

knobs of the great yellow house; crape and white ribbons at the windows. Its owner was going slowly down the walk, his head bent, his hands behind him, and a white weed on his hat. He never noticed his little girl, who stood in the doorway with a scared, mystified look in her face.

Edna shut the window, dropped down on her knees beside her little bed, and asked God to forgive her for calling that dead woman names, and for planning such a miserable day for herself, when she had more to be thankful for than the saddened man opposite—making up her mind she would be cheerful after that.

But the days dragged some, after all. They were all just alike. Grinby & Son ground the workmen, lowered their wages when possible, kept them on half fires till Edna's little feet were like lumps of ice.

Then the foreman swore more and more at the state of affairs, and Edna's types would pl, and her letters would be set upside down; she grew too weak to stand all day, and bought herself a high stool to sit on; she began to grow white and thin with crying nights in her cold room, alone with God, and saying over and over again, in her broken words, "I needed Fred so much—so much!" And Christ, who had been on earth himself, unloved, heard and understood her prayer, but gave her no answer yet.

Finally, soft April airs began to blow in the dreary pineries, and April leaves and April suns, and April skies appeared, and Edna, going to and fro in the spring sunshine, met the banker, with the wide weed in his hat, and he always said, "God-morning" kindly, and asked her how she did.

Long before he knew it, he began to grow glad when he saw her coming, and took comfort in looking at her girlish face. No rich man's daughter on the avenue had a more joyous heart than she.

He began to notice that even her hair had a merry way of kinking up all over her head, that there was always a smile in her eyes, that there were fun-dimples in the corners of her mouth; but he did not know how much of the gladness in that little face was due to his kind "Good-morning."

Edna began to wonder what made her daily walks so pleasant, why she walked with such a spring in her step, why her cheeks grew red at the sound of quick feet on the walk behind her, why she was wearing out her Sunday dress every day, why she grew glad of rainy days, though she did not own an umbrella, and her heart began to beat when Banker Lansing offered her part of his. She, thinking he was her good angel just dropped from the skies, trudged along beside him in a state of beatification, and took the shelter of his umbrella in all security and goodwill.

Old women put on their glasses and looked out at "that girl." Men looked at each other knowingly, and said how deeply trapped the banker was.

But the women were the worst. It is seldom that men will condescend to the little, mean suppositions about the opposite sex that women will of their own.

I should consider that I had lived to some purpose, and were ready to die, if only the women who read this story would never breath ill of their poor, hard-working sisters till they were positively convinced of their guilt—women in safe and happy homes, with rich fathers and husbands, condemning some poor, over-worked girl, passing through more temptation daily than their milk-and-water natures could withstand in a year.

Simple Edna, brought up among Latin grammars and crochets, what did she know about a town bubbling over with gossip?

Hard work many times keeps the mind sound, the heart pure and sweet; so she went on unwittingly walking over coals, singing to herself in the office.

The summer faded into autumn, and autumn into winter imperceptibly, and Edna had a new source of wonderment, for the banker ceased to walk with her. He took no pains now to leave his office at about the time she did hers, and she knew he took pains to avoid her. He was often hurrying on the opposite walk. He never stopped to speak to her now. He was nowhere to be seen on rainy days. Edna dragged through them alone.

"Just as I knew it would be all the time," she said to herself, though, to tell the truth, she had not even thought of it, but had accepted it all, as she did the sunshine, with a grateful heart.

On Christmas Day she rose slower than ever, and the light from the rat-hole showed a very heavy countenance. She had had a hard winter of it. She had been sick with a fever, had gone to work before she was able, and the state of her finances was unpromising, and she had but a few sticks of firewood left.

She warmed her numbed hands over the pine blaze she had kindled—the little hands that she used to fold in her lap and look at, not out of sheer vanity, as her stepmother suggested, but because Fred had admired them, and she liked to think them pretty for his sake.

Now there was a grime on them that would not wash out, and the delicate finger-ends were swollen and burst with the constant handling of lead. She did not care to look at them now, but put on her bonnet and went down into the yard for a pail of water.

When she had filled the pail, and nearly drenched herself (an aggravating way that pump had on breezy days), she looked up to see Prince Goldenheart standing close by her—the veritable Prince Goldenheart, such as they have in novels, for he told her he loved her, and asked her to marry him all in the same breath.

"People talked about my liking to be with you, Edna, and so I kept away from you; but I thought to-day was Christmas, the day that Christ and love came into the world, and I had waited long enough, and had a right to speak."

"But I'm so poor, and Fred wouldn't marry me, and there are so many handsome girls in the world," said Edna, twisting her shawl.

"Yes, but there is but one Edna," and taking the pail of water from her hand, he carried it up stairs for her, stopping a little on every step, looking to make sure the little figure was climbing beside him.

He opened the door of the dim Eden that no man's foot had crossed, and looked at the rag-mat, the little bed, the crooked stove, the Madonna, and sitting down in Edna's one chair, with the nail on the floor beside him, he took the shabby child in his lap, and held her close without a word.

Edna searched his face with large eyes that were so hungry for the love they had never yet found, and, seeing something

there that satisfied her, accepted the first kiss she had given or received since that memorable night she parted with Fred, then said, meekly:—

"I guess I will get down; the fire is all out, and my feet are both in the pail of water."

I close my story, thinking sadly how many Ednas there are in the world who will never find Banker Lansings, though the watching Father upon the throne keeps a high place for them among His angels.

I was glad Edna's Christmas Day had such a happy ending, and that on New Year's (her bridal day) she looked as pretty as other girls—her hair arranged *a la* Nilsson, twinkling pendants in her ears, twinkling pendants on her winsome little wrists, with a flush on her cheek and a light in her eye that had never been there before.

Minnie May's Department.

MY DEAR NIECES,—The good old time of Xmas is drawing near, and the question naturally arises, What shall I make this time, for father, husband, brother, sister, friend? is the query that now puzzles many an inquiring mind, and an answer to which would be gladly received. Whatever one needs in a mild or intense way, is most acceptable. Indeed, it is rather difficult to choose gifts for the "lords of creation," as they do not value little articles of adornment as much as we do.

The time, the money, the ingenuity, the devotion, spent on these tokens of affection, is well spent. As the patient fingers work hour after hour, with silks of glowing tints, Berlin wools of exquisite shades, delicate crocheting, tatting point lace and fine needlework, the love cherished for the intended recipient warms and brightens in the heart of the worker, and no doubt will be received by father or brother very heartily. There are many little things that are quite inexpensive, and that make very pretty presents. The other day we saw a lovely little frame made of perforated silver card-board. The central was out, and a bright-colored bouquet of flowers in a spandrel inserted. The edge of the board around the inside oval was embroidered with blue worsted. Patterns of the same made the corners lovely, and around the outer edge a quilting of narrow pearl-edged blue satin ribbon gave a graceful finish to the frame. The article when complete cost perhaps thirty cents, and in a carefully-kept room would be an ornament for a long time. Brackets and frames of scroll-work make very pretty presents. Even a paste-board box covered with tinted cambric and lace, or muslin, will make a tasteful receptacle for gloves, or comb and brush. A cigar-box covered and lined with quilted silk of agreeable tint, is both pretty and useful, and costs but little. Very pretty frames may be made of fresh leaves of bright tints fastened to a foundation frame, and ornamented with red berries. These hints are given merely suggestive, to those who have not yet settled in their minds what to make for Christmas presents. Hoping, my dear nieces, you will succeed in making some little gift for your loved friends (in remembrance of that memorable day), which no doubt will be received with gratitude, and that will repay you. We will now wish you a merry Christmas, begging you all to accept our sincere thanks for the numerous receipts which you so kindly have sent us, trusting you will continue to do so in the following year.

M. M.

Perhaps some of our nephews and nieces might kindly aid the ADVOCATE by introducing it to their friends. We shall be willing to remunerate any one who sends us even one new subscriber. We will send you either a handsome lithograph engraving or a chromo, or some new flower bulbs, which you may prefer, for a single name; or a free copy if you send us four new subscribers, accompanied with the cash; or will give you a good cash commission if you send us a list. Some ladies make excellent canvassers and make very high salaries by canvassing. Should any wish for terms to agents they can be supplied.

The Five Peaches—The Father and his Children.

Farmer Day brought, a few days since, five peaches from the city, the finest that were to be found. But this was the first time that the children had seen any fruit of the kind. So they admired and greatly rejoiced over the beautiful peaches with red cheeks and soft pulps. The father gave one to each of his four sons, and the fifth to their mother.

In the evening, as the children were about to retire to sleep, their father inquired, "Well, boys, how did the peaches taste?"

"Excellent, dear father," said the eldest. "It is a beautiful fruit, so juicy and so pleasant. I have carefully preserved the stone, and will cultivate a tree for myself."

"Well done," said the father. "This is husbandry, to provide for the future, and is becoming to a farmer."

"I ate mine," exclaimed the youngest, "and threw away the stone, and mother gave me half of hers. Oh, that tasted so sweet, and melted in my mouth!"

"You," said the father, "have not acted very prudently, but in a natural and child-like manner. There is still time enough, in your life, to practice wisdom."

Then the second began—"I picked up the stone which my little brother threw away, and cracked it open; it contained a kernel that tasted as good as a nut. And my peach I sold, and got for it money enough to buy twelve when I go to the city."

The father patted him on the head, saying, "That was indeed prudent, but was it natural for a child? May Heaven preserve you from being a merchant!"

"And you, Edmund?" inquired the father.

Frankly and ingenuously Edmund replied: "I carried my peach to George, the son of our neighbor, who is sick with fever. He refused to take it; but I laid it on the bed and came away."

"Now," said the father, "who has made the best use of his peach?"

All exclaimed: "Brother Edmund." But Edmund was silent, and his mother embraced him with a tear standing in her eye.

RECIPES.

RUSSIAN CREAM.

One quart milk, three eggs, one cup sugar, half package Cox's gelatine, vanilla or lemon flavoring; if cinnamon is preferred, boil a few sticks in the milk. Dissolve the gelatin in half a pint tepid water; bring it to a warm temperature but not scalding. Beat the yolks of the eggs and sugar together. Bring the milk to a boil; then add the dissolved gelatin, eggs and sugar, and let it just come to a boiling point, but no more, or it will be too stiff. Beat the whites, and, removing the mixture from the stove, add them to it, flavor, and pour into moulds. If wanted for dinner, prepare the day before, as it requires to stand longer than wine jelly.

PARSNIP FRITTERS.

Many consider this the best way of cooking parsnips. Boil tender and mash very smooth, removing carefully the strings or woody portions. For three or four parsnips allow two beaten eggs, three tablespoonfuls of cream, one tablespoonful of melted butter, and a tablespoonful of salt. Stir in a very little flour and fry either as fritters or griddle cakes. For mashed parsnips, which is a favorite dish with lovers of the vegetable, proceed as you would for potatoes, the secret of success being in mashing very smooth, removing the fibres, and seasoning plentifully with butter, cream and pepper. Be less lavish with the salt.

MUSHROOM SAUCE.

Put a teaspoonful of butter into a small saucepan, and when it melts add a teaspoonful of flour; beat until well cooked; stir a cupful of strong soup stock and half as much juice from the can of mushrooms. After simmering for a few minutes add about a quarter of a can of mushrooms, pepper, salt and a little lemon juice. Let it heat slowly to a boil and pour over the meat. This is an excellent sauce for breakfast or boiled chicken, and may be made cheaply with canned mushrooms. Use the remainder of the can for stewing, or, if you have a gridiron with small bars, they may be broiled.