

the wonders of London. He had spent a few hours there one day while attending upon his master, and he therefore felt competent to describe its principal sights, and where his knowledge failed his invention came to the rescue.

True, he mixed things up a trifle. He got the National Gallery and the Houses of Parliament under the same roof, Westminster Abbey and the Tower within a stone's throw of each other, while the way to the Crystal Palace was over London Bridge, and up the river, past Battersea Park. But this made no difference at all to his listener. Like Desdemona, she drank in all his descriptions—

"But still the house affairs would draw her thence; Which ever as she could with haste despatch, She'd come again."

All this was, I fear, on Ben's part, a matter of calculation rather than sentiment. That he wished to stand well, for the standing's sake, in the eyes of his landlady goes without saying, but the standing well brought with it and after it some advantages that were of infinitely more value to Ben. There were many things dear to Ben's heart, but none more dear than poached eggs and hot buttered toast; and although those were "not in the contract," they were almost daily incidents of Ben's life. At first, it is true, he had not got on so well with his landlady, for notwithstanding the best intentions, neither had been able to comprehend a word said by the other. Time, however, which works wonders in so many cases, brought amelioration in this, for Ben got a smattering of German, and the Fraulein picked up a few words of English, and from that time Ben was, to use his own expression, "a made man." Though not endowed with a large amount of wisdom, he knew "which side his bread was buttered," and he resolved to keep on good terms with the Fraulein, no matter who else might be offended. And the Fraulein herself grew really to like the big, boastful Englishman, and did her best to make both of her lodgers contented with their temporary home. This was about the position of affairs when, some eighteen months after they had left England, Mr. Westley told Ben he should soon be returning. This was a sad blow to Ben. No more poached eggs on hot buttered toast, no more tempting Rhine wine, no more idle days. He told the Fraulein what the Herr had said, and she, too, grieved. No more stories about London; no more leaves from the stately genealogical tree; no more pleasant evenings.

"And you must go?" she asked. "And I shall never you no more see?"

This set him thinking. Why should he go back? And the thinking ended in resolution; he would not go back. It came out in words at the first opportunity—"I do not mean to go back to England, Fraulein, but shall settle down in Germany, if I can get any work."

"There is plenty of work on the farm," said the Fraulein.

This did not altogether chime in with Ben's view of life. Work was a thing to be endured, not courted. Plenty to eat and to drink, and nothing to do, was Ben's domestic creed. Still, he could work, and not work very hard; and if he married the Fraulein the farm would be as good as his at once, and absolutely his some day. He might do worse; he feared he could not do better.

"I've had some news from home, Ben, that ought to please you. Your old sweetheart at the Rectory has had a couple of thousand pounds left her by her uncle, the miller."

"Two thousand pounds!" said Ben to himself. "Two thousand pounds! Why, that's a fortune. Things are becoming extremely complicated. I think I shall go back with master."

That night a letter was despatched to England bearing on the envelope the name of Miss Anna Robinson, at the Rectory, Westley, Shropshire. This was the letter:

MY DEAREST ANNER,—I owe this will fine, you in good faith as it leaves me at present. My dearest Anner, it is a long time since, I note to you, but their have been so much to do as I have, no time. I hop this will fine you, in good health, my dearest Anner. This is a very quite place, there is no sports nor nothing, I orphan sy, for dear old England an the sweete fasses, specially one, I left behind, I owe to see, it soon, so know more at present from your trew lover,

What the Fraulein thought of it when she heard that Ben had changed his mind I hardly know, but he made some plausible excuse, I have no doubt, and promised (to soothe her wounded feelings) that he would soon return.

Once more at Westley! The first evening after his arrival Ben went down to the Rectory. Anna was out—but the coachman was in!

"Yo' back again; my lad! Yo're just like a bobby, a-turning up when you are not wanted."

That was the coachman's welcome, and Ben resented it.

"Perhaps, if you don't want me, there's some one else as does."

"Then perhaps there's two on 'em, for I see two on 'em together not five minutes ago."

"Hey!" ejaculated Ben.

"As much hay as yo' like my lad. We gies it to the 'osses, and can spare a bit for a donkey."

Clearly, there was no friendly feeling on the part of the coachman for Ben.

Then the cook tackled him. "You've made a fine mess of it, Ben. Have you heard what she's had left her?"

"Left her!" exclaimed the humbug.

"Yes, left her—two thousand pound; and she's going for it on Monday. It'll make them very comfortable."

"Her and her mother," suggested Ben.

"Ho, ho, ho, ho!" roared the coachman.

"Hi, hi, hi, hi!" laughed the cook.

"Hee, hee, hee, hee!" sang the kitchen-maid—all in chorus.

"Her and her mother!" and then they went off again.

"It's very funny," said the victim, "but I don't see where the fun comes in."

"Don't e now! Then I'll tell yer. Yo're come back to make it up wi' her because yo' an heard as her's got some money. But it's bespoke already for—her and her mother."

Coachman, cook, and kitchen-maid repeat chorus.

"I'll not take it," said Ben, "from no one's lips but hers. Her said her'd stick to me, and I've stuck to her, and I expect her'll stick to me, and that's all about it."

"Then you can take it from her lips now, Mr. Benjamin," said Anna, coming in at the moment.

"You never wrote to me for more than twelve months, though I wrote to you twice, and then, when I had some money left me, you sent me a letter pretending as how as you was very fond of me."

Afore you went away I said to the coachman, "If he's not in earnest then I'm not in earnest," and that's all about it."

"Never mind," said Ben to himself that night. "If one door shuts another door opens."

Yes, the door was open when Ben got there, some six weeks after he had left. He entered the house with the air of a master, pausing a moment to look round on the vineyards which would soon be his.

He opened an inner door; there sat Fraulein, busy with her needle.

"I am back again," said he; "give me a welcome."

"Then you can go back again," she replied.

"But I am come to stay and work on the farm."

"The farm does not want you, neither do I," she answered.

Then Benjamin waxed furious. He called her fickle and unkind, told her that no good could come to a double-dealing person, and left her with the somewhat double-edged remark that "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush!"

I think I ought to explain the Fraulein's behavior. The old cook at Westley wrote to her to warn her against "that presuming villun."

J. T. BURTON WOLLASTON.

Minnie May's Dep't.

MY DEAR NIECES,—I have been thinking of you all during the happy holiday season just gone by. What tender, solemn thought surrounds Christmas tide. If we are carried in imagination to the rude manger in Palestine, and listen to the sweet song of the heavenly host, proclaiming, "Peace on earth, good will toward men," are we not lost in love and praise? No wonder the glorious anniversary is such a season of rejoicing. What happy gatherings there have been in nearly every home. Dear ones absent at school or college have returned. Married children with their "olive branches," and invited friends have met around the well-supplied table, and care is banished at least for that day. Christmas is nowhere else so truly enjoyable as in an old-fashioned farmhouse. Every dish on the table has a little history. The fruit and vegetables have been near neighbors all summer, having first seen the light within a stone's throw of each other. No wonder the pumpkin pies were delicious, when fresh eggs and sweet cream were to be had in plenty. And the turkey tasted all the better for having been "shipped" only from the barn to the house. And the children could tell which tree bore the red or yellow apples. Oh, those blessed country homes, with their generous hospitality and fresh abundance. My dear girls, be very proud of them, very much in love with them, and determine each to make home the most lovable spot on earth. I hope, my dear nieces, that in all the happy festivity of Christmas time our hearts and thoughts will turn to those in less favored circumstances. We all know homes where poverty holds a cheerless reign; food and clothing scanty. Let us remember Who it was that said "The poor ye have always with you." Let us remember them in a material manner, giving a little from our abundance. If any of you, my dear girls, say,

"really I have nothing to give," consider a moment. Have you not the kind word of sympathy, the smile of recognition, or the friendly enquiry. Let us weigh their cares and trials, and endeavor to feel for them, remembering that He whose birth we have been commemorating—

Came humble and lowly,
Sharing all pain and toil,
Making them—holy.

Although anarchy and confusion seem to run riot in other lands, over us the dove of peace folds her pinions. Peace and plenty is our portion. Let us show our gratitude by endeavoring more faithfully to perform our duties in the coming year. Hoping that the holiday season has been to you all one of hearty, healthy enjoyment,

MINNIE MAY.

Recipes.

CROQUETTES OF CHICKEN.—Mince fine the remains of a roast or boiled chicken or turkey. Add two well-beaten eggs, and flavor to taste with pepper, salt and a very little grated lemon peel; then stir in one ounce of finely-crumbed bread, and form into the shape of pears, not too large; roll in beaten egg then in bread crumbs, and fry in boiling lard of a light brown; dish in a warm napkin or entree dish, after having stuck a stalk of parsley in each for a stem. Try them; they are nice.

ENTREE OF SALMON.—Pick one can of salmon in pieces, saving all the liquor; stir into it two eggs, one teaspoonful of melted butter, one cup of bread crumbs and a pinch of salt and one of pepper; stir well and put into a well-buttered mould; steam for one hour; turn into an entree dish, and pour the following sauce over:—Put half a pint of water into a saucepan, adding the same from the salmon which you saved. Stir in when boiling one tablespoon of butter and one of flour and one of chopped pickles, and a little parsley-garnish with slices of lemon.

FROSTING FOR CAKES.—Dissolve one large pinch of gelatine in six tablespoons of boiling water; strain and thicken with sugar, and flavor with lemon. This will frost two cakes.

SNOW BIRDS.—These little birds make delicious little morsels when cooked as follows:—When plucked, washed and cleaned, have some large-sized potatoes peeled, and scoop out the insides with a blunt knife. Cut a slice from the end, so the potatoes will stand; put a bird into each, head end first; place a piece of butter into each and bake in the oven until the potatoes are done. Serve on a hot dish.

DELICIOUS RICE PUDDING.—Wash and pick a cupful of rice; put into a pudding mould, with one quart of milk; steam for two hours. Eat with cream and sugar.

Etiquette of Eating an Egg.

There are many ways of eating an egg improperly, but there is only one accepted way of eating it properly, and this, according to a good authority, is to "eat it directly from the shell," set, of course, in an egg cup, not an ordinary cup nor a tumbler. "It is considered extremely inelegant to break two eggs into a cup or tumbler, or even to break them into a tumbler at all," says this authority, in the Art Interchange. "One of our fashionable ladies, and a leader in society, was lately seen to turn her egg into a glass, and eat it from that, being also guilty of breaking two into the glass at the same time." These little things seem very trifling, but trifles make up the sum of human life, and we are judged largely, or one might say narrowly, by trifles, therefore it is best to observe the niceties, especially the etiquette, of the table.