

Family Circle.

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO
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The ADVOCATE! the ADVOCATE! What would we do without it?
It posts us up on everything and tells us all about it;
It tells us how to keep our farms so very neat and nice,
And how to kill the vermin out—the rats, gophers and mice;
It shows us how to grow the trees to beautify our homes,
So we will none so pretty see wherever we may roam;
And how to make our pastures—so soft, so sweet, so green—
Such grass, such cows, such sheep, such pigs, can nowhere else be seen.
It tells us how to feed our stock, to make them sleek and fat,
And how to grow our turnips to make them look like that;
And how to grow such pretty pigs, with cheeks so plump and white,
With wee short legs, and long soft ears, and tails curled up so tight.
He tells us how to grow our sheep, that wool so fine and long,
So when 'tis woven into cloth it will be warm and strong.
He, too, upholds the dignity of our Canadian hen,
And coaxes her to cackle on until next spring, and then
A trade with England will be fixed and cease to be a joke,
For hens and eggs, and roosters, too, can scorn the foreign yolk.
Then Home Department softly comes and tells our wives and girls
The best that goes to make up life apart from dress and curls;
And how to make the puddings nice for tired and hungry men,
And how to manage so to make five dollars do for ten,
And how to make and mend their clothes, and fashion bonnets new,
The readers of the ADVOCATE can these and much more do.
But Minnie May has never space to tell you all she wants,
To satisfy the appetites of sisters, cousins aunts.
Good Uncle Tom is always up with something for the boys:
Puzzles, games, characters or such to make more fun and noise.
The ADVOCATE! the ADVOCATE! We could not do without it,
For it posts us up on everything, and tells us all about it.

A method of making white fluffy balls from milkweed pods and thistle blossoms is described by the *Decorator and Furnisher* as follows:
Open the milkweed pod carefully, remove the silken filaments, and shaking off the seeds which are attached, dip the little bunches of filaments that are abstracted, in water to prevent their flying away, and when all from a pod are abstracted, gather them up as charilly as possible, tie in small bunches, and then tie closely to a wire stem. The result is a fluffy ball, softer than down and more lustrous than silk floss. Thistle balls are made by stripping the stem of the tough green bark and, with a pen-knife, removing the sepals or scales of the calyx, leaving the filament attached to the cup of the calyx; the purple, threadlike-petals are then pulled out, and the limp stem, to which adheres a white tassel, hung where it can be dried by the wind—the white tassel hardening in drying and becoming a soft, white, fluffy ball. These balls of thistle and milkweed, intermingled with dried grasses and cat-tails, serve to make very beautiful bouquets for winter decoration.

'CINDY'S DISCOVERY.

"Now be good chilluns, while I'm gone, an' doan' let dat kittle of hominy squorch," said Mammy Kershaw. "An' be sho you feed de pig, an' slop de cow, an' w'en de sun gits roun' to de noon mark on de flo', you tote a bucket ob water to dat air mule, 'case Brudder Johnsing gwine leabe him heah till to-morrer mornin'." An' if you all be good chilluns, and doan' do no misshif, Santa Claus gwine bring you sumping nice for Christmas to-morrer."

Having wrapped her stout form in a woollen shawl, mammy set out for Squire Beam's big home-stead, where she was to help prepare the Christmas feast. For mammy was an unrivalled cook, and there were pies and cakes to bake, chickens and turkeys to pick and prepare for the oven, the knives and forks to polish, the best china to wash, the silver to scour, and a dozen other duties to perform.

"And how are you getting along, Mammy?" asked the Squire's wife, kindly, as the woman made her appearance in the kitchen.

"Mighty p'orly, thank you," returned Mammy Kershaw. "Pears like I aint had nuffin but trouble, fur a-massy knows how long."

"You never found the fifty dollars you had saved up to finish paying for your cabin?"

"No, honey, we nebber foun' it, an' I doan' reckon we ebber will. You see my ole man, he tuck keer ob de money, an' w'en he tuck sick sud-dint wid de winter feber, he went right out ob his head, an' wasn't at his sef no mo' long enough to tell what he done wid dat air fifty dollars."

"Hit was all in one bill, jess like he drewed it out ob de bank, fur to take ober to ole man Pettibone. An' wedder he hid it away, to keep it safe, or wedder he done los' it out'n his pocket, is what I ain't nebber foun' out—an' doan' nebber 'spec' to fine out, now. But hit's gone, an' ole man Pettibone he Day, he's r-gwineter take de cabin back, an' we kin jess rack up an' go. An' what's a-gwineter 'come ob us' massy ony knowa."

"An' now whut shill I pitch into, Miss Sary, honey?"

Meantime the children had watched their mother's departure with sparkling eyes. They foresaw great fun while she was gone.

"What you tink I'm a-gwineter do, Tobe?" asked 'Cindy. 'Cindy was fourteen years old—the eldest of the flock, and as full of mischief as an egg of meat.

"Dunno, I answered Tobe. "Slop de cow?"

"Shucks!" retorted 'Cindy. "I'm a-gwineter ramsack dis yer cabin foh dem Christmas gifts whut mammy tote about. Needn't tink she kin fool me 'bout Santa Claus! Mammy's done hid 'em away ber own sef, an' I'm a-gwine to find 'em, dat's what."

"Cricky!" cried Tobe, while little Dora, or Do, as they called her, clapped her hands with delight.

"Le's me an' you hunt in de big chist," Tobe suggested. Accordingly, the "big chist" was carefully opened and rifled. Papers of dried sage, cat-nip, horhound and spearmint were tumbled out on the floor. Mammy's green bandbox, containing her "Sunday bonnet," came out too.

Some rolls of wool, several pounds of cotton-batting, a long-boarded black silk apron, sundry unmade stockings, a pasteboard box, containing shoe-laces, hairpins, a red handkerchief and a pair of long glass ear-drops, together with a few odds and ends of almost everything imaginable, were all within its depths, and the disappointed searchers hurriedly replaced its contents.

"Has you found anyting, 'Cindy?" asked Tobe, anxiously.

"No, I hasn't," responded 'Cindy, with emphasis.

"But I know dey's somers, an' I'm a-gwine to find 'em, slo'."

"De hominy's a-squorchin'!" cried out little Do, and 'Cindy hastened to stir it with a long-handled spoon, after which she resumed her search. Under box, and even in the pitch-dark six-by-four cellar, where mammy kept her winter board of potatoes, and turnips, the children searched, eagerly but vainly. No hidden treasures were to be found.

"Whar kin we look next?" asked 'Cindy, baffled but not defeated.

"I know now!" she added. "Mammy hides her money in de bed. Mebbe she done put 'em dar'!"

Darting to the tall-posted cord-beadstead in such haste that the numerous little plaits on her kinky head stuck out like quills, 'Cindy hurriedly turned down the bed-covering, and thrust her hand cautiously between the feather bed and the straw tick.

Tobe and Do stood breathlessly awaiting the result.

"Hyah dey is! I feel 'em!" cried 'Cindy, excitedly, while the other two shouted in triumph. Eagerly but cautiously she drew forth the clean pillow-slip, tied with a calico string. By dint of soon had the knot untied, and poured the contents of the pillow-slip on the bed.

"Oh! oh! oh! dis is my tin wagon an' hoss!" screamed Tobe, overwhelmed with delight.

"An' dis yere's my doll, an' dat's yourn, Do," cried 'Cindy, appropriating the larger of the two dolls.

They were exactly alike, except in size, and legs. Both were in pink tarlatan dresses, with blue sashes and overskirts trimmed with cheap cotton lace.

"Here's sumping else," announced 'Cindy, ex-

ultantly. "A red sugar rooster, an' a sugar dog an' cat!"

"I'll hab de rooster!" proclaimed Tobe, grasping it.

"An' I'll hab de dog. You kin take de cat, Do," decided the elder sister.

Soon all three were engrossed with their new treasures. Tobe tied a long string to his horse and wagon, and amused himself drawing them up and down the floor, unmindful of the racket he made, and only pausing now and then to take a sly lick at the sugar rooster.

The two girls, meanwhile, played happily with their dolls, and finally went to work to see if the pink tarlatan dresses could be "took off an' put on agin."

The hominy scorching, the pig squealed, and the cow lowed in vain for her slop. The sun had long since passed the noon-mark on the yellow-pine floor, and still the mule had not received his bucket of water. The breakfast dishes stood unwashed on the table, the bed was unmade, the floor unswept.

The children took a lunch of bread and molasses when they became hungry, and continued their play until the gathering shades of twilight warned them that mammy would soon make her appearance.

"Hurra-y, now, an' le's put 'em all back whar we got 'em at," commanded 'Cindy, "so mammy won't know nuffin about it. An' you go an' slop dat cow, Tobe, an' do kin he'p you feed de pig, an' tote a bucket ob water to de mule, whiles I redd' up an' wash dem dishes."

She skurried briskly around, hastily washed and wiped the dishes, spread the bed smoothly, and had just finished sweeping the floor and stood the broom on its head in the corner, when the two other children reappeared, followed by their mother.

"Dar now, see whut Mis' Beam done gimme fur a Christmas dinner," said mammy, holding up a fine, plump goose, already plucked and dressed.

"Hab you all ben good chilluns now? 'Case if you aint, I sha'n't cook it fur a week."

"We ben good, mammy, we all ben as good as pie!"

They fell to examining the wonderful goose by pinching, poking, and fingering it all over, with fingers still sticky with molasses.

"Hab you slopped de cow, an' fed de pig, an' wattered dat air mule?" demanded mammy.

"Yes'um! Yes'um! An' we on'y squorched de hominy jess' a leetle mite."

Mammy, having expected nothing better, forbore to find fault about the hominy; and, being tired with her day's work, she was glad to get her chores done up, and betake herself to bed; first, however, cautiously removing the pillow-slip and its secret treasures, without opening it, while the children were eating their supper.

Mammy was up bright and early on Christmas morning. "I'll jes' stuff dese year Christmas gifts, wot deir Ant 'Lizer sent 'em, into deir stockin's," she said to herself, carefully untwining the calico string from around the pillow-slip, and pouring its contents into her lap.

Hi! whut—whut's de matter ob 'em?" she gasped, staring with astonishment at the awful sight that met her gaze.

Two wheels were gone from the tin wagon, and the horse was "mashed flat as a pancake." Tobe had accidentally stepped on it in one of his trips across the room.

The dolls were in no better condition. One had lost an arm and the other a leg, while their pink tarlatan dresses were torn and crumpled, and smeared hear and there with molasses.

The sugar rooster was headless, the cat was half melted, and the dog was a forlorn-looking object that would never stand on all fours again. 'Cindy had yielded to the temptation to bite off his legs, in spite of future consequences.

Mammy stared in dumb amazement for a moment, her eyes rolling at the mysterious change in the contents of the pillow-slip. But the truth soon dawned upon her mind.

"Dem riporates has found wher' I hid 'em at," she reflected. "An' couldn' wait fur Christmas, to go yankin' 'em about!"

Something else besides the soiled and broken toys soon caught mammy's eye, however—something on which she pounced greedily.

"Wher' in de lan' ob Canaan dis yeah come from?" she cried, unfolding the crumpled object on which her attention was riveted.

"Bless me, if I doan' b'liebe dat limb 'Cindy kin tell someping about it!" she exclaimed, hurrying to the bed, she shook 'Cindy roughly by the shoulder. "You tell wher' dis yeah come from, if you want a bite ob dat air roast goose!" she commanded, showing the crumpled object. "Hit was in dat pillow-slip, long wid dem Christmas gifts y'all done broke up a'ready!"

'Cindy rubbed her eyes and stared.

"I dunno," she answered, sleepily and sulkily.

Mammy again seized her by the shoulder, and gave her a still more vigorous shake than before.

"You!" yelled 'Cindy. "I'll tell I'll tell! I—I done foun' it—in de toe ob pappy's boot, down sullen!" she confessed.

Mammy released her, smilingly broadly. "Does yer know whut 'is, 'Cindy?" she inquired.

"Hit's a picture," returned 'Cindy. "Tobe wanted to cut a man out ob it, but I wouldn' leabe him."

"Lan' o' goodness! Hit's better'n a pictur'," 'Cindy. Hit's dat air fifty-dollar bill I hunted fur so long. An' now I kin pay ole man Pettibone an' he can't turn us out ob de cabin!"

"Goody!" shouted 'Cindy. "An' will yo' cook dat air goose for dinnah, mammy?"

"Co'se I will. I'll mix de stuffin', an' git it in a-roastin' de berry fus' ting after breakfas'."