

DR. GIBBS. M-m-m.
MRS. GIBBS. George!
DR. GIBBS. George, look sharp!
GEORGE. Yes, Pa! (Off R.)

(MRS. GIBBS turns eggs.)

DR. GIBBS. Don't you hear your mother calling you? (Xes to stairs.)

MRS. WEBB. Walleee! You'll be late for school!

DR. GIBBS. Guess I'll go upstairs and take forty winks. (Exit upstairs.)

MRS. WEBB. Walleee! You wash yourself good or I'll come up and do it myself. (Xes to table up R. to serve two dishes of oatmeal, which she places on table.)

REBECCA. (Off R.) Ma! What dress shall I wear?

MRS. GIBBS. (Xes to cupboard for two plates, Xes to stove.) Don't make a noise. Your father's been out all night and needs his sleep. I washed and ironed the blue gingham for you special. (Serves one plate and sets it on table for George.)

REBECCA. Oh, Ma, I hate that dress.

MRS. GIBBS. Oh, hush-up-with-you!

REBECCA. Every day I go to school dressed like—like a sick turkey.

MRS. GIBBS. (Serves second plate) Now, Rebecca, you always look very nice.

REBECCA. (Shrilly) Mama, George's throwin' soap at me!

MRS. GIBBS. (Xing to set plate for REBECCA) I'll come up an' slap the both of you, that's what I'll do! (Xes to cupboard for plate.)

(A FACTOR! WHISTLE blows)

STAGE MANAGER. (Still by R. proscenium) We got a mill in our town, too, how 'bout it? (Annoyed)

WHISTLE) Makes blankets. Cartwrights own 'em, and it's brung 'em a fortune.

(Two beats after first whistle the CHILDREN have rushed downstairs, GIRLS leading. Entering R., REBECCA, 11, and GEORGE, about 16, drop their strapped books on the steps and sit at table, he above, she L. of it. At once he starts eating sleepily, she to eat languidly, staring vaguely out. EMILY and WALLY, same ages, sit respectively above and R. of their table. WALLY hangs book bag on his chair back. EMILY puts her books carefully on her L., WALLY opens a book and at once starts to read while both eat ravenously.)

(MRS. GIBBS sets plate on table. Xes to stove for coffee pot, Xes to pour it for GEORGE, replaces pot on stove, Xes to cupboard to pour glass of milk, Xes to place it for REBECCA, Xes to cupboard for butter.)

MRS. WEBB. (Xes to set down oatmeal for both children) Children! Now I won't have it. Breakfast is just as good as any other meal and I won't have you gobblin' like wolves. It'll stunt your growth, that's a fact. Wally, put away your book!

WALLY. Oh, Ma! By ten o'clock I got to know all about Canada.

MRS. WEBB. (Sits L. of table, eats) You know the rule's well as I do—no books at table. As for me, I'd rather have my children healthy than bright.

(WALLY puts book into bag, annoyed, then eats.)

EMILY. I'm both, Mama, you know I am. I'm the brightest girl in school for my age. I have a wonderful memory.

MRS. WEBB. Eat your breakfast. (Rises, Xes up