

LETTERS TO PATTY

fishness led to free fights under the nursery table. Finally separated, breathless and glaring at each other, the proper thing to shout was, "I hate and detest you. I shan't give you anything for Christmas! Not even a little speck of dust."

But I never remember asking myself what "J" would do, when sent from the dining-room at luncheon with a potato for the old white cockatoo in the drawing-room. "J" would not have eaten most of that potato going down the long passage past the pictures of Lady Godiva, and the Neophyte; but I did. And you used to pick out the nice, soapy, yellow potatoes when we took dinners to the poor people in a milk can with a squeaky handle; you know you did, Patty!

We were greedy, I suppose; yet our pennies were scarcely ever spent on sweets in the village shop, were they? No, you bought sheets of butter paper on which you drew really gigantic bullfinches, heavily seated on frail twigs with infinitesimal leaves at the end. And I laboriously copied you in this as in everything else. Twelve years later I went back to the old Manor House. Escaping from the hated usurpers, Patty, I wandered into our nursery—how small and dark! Was it really ours? and on into Clémentine's