

MRS. GORDON'S COZY CORNER.

BY MADA MAITLAND.

"Justin, do lay away that Citizen and come to breakfast. If Manitoba and Separate School difficulties are sufficient for you, just please remember your wee wife requires something more substantial on which to begin the duties of the day." Playfully taking the paper from his hand as she spoke, Justin Gordon's pretty wife led the way to the breakfast table. It was a cozy room with an open fireplace, and as husband and wife seated themselves at the daintily spread breakfast table, Mrs. Gordon remarked :

"Don't forget, Justin dear, I have a birthday this month."

"A birthday," he replies, "why bless me, how time flies. Twenty-three it is, you will be?"

"What a bare-faced compliment when you know I was that on our wedding day. No, I will be twenty-six this month. What an old woman your wife is growing, and still she is as giddy and foolish as on the day the responsibilities of this household fell upon her shoulders."

A smile greeted this moralizing, and later, when the husband was leaving for his office, he called back.

"All right, Lou, about that birthday gift, choose what will give you most pleasure to the value of one hundred dollars."

She was ascending the stairs as he spoke, but a few steps brought her to her husband's side and in well chosen words, with a charm peculiarly her own, she thanked him for his gift.

That morning, as she drew her rocker closer to the fire, she tried to decide what she would buy with that birthday money. While she

sits in cogitation deep, let us have a glimpse at her and her home. Three years ago she had become the wife of the clever young lawyer, Justin Gordon. She was the only child of Judge Barton, and it was with feelings of intense reluctance the old judge had given the "Sunshine of his home" to the keeping of the young lawyer : for many years the mother's chair had been vacant and Lou had presided over her father's fashionable home with a charming grace. In company with her father she often attended the church near their home, and once, during a week of special services, she had experienced a yearning after a better life, but the preparations for the Bachelor's Ball and its succeeding gaieties had so crept into her life that no decision was made, but with a promise to herself, that when a season of rest would come to her she would think of it again, she set aside the all-important question and lived the life of one of the gayest of the belles of one of our Canadian towns. Her husband, a son of many prayers, usually attended church service with his wife, but made no profession of religion, so though not a thoroughly godless home we have entered, it is not one where the Master is ever welcome and loved.

We left our heroine by the fire-side, and as we return we find her not alone but in animated conversation with a bright motherly little woman who proves to be Mr. Gordon's only sister, Mrs. Dalton. As we enter we find the question of the birthday gift just being settled. The bay-window in the drawing-room is being inspected and in happy laughing words they are, in