

'Tell me the names of the four little sisters ?'  
I said, addressing her.

August,  
1862.

'Violet, Maude, Cara, and little Tessa,' was  
the answer.

'What pretty names !' I rejoined ; 'and you are  
Beatrice.'

'Yes ; they call me Bee generally, except  
father : he likes me to be called Beatrix—  
spelt with an *x*, you know. And *did* you  
see our baby — little Leonardo ? Is he not  
lovely ?'

I had a stiff manner with children in those days :  
I was conscious of it, and this very conscious-  
ness did not help me to improve. The beauty  
of babies was not a subject to which I had given  
much thought : but we live to learn ; and I think  
in my later life I have atoned for this want of  
taste !

I was very late for luncheon ; and Mrs. Ball-  
Baker was surprised to hear I had been to see  
Mimsie's music-mistress.

'I am sure it was very good-natured of you,  
my dear. When is she coming to give Mimsie  
her lesson ?'

'Not this week, I am afraid,' I answered.