!"

This second summons roused the girl. She laid down her book with a sigh, which had a tinge of vexation in it, but she was so thoroughly sweet-tempered no sign of impatience showed itself, except that her eyes were a little clouded, when she entered her mother's room, and asked:

"What do you want, mamma?"

"I am very sorry, dear, but the boys will soon be home, and this tablecloth must be finished. I have—"

"Now, mamma, I don't want excuses. I ought to be ashamed of myself, wasting time over that German when you needed me. Yet I do so hope—"

The girl spoke hesitatingly, and her mother finished the sentence:

"That you could help better with your German than with your needle. Yes, I know you hope so, and I have tried not to discourage you, but I heard only last night that translating from the German is almost as much overdone as from the French."

"Yet there ought to be a chance for me somewhere," said the girl, a little despondently, yet with a vigor and determination that were in striking contrast to her mother's tone, which seemed to yield a weak acquiescence to the present state of affairs.

Ellen had taken the tablecloth, and was making her needle fly as she talked.

"Now, here are we wasting our time over sewing which a machine would do in one-tenth of the time, because—"

"I dare not run in debt," interrupted Mrs. Marshall, "and the agent would not leave us a machine on trial when I could not hold out any hope of taking it."

There was a long silence. Mrs. Marshall, a gentle, yielding woman, with no "push" whatever, and only a firm determination to live from week to week within her very limited means, was wiping a few weak tears that would gather in her eyes, as she felt that Ellen, her eldest child, and the one on whom she unconsciously leaned, did not agree with her, and Ellen was debating whether the time had not arrived to propose a scheme to her mother which she had been turning over in her own mind for some weeks.

"Mother," she said at last, as she reached the end of the long hem, and broke her thread with that sudden snap which always tried Mrs. Marshall's nerves—"mother, I believe I could earn a machine."

"Ellen!" exclaimed the astonished mother. "As Ellen gave a determined little nod, Mrs. Marshall went on: "You can't possibly undertake even a short story as yet."

"Oh, that translation scheme must be given up—for a while at least! I intend to keep it in mind, though; but I mean to earn a machine just as lots of other women do."

"Women!" exclaimed Mrs. Marshall, in a tone that Ellen understood very well.

"Yes, mamma, women and girls. It won't make me less of a lady to earn my machine, and I am such a beautiful seamstress, 'if it's myself sees it, as shouldn't," to quote Bridget; besides, I can keep on and earn money with the machine."

"Ellen, Ellen! Do you purpose going out by the day with your machine, or taking in sewing?"

"My purpose is just this, you dear, precious mother! And now listen with the very best side of yourself, for your little girl is in sober earnest—it isn't just one of Ellen's notions."

And the girl threw aside her work and sat down in her favorite position, on the floor at her mother's feet.

Ellen did not suspect it, but this very position was always in her favor when she was pleading with her mother; for, unconsciously, the mother liked to feel the young girl was looking up to her, even though it was merely an outward appearance.

## A Sagacious Dog

**A**LADY living in Chicago is the owner of a very sagacious Newfoundland dog called Don. The other day Don, who quite frequently goes to the grocery or market for his mistress, was sent after a basket of eggs. As he was returning home carrying his basket with a proud, dignified air, he met a dog against whom he evidently had an old grudge. He set his burden down on the walk, then, giving a bark of challenge, started after his enemy on a dead run. A friend of his mistress, who witnessed this proceeding, picked up the basket and carried it to its proper destination. Meanwhile, Don, having vanquished his foe, returned to the spot where he had left his eggs. On discovering that they had disappeared, he ran around frantically trying to find them. Finding his effort vain, he sat down and lifted up his voice in a howl of anguish, as visions of his mistress's displeasure crossed his mind. Suddenly he started for home at a brisk trot. Sneaking out into the back yard, he picked up an old, discarded basket that lay in one corner of the yard, and carried it in and deposited it at the feet of his mistress. He has been taught that when he goes to the grocery for any article they do not happen to have, to return and give a succession of sharp barks. This he proceeded to do, as if to say, "They were out of eggs to-day."



"Mother I believe I could earn a Machine."

"I don't suppose, mother, that you've ever heard of the Exchange for Women's Work? No, I thought not. Well, they take anything there that you make and try to sell it for you. No one knows who made the things, and the whole transaction, as far as the maker of the article is concerned, is private. Now,

Mrs. Beatty told me the other day that she is a subscriber—that gives her the right to send three workers there to sell things—and she offered to send me there. I suppose she thought I'd paint china," added the girl, with a merry laugh, for Ellen's total lack of faculty with the pencil and brush was a family joke;

## A Lobster's Toilet

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**I**T has not happened to every one to see a lobster cast his shell. Last summer I had an opportunity of watching the process.

I was staying for several weeks in a secluded little village on the south coast, and one day, when the only fisherman in the place returned after taking up his "pots," he flung upon the beach a specimen too small for sale or home consumption.

The prize was taken possession of by a boy, who presented it to my improvised aquarium, for which all the little boys of the village were enthusiastic collectors.

I kept the water well aerated, and devoted a great deal of time and attention to my various live stock; and at last my reward came.

I have too much respect for the lobster to believe that he would without grave necessity undress before an utter stranger like myself, for he is of a modest and retiring habit. No doubt, at the time of his capture my lobster had already begun to think about getting a new suit, and as the days went by the old shell became so small for him that he could no longer avoid discarding his ever-tightening armor. One morning, therefore, I found my lobster apparently fit his last agonies. He lay on his back and rubbed his legs convulsively together as if in intense pain; and then he wriggled about, or jerked himself violently upward by means of his tail.

I suppose that these actions had for their object the loosening of the claws and limbs in their sheaths, but at the time I feared that my lobster was in his death throes.

The rapid movements somewhat disturbed the sand and clouded the water; but, as the patient lay close to the glass, I never entirely lost sight of him. Nevertheless, I do not quite know how it all occurred.

The throes continued for an hour or more, and efforts were apparently made to burst the shell open from within; but it was not until I saw that the lobster had actually divested himself of his head-covering, including the stem-sheath and outer cornices of the eyes, that I understood what my guest was about.

A great deal more wriggling and struggling followed; the lobster gradually squeezing himself, as it were, out of the shoulders of his suit of armor. The operation looked as if it were extremely painful and exhausting, and I more than once thought of offering assistance.

But I did not interfere; and at last I had the satisfaction of seeing my lobster and his discarded shell lying side by side. The latter looked much the smaller of the two; and, save that it was motionless, it might have been mistaken for a live and healthy crustacean in full dress. The orifice through which the au-

cient tenant had evicted himself was very small, and the head-piece had not been completely thrown off, but was left hanging as by a hinge.

But the now naked lobster did not look at all like his old self. His colors were so bright as to suggest that he had been parboiled, and he had the tender appearance of human flesh from which the skin has just been removed.

I took out the shell, and found that my guest had got rid not only of the major part of his eyes, but also of the lining of his stomach, including his internal teeth, and of some of the bones of his thorax; yet he seemed to be little the worse for the thorough turn-out.

On my return from luncheon I touched him, and found that, although quite soft, he was covered with an incipient shell of the approximate solidity of oiled tissue-paper. He did not like being touched.

During the three following days the shrimps worried him a good deal; but he grew with marvelous rapidity until he was fully half as big again as he had been, and when I once more touched him the shell on his big claws were sufficiently hard to enable him to give me a spiteful nip.

I have omitted to mention one curious circumstance connected with this particular animal's toilet. When the lobster was given to me he was without his left big claw, which had, I suppose, been accidentally wrenched off by his original captor. The stump was very quickly healed up, a hard, calcareous seal encrusting the end of the joint.

To my astonishment, when the lobster worked himself out of his old shell, he appeared with a rudimentary left claw, which had evidently formed behind the shield. This claw grew even more rapidly than the rest of the body; and, by the time the new shell was hard, the new claw, though still disproportionate, was of very serviceable dimensions.

I do not believe that the loss of a claw is a matter of much more moment to a lobster than it is to a crab. Sometimes, indeed, both lobsters and crabs appear to dismember themselves voluntarily.

I have known a lobster to get one of his claws hopelessly wedged in between the withes of a lobster-pot, and leave it there in the most nonchalant manner imaginable. Crabs exhibit even greater coolness in similar circumstances. They seem to prefer, if they lose part of a limb, to grow the whole thing again new. They apparently feel that they can make a better job of an entire limb than of a single joint of one.

If, in taking a crab from the sea, you cause him to lose the outermost joint of one of his big claws, the philosopher will presently jerk away the rest of the limb right up to the shoulder. He does not simply drop it; he actually and unmistakably casts it from him. It is useless; and at once he sets to work to grow a new one.

"but I moused around the Exchange rooms and I found out that there is real demand for nice, plain sewing—pretty baby clothes, and all that; and—there's the way to a machine! May I go and tell that agent we'll take it on trial?"

"Oh, Ellen! you take away my breath with your plans and quick speeches. I—I—don't know."

"That means 'yes' with you, mamma. Now, how much better for me to work and earn money than to work just as long and merely do the family sewing. And I'm going to give you the cutting out and the laundry work. You 'do up' my laces and things so beautifully that you'll make the dear little baby clothes to look just too lovely."

"I used to enjoy doing up my baby things," said the mother, as she thought, with a sigh, of the happy days when everything was provided for her, and it was a pleasant employment of her leisure hours to flate the delicate ruffles and laces that adorned her little ones.

"And you'll enjoy the work now. Oh, I'm so glad you're willing!"

The bright, generous girl of sixteen never took any credit to herself for her plans of helpfulness, but was only truly grateful that her gentle mother approved.

We cannot follow her step by step as she arranged for her machine; invested a long-hoarded five-dollar bill in materials and patterns, and then carefully put her "first" sample, as she called it, together. It was an infant's dress, simply but exquisitely made, and when done up by Mrs. Marshall was really a dainty sight as it lay in its box ready to be taken to its destination.

The younger children had been interested critics as the work progressed, and now stood around the box, giving their last opinions.

"It's a daisy!" exclaimed eight-year-old Ted; "and I just wish we had a baby to keep it for."

"You forget it's to help pay for the machine," said Lou, a little girl, as full of schemes for the family comfort as Ellen. "Babies are nice; but they're a lot of trouble."

There was a general laugh at Lou's unconscious imitation of Bridget, the servant and friend of the family.

"Och, Miss Ellen!" was her comment; "it's as swate as an angel, and they'll be payin' for it before they buys it, they'll want it so bad."

Ellen could not help feeling pretty sure the dainty garment would bring orders, and enjoyed taking it to the rooms, where it was so heartily approved that she felt more encouraged.

Meanwhile, during the waiting time, Ellen used her scraps of lace and insertion in making a dainty bib, and found time for study also, and much did the machine save her mother and herself. For machines do save time, if only one is content to put in no more stitches than they would by hand.

Two weeks passed, and then the postman brought a note for Ellen.

"An order, mamma—an order! Six infants' dresses and six white skirts!"

"And at such a good price! Ellen, my dear child, I always thought sewing paid so badly."

"But, mamma, you see the ladies have started the Exchange to sell good work at paying prices. And only those who want the best, and can pay for it. Oh, I'm so glad! Now we'll soon have our new machine paid for, and George can take his violin lessons, and your can have a new dress!"

"And Ellen is to have nothing?"

"Yes, indeed! Ellen is to have time, after a while, to go on with the German. She doesn't mean to always earn money by her needle—only make it a stepping-stone!"

And so it proved. After a time the orders that came so fast had to be refused. "The young lady has other work," was the answer to the disappointed customers, and Ellen, having mastered German thoroughly, has translated her third book.

"Yes, dear," said her mother, one evening, "you were right. It is far better to push out and do something to make extra money than to pinch and contrive to make the little one has to do; but all have not your energy."

"And I have not your patience, dear, sweet mamma," answered Ellen, kissing her gentle mother.

## A Krupp Anecdote

**T**HE richest and most famous gun-maker in the world was Herr Krupp, who died lately at Essen, in Germany. The anecdote is related of Herr Krupp that as he was once showing the Emperor William through his works, the latter displayed great interest in the steam hammer, and was told that the workman in charge of it, named Ackermann, was so skillful that a hand might be placed on the anvil without fear, and he would stop the hammer within a hair's breadth of it. "Let's try it," said the Emperor; "but not with a human hand—try my watch." And he laid it, a splendid specimen of work, richly set with brilliants, on the anvil. Down came the immense mass of steel, and Ackermann, with his hand on the lever, stopped it just the sixth of an inch from the watch. When he went to hand it back, the Emperor replied: "No, Ackermann, keep the watch in memory of an interesting moment." The workman, embarrassed, stood with outstretched hand, not knowing what to do. Krupp came forward and took the watch, saying: "Pl'll keep it for you, if you are afraid to take it from his Majesty." A few minutes later they again passed the spot, and Krupp said, "Now you can take the Emperor's present from my hand," and handed Ackermann the watch, wrapped up in a thousand-mark note.