Our Boys and Girls.

RICHES.

BY W. L. SANFORD.

Have you a little baby boy
A few months more than two years old,
With soft brown eyes that brim with joy
And silken ringlets bathed in gold;
Who, toddling, follows you around
And plays beside you near the hearth;
Whose prattle is the sweetest sound
To you of all glad notes of earth?

Have you a little baby boy
Who, when the voice of slumber calls,
Reluctant leaves each tattered toy
And in your strong arms weary falls;
Who, yawning, looks with sleepy eyes
Into your own and faintly smiles;
Then shuts his lids and quiet lies,
And drifts away to Dreamland's isles?

Have you a little one like this,
Who puts all troubling thoughts to flight
When, climbing up, he plants a kiss
Of love upon your lips at night?
If so, then humbly bend your knee
And lift your heart in thankful prayer,
For you are richer far than he
Who, childless, is a millionaire!

A NEW KIND OF CAKE.

BY HILDA RICHMOND.

"Now, go right into the parlor, and don't let me see you till dinner time!" commanded Elsie, playfully. "And don't worry about the dinner either! The chicken 's in the pot, and the rest will be easy."

"But it seems ridiculous to put the dinner-getting for the minister and his family into the hands of a sixteen-year-old girl. I had planned to have a splendid meal the first time they came, for he 's preached in our church only a month, and just at that very time, Mary had to go home and leave me. That 's always the way my plans turn out."

"Auntie! Do you mean to insinuate that I can't cook a splendid dinner as well as Mary? I have a notion to put too much salt in the chicken-pot for that. I'm sure you'll be pleased with the meal, for I've had lots of lessons at cooking-school, and dabbled in the kitchen at home since I was a mere child."

"If Mrs. Forrest hadn't brought her fancy-work, I might slip out once in a while and help you; but some one told her about my drawn work, and she wants me to teach her. Your uncle always likes to have cake and ice-cream when we have company," she added, rather doubtfully.

"I took the prize for the best cake that week when our class gave a public exhibition," said Elsie, demurely, "so I guess I can manage that. It's only 8 o'clock, and you won't want dinner till twelve, will you? Company comes early in Sharon, it seems to me."

"Yes, they'll be here in half an hour; but we say, 'Come and spend the day' in little towns, instead of looking for the guests fifteen minutes before dinner time. I guess there's nothing to do but to take your advice; but it's a shame to impose on you the very first day you are here. Are you sure you can manage?"

"Perfectly certain. There is a man helping a lady and a child out at the front door this blessed minutes. I hope you are not going to have other guests. I didn't contract wholesale catering, and there are only two chickens stewing on the stove."

"It's them," said Mrs. Edwards, with no regard for grammar, leaving her niece to undisputed possession of the big, clean kitchen.

"Poor Aunt Rose will be on pins and needles till dinner is over," laughed Elsie rather wickedly. "It is easy to see that she has small faith in my ability, but I'll try to convert her. I'll make a devil's food cake that will astonish her. I don't suppose the people in little towns like this ever hear of the new things we try at cooking-school. If I get through in time, I'll make strawberry ice cream, too. The pink and brown on auntie's old-fashioned plates will be quite artistic."

All this time the dainty cook was whisking eggs and weighing out brown sugar as swiftly as her thoughts were flying, but suddenly the cake came to an abrupt standstill. "Why didn't I remember that there was no sour milk?" she lamented. "I saw Aunt Rose put the last drop in the pan for the little chickens, but never thought of it till now." She looked despairingly at the brown mass, and then picked up a cup and ran swiftly to the adjoining house.

"Please, can you let me have a little bit of sour milk?" she asked, breathlessly, as a woman answered her knock. "I must have some for my devil's food, and auntie threw the last of ours out this morning."

"Who is your aunt?" inquired the woman, rather coldly, without offering to take the cup.

"Mrs. Edwards. I am her niece from the city, and she has company today, so I offered to get the dinner because Mary left last night. The new minister and his family are at the house today."

The woman took the cup, and when she returned Elsie said, "Oh, thank you, ever so much. I'll bring you a piece of my cake when it's done," and hastened back to the deserted kitchen.

Everything went well after that. The crushed strawberries gave the smooth cream the right tint and flavor, the chicken simmered to the proper degree of tenderness, and the peas and potatoes acted as if perfectly willing to do credit to the young cook, whose spirits rose every minute. The table was set with the finest china and the delicate, old-fashioned silver, and a great bouquet of roses scented the cool air of the darkened dining-room.

"Auntie Edwards said we should come out, and you'd give us a piece," said a fairy-like little girl, leading a small boy into the kitchen. "It's so long to wait till dinner's ready."

"So it is, you darling," said Elsie, handing out two little cakes covered with icing. "I made them for you. Now, run back to your mamma, for I'm awfully busy, just awfully busy,' she added, impressively, as they showed a disposition to linger.

"What peculiar-looking cake!" cried Mrs. Edwards, when the children displayed them in the parlor. "My niece goes to cooking-school in the city, and was anxious to bake the cake for today, but I'm afraid she had bad luck," she added apologetically.

"It looks lovely," said Mrs. Forrest. "Devil's food is Mr. Forrest's favorite cake, but we seldom have it because I forget to allow the milk to sour. The children drink so much milk that it is not often enough is left for even a small cake."

"I never heard of devil's food before," said Mrs. Edwards. "Is it really good? It looks so black and ugly."

"I think it is a beautiful brown, and it is just delicious. Your niece must be a good cook."

"I don't think she made this with sour milk, for there isn't a drop in the house," said the hostess, "but I'll ask her. Bessie wants a drink, so I'll do both errands at once."

"Yes, you have to use sour milk or buttermilk for devil's food," explained Elsie, when her aunt filled a small pitcher with water in the kitchen. "I never thought that you gave the last bit to the chickens till my cake was about half done, but the woman next door helped me out. Doesn't it look lovely?"

"You didn't ask her for sour milk!" gasped Mrs. Edwards.

"Of course, and she gave it to me. What is the matter, Aunt Rose?"

"Child! We haven't spoken for two years. I used to buy milk of her, and one time she sent sour instead of sweet. When I spoke to her about it, she got angry, and we have had no dealings with each other since. I wonder what she thought when you asked for sour milk!"

"I don't know, but as soon as I serve the dinner to you folks, I'm going to take her some cake and ice cream. Very likely she's sorry, and doesn't know how to make up. Are you ready for dinner? Everything is in its prime now."

A sudden impulse took possession of Mrs. Edwards. "Could you make another place at the table?" she asked, quickly. "I'm going over and ask Mary Jones to come to dinner."

"Of course I can; and it won't hurt the dinner a bit to wait a few minutes," said Elsie, joyfully.

"Mary, I've come to ask you to dinner," said Mrs. Edwards, coming up to the kitchen door where Mrs. Jones had set out a slight repast for herself on the corner of the table. "I'm ashamed to think I ever spoke about that milk, and I want you to forgive me."

"It was all my fault, Rose. I've been wicked and sinful, and this morning I came very near telling your niece not to borrow from her aunt's enemies. I'm glad I didn't, for she seems like such a nice girl. Do you really want me to come over to dinner?"

"You must come. It won't take you five minutes to slip on another dress, and Elsie will have dinner by that time."

"Why, Mrs. Jones!" said Mr. Edwards, in surprise, when that lady came in, slightly out of breath with a struggle over her best black silk, just before Elsie announced dinner; "I was just telling the minister about that foolish little quarrel you and Rose had several years ago, and we were planning how the difficulty could be solved, when here you two ladies seem like the best of friends. Mr. Forrest will think I was telling a story."

"Mr. Edwards! Did you tell Mr. Forrest that?" said his wife in dismay. "I was just congratulating myself that he would never find it out."

"I don't care," said Mrs. Jones, smilingly, "since it's all over. It was my fault, anyway."

"I have called dinner twice, auntie," announced Elsie. "I am afraid the food will get cold."

The anxious look faded out of Mrs. Edwards' face as the dinner progressed, much to her niece's amusement. When the dessert was brought on, she beamed with delight at the pink mounds of ice cream flanked by the delicious brown cake with its thick coat of icing, the whole served on the thin, pink-and-white plates.

"What new-fangled kind of cake is this?" inquired Mr. Edwards, looking with scant favor at his piece.

"Mrs. Forrest and Elsie call it devil's food, but I think that is a horrid name for such good cake," said his wife. "If it had not been for this you might still be looking for some plan to induce Mrs. Jones and me to make up."

"How is that?" inquired the minister, and the story came out. "It's a lucky thing Elsie knew nothing of the trouble or we wouldn't be together today," said Mrs. Jones, when she had finished the foolish little story, with much help from Mrs. Edwards.

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