

MINNIE MAY'S DEPARTMENT.

MY DEAR NIECES,—I would like to have a chat with the mothers this time, so you young girls need not listen unless you wish; but at any rate it can do you no harm, for the time will come to most of you when you may put my little preaching into practice.

"Girls, confide in your mother," is an advice often given, but not frequently enough acted upon. When children are very young they instinctively turn to their mothers with every tale of pleasure or grief; and why is it that as they grow older this confidence diminishes? I think the fault lies chiefly in the fact that most mothers do not respond fully enough to these confidential outpourings of the childish joys and sorrows. And some mothers even think it wise to conceal much of their love from their children, and demonstrations of affection are often met with "Oh! don't be so foolish," or a similar remark, and a tender heart is wounded, and it may be long ere that sweet foolishness (so dear, despite all, to the mother heart) is repeated. Again, a lively school-girl comes bounding in, with face aglow, to tell mother what a "glorious time" she has had, or of the expected holiday, and hears in answer, a sigh, and "Run away, Jessie, I have no time to talk or listen to you at present," and after a few such rebuffs, though not ill-meant, Jessie soon ceases to look to that quarter for sympathy, which is the greatest key to confidence. Then, when girls are almost grown up, if parents would allow them to entertain their friends occasionally, we would hear less often the remark that some parents make: "My family is never happy unless away from home." Small marvel. I think, for those parents, having left the sunny days of their youth (if, indeed, such a time ever existed) so far behind them, now consider all modern amusements vanities, and those who desire to join in them, frivolous. What surprises me is that there is enough of the warmth of youth left in those children to desire pleasure, after living in such a chilling atmosphere. Unfortunately this picture is not over-drawn, although it may appear so.

But on the other hand, I know of more than one home worthy of the name they are, too, where the daughters, big and small, discuss the events of the day with their mother, just as freely as with a companion, and she not only feels interested, but lets them know that she is so. And in those homes the young people's guests are as welcome and as considerately treated as those of the parents; and I feel confident that there will be no clandestine meetings with objectionable company in those cases, nor will these girls be burdened with the desire to leave home that invariably follows the former treatment.

Allow, then, your families to have as much home amusement as you can afford (youth, if not warped by adverse bearings, demands it), for if you do not, they will go elsewhere to seek it.

Of course, mothers, you love your children, and mean to do your best for their welfare, but do not let a false idea of what is best render their home lives uncongenial; do not let your love go to waste by keeping it pent up in your own hearts. Rather let it flow forth unreservedly, to meet the flood of affection which will surely reward it; and do this not only in early years, but as long as your family is near you, and you will have the happiness, in later life, of finding that, although now men and women, your children are, to you, children still, and that they will turn to you for advice and comfort as trustingly as ever. And the fond memories of such a love-lighted home will cast forward their bright rays, and dispel from your dear ones many of the dark shadows that fall to the lot of all.

MINNIE MAY.

Child Philosophy.

A few days ago I was told of a touchingly pretty remark made by a little girl of four years. It is, I think, worth recording. Her father was walking with the child through the village cemetery, when, pointing to the graves, she asked, wonderingly: "What are these for?" Her father, somewhat puzzled what to say, answered: "They belong to the people who have gone to heaven." "To the angels?" "Yes." "Ah!" commented the little girl, "that is where they have left their clothes."

"William Tell Saves Baumgarten."

The story of William Tell, the patriotic hero of Switzerland, like too many of the delightfully detailed historical narratives that were received with unquestioning faith by our grandfathers, has not escaped the remorseless hands and searching scalpel of modern criticism, till but a bare skeleton of presumptive facts is left for the imagination of the poet and the artist to work upon; but still, when the circumstantial details of these old histories are not inconsistent with the possibilities of human nature, we cannot cease to review with pleasure and profit such as illustrate the better side of humanity. The story of Tell, in brief, according to that version which has found the widest currency, is as follows: In the beginning of the Fourteenth Century, Albert I. of Austria was striving to annex the three Waldstatter—Uri, Schwytz, and Unterwalden, to his family estates. Herman Gessler, his bailiff, lived at the Castle of Kussnacht, and perpetrated on the people of the district the most atrocious cruelties. A league was formed of the principal men of the Waldstatter, to resist the Austrian pretensions, and to it belonged Walter Furst, and William Tell, his son-in-law. Various stories are related of the exploits of Tell.



"WILLIAM TELL SAVES BAUMGARTEN."

One of these forms the subject of our illustration, a reproduction of one of the best examples of the great German painter, Kuehch. It is connected with the rescue of Baumgarten, a citizen of Unterwalden, from the pursuit of the Austrian troopers, as related in Schiller's well-known drama. Baumgarten had killed Wolf-shot, one of the tyrannical appointees of Gessler, for an assault upon his wife. The deed gets wind, and Baumgarten, flying for his life, reaches the shores of Lake Lucerne just as a fierce storm approaches. He in vain, though seconded by the surrounding country-people, beseeches the ferryman to take him over. Ruodi, the ferryman, declares it impossible, and seeing Tell approaching at the critical moment, appeals to him in the words of Schiller:

Ruodi: Well, there is Tell, can steer as well as I. He'll be my judge if it be possible. Am I to plunge into the jaws of Hell? I should be mad to dare the desperate act.

Tell: The brave man thinks upon himself the last. But trust in God, and help him in his need.

Ruodi: Ah, in the port, the easy road to safety. There is the boat, and I will take you to the shore.

The boatman may pity, but the Viceroy will not. Come, you are a man! Save him! Save him! Save him!

Ruodi: Though I were my own son, or my darling child, I would not go. I am Swiss, and my day. The lake is up, and calling me.

Tell: Nought is to be done with idle talk. Time presses on, the man must be saved. Say, boatman, will you?

Ruodi: No; not I.

Tell: In God's name, then, give me the boat! I will.

Huntsman: Ha, noble Tell!

Huntsman: That's like a gallant huntsman!

Baumgarten: You are my angel, my preserver, Tell!

Tell: I may preserve you from the Viceroy's power; But from the tempest's rage and the storm's blast, Yet you had better fall into God's hands Than into those of men.

Huntsman: He has a good reason. Console my wife, should aught of ill betide, I do but what I may not leave undone.

He leaps into the boat.

They push off just as a troop of horsemen appear, and ultimately escape.

In the picture, Tell appears in the background, with the historical cross-bow upon his shoulder; while Baumgarten kneels in the foreground (appealing to the boatman, Ruodi), in his girdle is the axe with which he had killed Wolf-shot.

Johnny: "And are the angels always well and don't get cross at all?" Mamma: "Yes, Johnny." Johnny: "An' they never fight nor do anything wrong?" Mamma: "No," Johnny: "An' they always have the same kind of weather, do they?" Mamma: "Yes," Johnny, after a moment's pause: "Then what do the angels talk about, mamma, when they go to call on each other?"

The character of the old Illinois courts, in which Abraham Lincoln practiced, was very primitive. In one case a livery-stable horse had died soon after being returned, and the person who had hired it was sued for damages. The question turned largely upon the reputation of the defendant as a hard rider. A witness was called—a long, lank Westerner. "How does Mr. So-and-so usually ride?" asked the lawyer. Without a gleam of intelligence, the witness replied, "A straddle, sir." "No, no," said the lawyer: "I mean, does he usually walk or trot or gallop?" "Wal," said the witness, apparently searching in the depths of his memory for facts, "when he rides a walkin' horse, he walks; when he rides a trottin' horse, he trots; and when he rides a gallopin' horse, he gallops; when the lawyer was angry. "I want to know what gait the defendant usually takes—fast or slow." "Wal," said the witness, "when his company rides fast, he rides fast; and when his company rides slow, he rides slow." "I want to know, sir," the lawyer said, very much exasperated and very stern now, "how Mr. So-and-so rides when he is alone." "Wal," said the witness, more slowly and meditatively than ever, "when he was alone, I wa'n't along, and I don't know."

Short Stories of Scotch Humor.

A good-natured member of the fraternity used to encourage young preachers, when he saw them at all flurried, by kindly tapping their shoulders, with the encouraging words: "Gang awa up, my young man, and you will overcome your feelings. When I at first took up the Bible I was very nervous, but now I feel nowise agitated in the service."

Will Hamilton, the half wit of Ayr, was hanging about the vicinity of a loch, which was partially frozen. Three young misses were deliberating as to whether they should venture upon the lake's surface, when one of them suggested that Will should be asked to walk on it first. The proposal was made to him. "Though I am daft, I'm no ill-bred," quickly responded Will. "After you, led-dies."

Till lately, a discharged recruit at Strathclyde, who laboured under the monomania that he had received a charge of the public works in that burgh, called weekly at the office of one of the local journals to report that "wad" was "a" "Why dinna ye get married, he?" "I canna," was the reply, "because my wife, of the parish, she's dead."