

THE COME

SECRET

WHOLE NO. 947

From Arthur's Home Co.

HOW MRS. WALKER HAPPENED TO HAVE PUMPKIN PIES.

BY ALICE CANBY,
Author of "Cloverbook."

'O mother, mother, what are you going to do? what are you going to make?—custard or pudding or never!—

'Little folks must not ask too many questions,' said Mrs. Walker, the good woman to whom these questions were addressed, as she scooped a hollow in her bowl of dough that was surrounded with various articles such as a plate of lard, another of butter

The little folks, thus reproved, stood hard by in silent wonder; they had never seen

such an array of good things on the table before—there was a great pot too, steaming over the fire, closely covered so they could not tell what it was, but a delightful fragrance filled the room, that heightened curiosity. The deal table, too, seemed very white—surely the thought I had never

"Rock the cradle a minute, Mary dear," said Mrs. Walker, as the baby thrust out its arms with a half cry.

Willy hurried to the cradle, and sure enough, the baby had on the prettiest little slip of pink ehintz they had ever seen. Johnie never looked so pretty before; his hair was being carefully curled along his white smooth forehead, and the blanket over his

pretty chintz seemed soft and white as a new one, so nicely had it been washed and dried. But the baby was no sooner quieted than they discovered new marvels—on the bed cover which a ragged patch quilt had always been spread, there was a counterpane, snowy white—this article they had sometimes seen

before in an old chest in the garret, in which was also kept their mother's wedding gown—a yellow silk, the fashion of which seemed to them very curious, together with an old-fashioned bonnet that had been their grandmother's; here, as I said, they

counterpane, but always closely folded, and so yellow and dusty that the white, soft spread they now saw, seemed not the same; but their mother said it was the same, and might well they knew she never told us untruth. The little square window had been washed that morning, and a sunbeam, as it

The floor had been scrubbed and was not quite dry; but the hearth was blue and dry. The blaze shone brightly over it. In the

'And what do you think is in that great roll in the corner,' asked the mother, smiling complacently, as she moulded the bread. Eagerly they ran, and unwinding the cover-

ack in which it was enveloped, the prettiest carpet they had ever beheld, unrolled itself along the floor—true, it was made of rags which they had helped to cut, and saw two years before, but the bright checks of red and yellow made it beautiful; and they wonder-

'Now, Willy, put on your hat and pick up basket of chips for mother,' and taking off the lid of the pot, Mrs. Walker stirred the contents with an iron spoon vigorously.—Willy drew softly near and saw that his un-

in was stewing, and putting on his hat was back with the basket of chips in a minute. His mother threw a few under the pot till it steamed again, and then asked Willy if he could not find her a dozen fresh eggs, telling Mary Phä had best stay in, doors low.

...and the child took it
on the sling in which it hung, and saying
was almost well, began tying on her bon-
net. The mother made no further demur,
but telling them to be quick for the waiting
... had nice baked goods.

made before their father should come home, they went out together, in silence and as though they wished their father were not coming home at all, though it was a month since they had seen him. And why should

They were little children—Mary eight and Lily ten years old, so they did not precisely understand why, but they knew home was ever so pleasant when their father was there, which was usually once a week.

ough he sometimes staid away for a fortnight, and now had not been at home for month. To them he was only a severe master, and they dreaded and feared to enter his house when he was at home, as they all might, for he seldom spoke except to re-

ove, or touched but to thrust them out of the way. Often, too, they saw their mother weep at such times, but when they asked a reason she only wept the more. They were not allowed to have their usual sports and pastimes but the playthings were not

...when their father came, and an unusual strain imposed upon them during his stay, generally from Saturday night till Monday morning. They often saw him dripping from a brown jug which he always brought home

him. Sometimes they saw their mother give him money which she found time to earn, besides doing all the work in the house, tending to the cow and garden, and making and mending all their cloths. Much they wondered why he did not have money, for

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