

sentimental and droll; but the one that made her fingers tremble so that she could scarcely take it out of the envelope, that was all covered over with hearts and arrows, and doves and flowers, was directed in John's beautiful clear copper-plate handwriting that she knew as well as she knew her own. It was sealed with wax, and she got a scissors and cut carefully round the seal, then slowly took out the valentine, and unfolded it. It was a hideous caricature, with big goggle blue eyes, cheeks red as paint could make them, and a mane of *red hair*, all loose, and flowing round the shoulders and down the back!

"What the words were, written underneath it, poor Ally never knew. With a scream of pain, for no stab from a knife could have hurt her as much, she dropped the horrid thing on the floor; then quickly passing from wounded feelings to rage, she stamped on it, and tore it into a thousand pieces.

"Next day she met John face to face; he was the first person she met when she went into the street. He came towards her with a beaming face, and both hands outstretched.

"Oh, Ally!" he said, 'I've been waiting all the morning—'

"Good morning, sir," she said, and her eyes pierced him like a gimlet.

"He turned pale, and his lips quivered, then he seemed to make a great effort, and said—

"Miss Alicia, you got my valentine—"

"How dare you, sir?" she exclaimed, in a voice of concentrated rage and scorn; and at that moment she heard a familiar air hummed, in a well-known, sweet baritone, close behind her—

"In the town of Kilkenny—"

"She turned like a lightning-flash, and took the arm of the singer; and the next Sunday their two names were called in church. John waited till the wedding was over. Alicia supposed he was waiting to marry Mandy on the same day. But he didn't. On the day after Alicia married the husband whom she afterwards learned to love very dearly, John left that part of the country, and they did not meet again till her red hair

was like the snow, and he had very little left, of any kind, and what there was matched hers in colour."

"Oh, grandma! and what became of Mandy?"

"She lived and died an old maid. When she sent for me yesterday it was to beg forgiveness, and to give me this valentine."

Grandma took from under the snowy folds of her neckerchief a worn and faded piece of paper; it had a border all flowers and doves, and other old-fashioned valentine signs, but in the centre just these lines:—

"Alicia, I love you with all my heart. Will you marry me?—JOHN."

"And that was your valentine, grandma?" Hetty asked, awestruck.

Grandma smiled. "It was Alicia's valentine," she said. "Mandy had unsealed John's letter, taken out this valentine, and substituted the horrid red-haired caricature."

"Oh, the wretch! But she's dead, only I could never have forgiven her. It would have been a case of Queen Elizabeth and the wicked Countess of Nottingham."

Grandma stooped and kissed Hetty. "At your age Alicia might have felt the same, dear," she said. "But the things of this world pass away, and beyond we shall lose sight of all the wrongs and disappointments we leave here."

She folded up her valentine and laid it, tenderly, just over her heart.

That evening, when old Mr. Allison called for his granddaughter, my grandmother held his hand softly between hers, and looked into his eyes with a look he must have remembered, for he seemed to flush up and grow younger as he met it.

"John," she said, "I got your valentine to-day."

"My valentine, Alicia! What do you mean?"

Then he led her away to the other side of the room, and they talked together for a long time.

Sophy Allison was standing beside me, and I couldn't help saying—

"Why, Sophy, your grandfather's name is John."

"And your grandmother's must be Alicia."

## REMUNERATIVE EMPLOYMENTS FOR GENTLEWOMEN.

BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.



**L**DARE SAY that this paper will appear to be somewhat disjointed and scrappy, for it will mainly consist of a gathering together of odds and ends, so to speak: it will chiefly be a survey of what is taking place in some of the departments of work which have been described before in these pages. It is necessary to review the ground now and again, for the demand for some products of brain or hand dies away, and the demand for others increases.

With regard to the profession of nursing, there seems as yet to be no difficulty for certified nurses to obtain

appointments. At the "Nightingale Training School," details of which were given some months ago, twenty-four nurses have lately completed satisfactorily their year of training, and have been entered on the register as certified nurses. Twenty-two of this number received public appointments at once—these were posts at hospitals in London, the provinces, and on the Continent, in infirmaries and nursing associations. The failure of those candidates who did not gain certificates was mainly due to deficient physical strength: this is a fact to be considered by those who think of taking up work of this kind.

The various employments which come under the name of decorative art suggest that attention be turned in that direction ; for the decoration of houses, as at present followed out, gives employment, directly and indirectly, to very many workers—new designs for wall-papers, for dados, for friezes, for tiles, and for painted glass, together with the colouring of the two last-named. There is also mural mosaic-work, which may be classed in the same list.

All these are being brought largely into use in the new houses which still continue to spring up on all sides, and the owners and occupiers of old houses are in a great degree infected with the same desire to re-embellish their dwellings. Some gentlewomen are therefore turning their attention to this class of work. I learn from reliable authority that the technical knowledge of this art is best acquired in the studio of a decorative artist, and that one or two years should be spent there.

I have heard of a work-room which has been started for dressmaking purposes since I suggested that branch of needlework a few months ago. It has been set on foot by gentlewomen, and is conducted and superintended by such. So far—that is to say, during these few months—the result has been satisfactory; a considerable amount of work has been undertaken and executed.

I have beforetime mentioned the making of artificial flies for anglers. I have lately been again told that this is a work which yields good remuneration to those who have the aptitude for handling finely-spun silk and tiny feathers, and who can wed delicate and minute atoms together in a skilful fashion. As much as three shillings is paid for an artificial fly when it is of a special kind. Another suggestion heretofore made is the cultivation of flowers as a source of profit. There is no diminution in the demand for flowers in our large towns. During the last two years I have observed this from my window. I see a man bring a basket of flowers for sale—a single flower for a penny. Very near to him a woman places herself with a basket of nuts, oranges, or other fruit. To my surprise, I notice that boys and girls, children of all ages, quite as often as adults, stop and buy a flower. I have repeatedly seen ragged children spend their coppers at the flower-basket, and not on the fruit-basket close by. I record this observation to show that the liking and fashion for natural flowers is widespread, and pervades every class and people of all ages.

To-day I am going to add another suggestion relative to the cultivation of flowers.

The luxury of having freshly-gathered flowers during the winter season is an expensive one. An immense quantity come from sunny lands across the water, but yet the majority of people cannot afford to pay the sums asked for these ; and when they do stretch a point and buy the tempting bunch, the pleasure of possession is very transient, for they die in a day in town houses.

Of late years, dried natural flowers and dried natural grasses have been used for winter decorations, and it is these I would now bring before the reader's notice

as a class of plants whose cultivation would be remunerative. One shilling is given for a hundred Rodanthe flowers, and four shillings for the same number of Marguerite asters. There are many kinds of what are commonly known as "everlasting flowers" (I do not allude to those known as "immortelles") besides those named, and their bright hues among grasses and leaves have a pretty and cheerful effect. The price charged for bouquets composed of these is from three-and-sixpence to five shillings.

Whilst speaking of the pleasures for which town-folk seem willing to pay, I may mention pet birds—the demand for such, whether birds of plumage or birds of song, is on the increase. The rearing of these might be made a source of profit ; personal attention must be regularly given to cleanliness, proper food, and the like, or the venture will yield loss instead of profit. The value of birds is greatly enhanced if they are trained to eat out of the hand, to take a seed from the lips, and show other little signs of friendliness.

A few words on another subject before I lay down my pen.

It is difficult oftentimes for widows with families to find remunerative employment. Many instances of this have come under my notice, and roused sincere sympathy. If they take posts in public institutions they must needs be separated from their children ; and if they try to keep a home together, the care and attention required by the little ones debars the mother from undertaking any regular employment, or one that would oblige her to leave her home for hours at a time.

There are two or three plans which can be adopted, of which I will speak briefly. For one who possesses the talent for teaching, day-pupils could be taken. Many parents like their children to have individual attention in their early years. The outlay for a venture of this kind would be small.

There are various sea-side resorts to which children are sent for their health, where in some cases children have to stay for months. Parents are often glad to know of a gentlewoman in whose care they could place their child. In order to make the fact known, the doctors in the place should be told, and also doctors practising in any large town near should be informed, for they are often asked to recommend a home of this kind when they order their little patient to the sea.

Another plan for enabling a mother to keep a home for her little ones is that of taking a house in a watering-place, and letting some of her rooms to visitors. I know, and I can quite understand, that the pride of many will rise up and bar the way ; but it must be more honourable to earn a living than to beg one. Children must be fed and clothed, and in this spirit of independence four gentlewomen with whom I am acquainted—the widow of a medical man, of a solicitor, of a captain in the army, and of a merchant—in different places, in the North of England and in the South, have been enabled to keep a home for their children and themselves. They were gentlewomen when they began this venture, and they are gentlewomen still.

## REMUNERATIVE EMPLOYMENTS FOR GENTLEWOMEN.

BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.



SOME months ago I spoke of teaching as an employment to which a great number of gentlewomen turned for a livelihood. I drew attention to the fact that in the present day the demand for governesses for private teaching had greatly decreased, owing to the establishment in all parts of the kingdom of public schools and colleges for girls, and that those who sought appointments as instructresses in these high schools and collegiate halls must be prepared to show certificates of examinations passed and honours gained.

I again allude to this subject for two reasons, one of which is that gentlewomen evidently do not realise that the supply of governesses is still greatly in excess of the demand. Some little time ago a friend of mine advertised for a governess, and she received more than one hundred and fifty letters from ladies anxious to take the post. Another personal friend advertised last month, and two hundred governesses wrote to offer her their services. Now, as in both instances there was nothing attractive set forth—the work was not light, and the salary was not high in either case—the deduction to be drawn is that the number of gentlewomen who are seeking and waiting for employment of this particular kind far, far exceeds in number the vacancies which they have prepared themselves for, and are anxious to fill.

There are two branch lines, neither of them perhaps so easy or smooth to travel along as what may be termed the ordinary, or main line of teaching, but they afford special interest as the line is traversed. There are at the present time comparatively but few competitors for the places, and the salaries offered and given are exceptionally high, ranging, I am told, from sixty to a hundred and twenty pounds a year.

There are two classes of children who cannot be taught by ordinary methods or with ordinary children—the deaf and dumb and those deficient in intellect. Of course, these classes are not large in number, and the ordinary class greatly preponderates over them, therefore I do not say to every one of the two hundred, "You will find employment if you turn your attention to the systems of teaching for these peculiar cases," but I do strongly advise those to do so who feel that they possess qualifications which will fit them to undertake work of this particular character.

Let us take the first class mentioned, that of the deaf mutes. The system of educating these which is now in general use is that known as the German system: this teaches the deaf to understand spoken language, to read and comprehend the motions made by the lips of those who are uttering words audibly,

and it teaches the deaf themselves to articulate words and express themselves by speech.

This system is possibly more difficult to impart than sign language, but its after-benefit must be far greater, for by its help the deaf are no longer excluded so entirely from the enjoyment of companionship and society in general.

There is a training college at Castle Bar, Ealing, London, W., where this system can be studied and learnt in all its entirety. A year's study and practice is required, at the end of which period certificates are given to students who can pass a satisfactory examination. The college fees are £50 per annum for in-students, and £45 for out-students. The demand for teachers qualified to give instruction in this system at present exceeds the supply. Beyond the fact of there being many children requiring instruction in institutions, in schools, and in private families, there are adults who are anxious to learn the method of lip-reading—those who are precluded by deafness from hearing any words which are not directly addressed to them, but who, with a knowledge of lip-reading, can read what is being said by public speakers, as well as being able to enjoy general conversation.

Let us now consider the second class mentioned, that of children deficient in intellect. Much, very much, can be done to rouse this where apathy and dullness are predominant, or to curb undue restlessness, and train it when the child has no self-control. I must not occupy this space by enlarging on a subject in which I have always taken a special and keen interest, and therefore I will only add that systems and devices, methods and plans, have to be brought into action; if one fails, another has to be tried. There is plenty of scope for the instructress: if the work of instruction seems monotonous in one respect, it has ample variety in other ways.

In most, if not all, of the public institutions and asylums for the teaching of imbecile children, the teachers have been selected from the class employed in elementary schools; but governesses are required for private families, and often there is a great difficulty to find any one trained to undertake cases of this kind.

From time to time we see notified in the newspapers how large a number of women apply for clerkships in Government offices, for, as is well known, many departments are now filled by women. Certain tests of proficiency are applied, and although these tests are not very severe, and the demand made on the intellect is not very great, yet the demand for certain particular branches of knowledge, and for thoroughness and accurateness in those several branches, is unswerving. Candidates must pass a searching examination.

A great and dependable help to procure and acquire this knowledge has lately been placed within the reach of all who wish to offer themselves as

candidates. A book has been published by Messrs. Cassell and Co., a "Guide to Female Employment in Government Offices." In this book there are not only the different subjects named, but actual help is afforded by distinct information as to what the examiners will expect from each candidate on each subject; the books to be studied are recommended, the ordinary defects and mistakes made by candidates are pointed out, and copies of the latest examination papers are included. Very much valuable information can be culled from this small but most useful compendium.

With regard to home employments, I can mention one which I think might prove remunerative. At the present time the fashion for mats and rugs runs high. Rugs are put here, there, and everywhere—in drawing-rooms, in halls, in bed-rooms, to say nothing of the places they have always held at the entrance of rooms and in front of the fire-place. The rugs which are pre-eminently in favour are from Eastern lands—Persia, Turkey, India, Palestine; carpets and rugs from these countries have just now displaced the productions of Western countries. A German firm has introduced a plan for imitating Oriental rugs, and Smyrna rugs can now easily be made in English homes.

The handiwork is accomplished by knitting short pieces of thick wool closely together with soft cotton; the wool and the cotton are specialities introduced by a Manchester firm. A book has been issued by them, which contains twenty-five coloured designs, such as are seen in the veritable Smyrna

rugs. With one of these before her, the knitter has no difficulty in producing the proper effect and an Eastern appearance. There is also a book containing specimens of the different colours of the wools; due regard has here also been paid to the Eastern class of dyes, so that in appearance, in pattern, in colour, and general style, and, I am assured, in durability also, the resemblance between rugs brought from afar and those made at home is close and unmistakable.

The work is not heavy, as the rug is made in strips, which are afterwards sewn together. Its manufacture is rendered easy by all the convenient provisions made for its execution: boxes are sold which contain a specimen of work, a pair of knitting-needles, a staff by which to measure the lengths of wool, a paper pattern of the design, a ball of cotton, and a quantity of wools the different colours required for that design.

A table setting forth the approximate quantities of wool required per square yard for each individual pattern has also been issued, so that a knitter is able to estimate the cost and name the price before she takes an order.

The depôt for the sale of work done by gentlewomen is still, I believe, open at 131, Edgware Road, London, W. The entrance fee is half-a-crown; the yearly subscription is five shillings; one penny in the shilling is charged as commission on work sold. I hope that all my readers who are able to do so will call at this depôt, and see whether it is not possible for them to supply their wants there, before they give their custom elsewhere

A. S. P.

## MY NAMESAKE MARJORIE.

By the Author of "Who is Sylvia?" &c. &c.

### CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH. FOLLOWS THE HENDERSONS.



WHILE the minds of the Cottage people were yet in their first commotion over the romance of Marjorie Assheton's history, and the love-disasters threatening Stephen Legh, Miss Bassett, grievously disfigured, was wakening afresh to life, in her still, darkened room at Westfields.

Though speaking seldom, it soon became assured

her attentive nurses that memory was returning. Her few questions all pointed to the time of her accident, and her thoughts during long intervals of silence seemed rarely at rest. The Monday after Mr. Legh had left for Brussels she was especially unquiet, mut-

tering to herself words which the listening attendants fancied bore on the subject that disturbed her.

"Hark, Mrs. Dybell," whispered one to the groom's wife, who had been called in to share their labours, "that's the fifth time she's said the same thing. 'Did my letters go?' What letters does she mean, I wonder?"

"Like as not some she was off to post when she got kopped out," was the reply; "I know it were Wearford post they was drivin' to. Ah! now I think of it, she'd a leather sort of bag in her hand, that my master said he picked up and brought home off the road. P'raps the letters are there now. It's hangin' along with her clothes. Shall I look?"

"Do," said Nurse Simmonds, and having obeyed, Mrs. Dybell brought stealthily forth two sealed envelopes, and with lowered voice asked, "Shall Dybell post 'em this forenoon? It may make her easy, and he's got to go to Wearford."

The nurse nodded, and, satisfied that they had done aright, both the women answered promptly, when the