

the box which had come during her absence. It was larger than usual, but she was too weary to feel much interest in its possible contents. She threw herself on the bed to wait for the supper gong, and it was not until that meal had been disposed of, that she removed the lid. Directly beneath it lay a letter. This was a new feature—a postal card announcing the shipment, was all she was used to. She opened this dainty missive with fingers that actually trembled with the rare excitement of receiving a letter. Her eyes dimmed, then overflowed, as she read the friendly message. "We have decided to save you the trouble of doing your own sewing this summer, dear Mildred, and have fixed your things ourselves. We hope they will be all right, and that you can spend the time it would have taken you to make them over in some pleasant outings. There is a small purse in the jacket pocket with an insignificant scrap of blue paper in it, which will pay for at least a few breaths of fresh air for you, and you are positively to use it for that and nothing else. There are trolley-cars and parks at your reach, and these things are not to be despised, since they are the best you can do, you busy creature."

"At Christmas you must come to us—don't say you can't afford it, for you must. Your faithful service for Fales Brothers deserves a reward, and father means to see that you get the time and your salary too. Father usually accomplishes what he undertakes. You will stay a month, and have a happy, restful time, we hope, and you must lay your plans accordingly."

"Our dear friend, Ruth Sewell, who is visiting us this summer, has helped prepare your box, and so interested has she been, that she says she feels as if you belonged to her, too; and, Mildred, she is worth belonging to. She sends you her love with earnest wishes for a happy birthday and many returns, in which we all join."

"Let us hear from you soon. It is a pity our correspondence has fallen so flat. We must revive it. May we not?"

"Your loving cousin,
"Agnes."

Mildred laid her letter down with a radiant face. Was it possible she had felt forsaken when friends like these were hers? How ungrateful she had been! And that visit! How the days would fly with that to look forward to, and she had been wicked enough to think nobody cared. "Dear God, forgive me! I'll try to be good," she murmured penitently, as she knelt beside her box and carefully lifted out its contents. A summer wardrobe complete! One dainty new lawn, a neat white dress, a tailor suit, hat, gloves and shoes. The pretty white garments dear to girlish hearts, and every item complete as to buttons and tapes, bindings and belts, hooks and eyes. A box of collars and ruffles; some hand-made handkerchiefs nestling beside a little flask of violet perfume, hairpins and combs, a cunning set of shirt waist studs, a half dozen late magazines, and two or three new books; a mounted photograph of three girlish faces, merry and friendly, on the back of which was written, "With love of Ruth, Kate and Agnes." Last, but perhaps not least, a carefully packed loaf of home-made bread, another of cake, a jar or two of fruit, a box of Kate's delicious candy, and a dozen fragrant apples of enormous size.

Mildred sat among her treasures and laughed and cried, and examined and nibbled, to her heart's content. There should be a feast to-morrow night, and some of her "companions in misery" should share it.

No, it should be a moonlight picnic at the loveliest park, and she could pay the carefare for them all.

Was anybody ever so blest and happy before? Should she ever be lonesome or tired again?

Then and there she wrote her letter of thanks, her lonely young heart pouring into it the tenderness for which she had so seldom been able to find expression. As she wrote her eyes were bright and her lips smiled happily. She did not know it was hot—she had forgotten her weariness. There was nothing left to remember but the goodness and unselfishness of the friends who had done so much for her, and the love of the heavenly Father who had inspired them.

Kate's eyes were wet as she read the letter, Agnes was only wiping away tears, but Ruth was smiling contentedly.

"To think how she appreciates everything and how we've never done anything before but throw her cold scraps," sighed Agnes.

"And even that has been grudgingly done," added Kate.

"Don't waste your time lamenting the past," advised Ruth cheerily. "You have a long, lovely future to make up to her in, and if I'm not mistaken, she is worth cultivating for her own sake. You have the time and the means; she has neither. There's your chance, girls, make the most of it."

"We certainly will," they both declared, and they are keeping their word.—Christian Observer.

"Only a Thing."

In a pretty, sunny parlor, modest but tasteful, two women were arranging flowers. One was the hostess, the other a visitor who was helping with the preparations for a tea that afternoon. It was from the visitor's hand that a delicate glass vase slipped and crashed to pieces on the hearth.

"Oh, Ellen, I'm so very sorry!" she exclaimed, in distress. "The Venetian glass vase your sister brought from Italy—the very one I can't possibly replace. It's too bad!"

"It was pretty, and I'm sorry of course," acknowledged Ellen frankly, burrowing promptly in a closet for the dust pan; "but don't stand there frozen in horror, and your face like a tragic mask. After all, it's only a thing."

"Only a thing!" echoed the culprit, in a voice of astonishment tinged with indignation. "Of course it's a thing. Most things are things. But that doesn't prevent their being precious."

Ellen laughed outright.

"Most things certainly are things," she admitted, "and a few things are precious; but even then there's a difference. I forget that you didn't know the family law, and couldn't finish it out for yourself. You see I was quoting my name aunt, who was the dearest, coziest, most comfortable, and yet most wide-awake and spirited old lady in the world. She always declared that the richest gain that came to her through age and experience was the perception of relative importance. Life is so much more easy and interesting if we never let ourselves be troubled about what need not really matter; and compared with people and actions, things, our mere little possessions, are, after all, so trifling. She deemed it disgraceful that anything less than war, earthquake or fire, affecting things, should make us unhappy."

"When a heart, a promise or a principle is broken," she used to say, "that's disaster,

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and one may grieve; but when a tea pot is—a thing is only a thing. Laugh and take a brown pitcher, and the tea will taste just as good."

"I suppose it would," agreed Ellen's friend, reflectively, "if the laugh were genuine, but so many of us couldn't laugh. It's Emerson, isn't it; who says, 'Things are in the saddle, and ride mankind'? Only he should have said womankind—it's our housekeepers who are slaves to things."

"Oh, not all of us," protested Ellen, cheerfully. "Suppose you put the pink chrysanthemums in that old Dutch mug and twist the trailing fern round the handle—I'm not sure it isn't going to be prettier than the Venetian vase, after all."—Youth's Companion.

Domestic Strategy.

The younger man had been complaining that he could not get his wife to mend his clothes. "I asked her to sew a button on this vest last night, and she hasn't touched it," he said. "At this" says the New York Press, "the older man assumed the air of a patriarch."

"Never ask a woman to mend anything," he said.

"What would you have me do?" asked the other.

"Simply do as I do," was the assured reply. "You haven't been married very long, and I think I can give you some serviceable suggestion. When I want a shirt mended I take it to my wife, flourish it round a little and say, 'Where's that rag-bag?'"

"What do you want of the rag-bag?" at once. "I want to throw this shirt away; it's worn out," I say, with a few more flourishes.

"Let me see that shirt," my wife says then. "Now, John, hand it to me at once."

"Of course I pass it over, and she examines it. 'Why, John Taylor, she is sure to say, 'I never knew such extravagance! This is a perfectly good shirt. All it needs is'—And then mends it."—Youths Companion.

Celery and Pine Apple Salad.—Cut stalks of blanched celery and pine-apple in small pieces, and sprinkle with lemon juice, then stand in the ice-box until thoroughly chilled. Mix with a white mayonnaise to which one-quarter of blanched and pounded pistachio nuts have been added. Arrange in a mound on an oblong cut glass dish, surrounded by a ring of lettuce leaves, garnishing with stars of mayonnaise and halved pistachio nuts.