

LETTERS TO PATTY

room, unused now. There, still pinned on the wall, was an immense bullfinch, and next it a feeble copy. And all at once I heard Patty's voice singing scornfully down the years, "Little Miss Cop-y, Little Miss Cop-y, Little Miss Cop-y."

When you didn't buy butter paper it was a pennyworth of oatmeal. It really wasn't very nice, was it, and mice had clearly been there; but we played horses, and ate it out of the palms of our hands, pretending it was a bran mash. I suppose it was this same passion for reality that made us wrench the stands from our toy animals, that made us scorn the bells and scarlet woollen reins of our friends, the O'Beirnes—"the little O's," as we called them contemptuously, though they were older than we were! Do you remember our reins, narrow brown leather ones, made at the village cobbler's? (I heard he was asking after Miss Patty and Miss Baby the other day. Miss Patty, who has six little Patties of her own, and Miss Baby, who has only a month to write her folio in!) And our reins were buckled to a stick with the bark peeled off, which we held proudly in our teeth. D'you remember the nicest tasting "bits" were cut from the old fig tree that grew on the wall by the schoolroom window? There was a