

Mr. and Mrs. Woodbridge

Harriet Beecher Stowe

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PREFACE.

Well written Tales, with only real life set forth, are profitable. A two fold object is gained by such publications; interest is blended with utility. No writings are made so profitable as those which, while they are eminently calculated to afford the richest instructions to the mind, instructions embodying the very elements of virtue, awaken the finer sensibilities of our nature by the exhibition of life *as it is*. More moral principle is instilled into the mind by the exhibition of a *living* example than was ever accomplished by essayists however correct might be their doctrines. The ways of life are better learned by *seeing* than any other way.

With these views of life and manners, the publishers thought it would subserve the interests of morality by giving a wider circulation than otherwise could be done of the matters of this volume. A few choice poems are given for variety. Most of the articles are taken from the *Lady's Book*, a very popular monthly magazine published in Philadelphia. The poems are mostly from the *Ladies' Companion*, published in New York. The publishers can not object to so good matter being circulated. The reputation of the magazines will not hereby be impaired but rather the works will be brought more into notice.

As it regards youth, this little volume it is thought will prove very instructive. Their minds are more susceptible of impression than the more aged. If Mrs. Woodbridge had been under like influences in her mother's care as those improprieties of her conduct and the talk of her neighbors had upon her mind she would never have been so reckless about the happiness of her husband and his and her friends. The difficulties of overcoming such effects as her training produced upon her mind while young are clearly seen in her reformation. No young girl can read this story (no matter if such persons as Mrs. W. ever had an existence save in the author's imagination) and then resolve to be such a connubial tormentor. Married life is every way calculated to yield enjoyment when all the principles therein involved are duly regarded; but if they are not regarded, it will make its subject as miserable as they would have been happy.

To promote the highest enjoyment of matrimonial alliances, and encourage mutual affection it is necessary that married persons live for one another. This done all will be well. So with the world, "Do as you would be done by" is the great maxim. To teach this important lesson has been a special object in sending out these pieces in the present form.

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MR. AND MRS. WOODBRIDGE.

PART I.

The morning subsequent to their arrival in Philadelphia, Harvey Woodbridge proposed to his bride, (a New York beauty, to whom he had recently been united, after a very short acquaintance,) that she should accompany him to look at the new house he had taken previous to their marriage, and which he had delayed furnishing till the taste of his beloved Charlotte could be consulted as well as his own. Meanwhile they were staying at one of the principal boarding-houses of his native city.

Ten o'clock was the time finally appointed by the lady for this visit to their future residence: and her husband, after taking a melancholy leave (they had been married but seven days) departed to pass an hour at his place of business.

When he returned, Mr. Woodbridge sprang up stairs three steps at a time, (we have just said he had been married only a week,) and on entering their apartment he was saluted by his wife as she held out her watch to him, with — "So after all, you are ten minutes beyond the hour!"

"I acknowledge it, my dear love" — replied the husband — "but I was detained by a western customer to whom I have just made a very profitable sale."

"Still" — persisted the bride, half pouting — "people should always be punctual, and keep their appointments to the very minute."

"And yet, my dearest Charlotte," — observed Woodbridge, somewhat hesitatingly — "I do not find you *quite* ready to go out with me."

"Oh! that is another thing," — replied the lady — "one may be kept waiting without being ready."

"That is strange logic, my love," — said Woodbridge, smiling.

"I don't know what you call logic"—answered the beautiful Charlotte. "I learnt all my logic at Mrs. Fooltrap's boarding-school, where we said a logic lesson twice a week. But I am sure 'tis much easier for a man to hurry with his bargaining than for a lady to hurry with her dressing; that is if she pays any regard to her appearance. I have been pondering for an hour about what I shall put on to go out this morning. I am sadly puzzled among all my new walking-dresses.— There are my chaly, and my gros des Indes, and my peau-de-soie, and my foulard —"

"If you will tell me which is which" — interrupted Woodbridge — "I will endeavor to assist you in your choice. But from its name (foulard, as you call it,) I do not imagine that last thing can be a very nice article."

"What fools men are!" — exclaimed the lovely Charlotte — "Now that is the very prettiest of all my walking-dresses, let the name be what it will. I always did like foulard from the moment I first saw it at Stewart's. I absolutely doat upon foulard. So that is the very thing I will wear, upon my first appearance in Chesnut street as Mrs. Harvey Woodbridge."

"Don't," — said her husband, surveying the dress as she held it up — "it looks like calico —"

"Say don't to me," — exclaimed the bride` threateningly;—"Calico, indeed! — when it is a French silk at twelve shillings a yard — a dollar and a half as you foolishly say in Philadelphia."

"Well, well," — replied Woodbridge, pacifyingly— "wear what ever you please — it is of no consequence."

"So then, you think it of no consequence how I am drest! I dare say you would not grieve in the least, if I were really to go out in a calico gown — I *did* suppose that perhaps you took some little interest in me."

"I do indeed," — answered Woodbridge.

"You confess then that it is but *little*."

"No — a very great interest, certainly — and you know that I do. But as to your dress, you, of course, must be the best judge. And to me you always look beautifully."

"To you but not to others — I suppose that is what you mean."

"To every one" — replied the husband — "I observed this morning the glance of admiration that ran round the breakfast table as soon as you had taken your seat. That little cap with the yellow ribbon is remarkably becoming to you."

"So then, it was the cap and not myself that was admired!"—said the wife.—"I am sure I am much obliged to the cap. *Yellow* ribbon, too!— To call it yellow when it is the most delicate primrose. As if *I* would wear a yellow

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ribbon."

"Indeed, my love" — answered Woodbridge — "you must forgive me if I am not *au-fait* to all the technicalities of a lady's toilet. I acknowledge my ignorance with due humility."

"You well may — I was absolutely ashamed of you one evening at our house in New York, when Mrs. Rouleau and the two Miss Quillings and Miss Biasfold were present, and we were all enjoying ourselves and discussing the last fashions. And thinking you ought to say something by way of joining in the conversation, you called my deep flounce a long tuck."

"I'll never do so again" — said Woodbridge, imitating the tone of a delinquent school boy.

The foulard silk was energetically put on; the fair Charlotte pertinaciously insisting on hooking it up the back entirely herself: a herculean task which, in his heart of hearts, her husband was rather glad to be spared. And not knowing that spite gives strength, he stood amazed at the vigour and dexterity with which his lovely bride put her hands behind her and accomplished the feat. When it was done, she took a long survey of herself in the glass, and then turned round to her husband and made a low curtesy, saying — "There now — you see me in my calico gown."

Woodbridge uttered no reply: but he thought in his own mind — "What a pity it is that beauties are so apt to be spoiled!" — He might have added — "What a pity it is that men are so apt to spoil them."

At length, after much fixing and unfixing, and putting on and taking off the finishing articles of her attire (particularly half-a-dozen pair of tight fitting new kid gloves, none of which were quite tight enough) her ignoramus of a husband again offending by calling her pelerine a cape and her scarf a neckcloth, and mistaking the flowers in her bonnet for roses when he ought to have known they were almond blossoms, Mrs. Harvey Woodbridge sullenly acknowledged herself ready to go out.

During their walk to the new house, our hero endeavored to restore the good-humour of his bride by talking to her of the delightful life he anticipated when settled in a pleasant mansion of their own. But his glowing picture of domestic happiness elicited no reply; her attention being all the time engaged by the superior attractions of numerous ribbons, laces, scarfs, shawls, trinkets, &c., displayed in the shop-windows, and of which though she could now take only a passing glance, she mentally promised herself the enjoyment of making large purchases at her leisure.

They arrived at their future residence, a genteel and well-finished house of moderate size, where all was so bright and clean, that it was impossible for the bride not to be pleased with its aspect, as her husband unlocked the doors and threw open the shutters of room after room. Mrs. Woodbridge rejoiced particularly on observing that the ceilings of the parlors had centre circles for chandeliers, and she began to consider whether the chandeliers should be bronzed or gilt. She also began to talk of various splendid articles of furniture that would be necessary for the principal rooms. "Mamma charged me" — said she — "to have silk damask lounges and chair-cushions, and above all things not to be sparing in mirrors. She said she should hate to enter my parlors if the pier-glasses were not tall enough to reach from the floor to the ceiling; and that she would never forgive me if my mantel-glasses did not cover the whole space of the wall above the chimney-pieces. She declared she would never speak to me again if my centre-table were not supplied with all sorts of elegant things, in silver, and china and coloured glass. And her last words were to remind me of getting a silver card basket, very wide at the top that the cards of the best visitors might be spread out to advantage. The pretty things on Mrs. Overbuy's enamelled centre-table are said to have cost not less than five hundred dollars." "Was it not *her* husband that failed last week for the fourth time?" — asked Woodbridge. "I believe he did" — replied Charlotte — "but that is nothing. Almost every body's husband fails now. Mrs. Overbuy says it is quite fashionable." — "In that respect, as in many others, I hope to continue unfashionable all my life" — remarked Woodbridge. "That is so like pa" — observed Charlotte. — "He has the strangest dread of failing; though ma' often tells him that most people seem to live much the better for it, and make a greater show than ever—at least after the first few weeks. And then pa' begins to explain to her about failing, and breaking, and stopping payment, and debtors and creditors, and all that sort of thing. But she cuts him short, and says she hates business talk. And so do I, for I am exactly like her."

At this information Woodbridge felt as if he was going to sigh; but he looked at his bride, and, consoled himself with the reflection that he had certainly married one of the most beautiful girls in America; and therefore his sigh turned to a smile.

They had now descended to the lower story of the house. "Ah!" — exclaimed Charlotte — "the basement, back

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and front, is entirely filled up with cellars. How very ridiculous!" — "It does not seem so to me" — replied Woodbridge — "this mode of building is very customary in Philadelphia." — "So much the worse" — answered the lady. — "Now in New York nothing is more usual than to have a nice sitting room down in the basement story, just in front of the kitchen." "A sort of servants' parlor, I suppose" said her husband. "It is certainly very considerate to allot to the domestics, when not at work, a comfortable place of retirement, removed from the heat, and slop and all the *desegremens* of a kitchen."

"How foolishly you always talk" — exclaimed Mrs. Woodbridge. "As if you would give the basement-room to the servants! No we use it ourselves. In ma's family, as in hundreds of others all over New York, it is the place where we sit when we have no company, and where we always eat."

"What! — half under ground" — exclaimed Woodbridge — "Really I should feel all the time as if I was living in a kitchen."

"It is very wrong in you to say so," replied the lady — "and very unkind to say it to *me*, when we had a basement-room in our house in New York, and used it constantly. To be sure I've heard ma' say she had some trouble in breaking pa' into it — but he had to give up. Men have such foolish notions about almost every thing, that it is well when they have somebody to put their nonsense out of their heads."

"I never saw you in that basement-room" — observed Woodbridge.

"To be sure you did not. I do not say that it is the fashion for young ladies to receive their beaux in the basement-room. But beaux and husbands are different things."

"You are right" — murmured Woodbridge.— "If always admitted behind the scenes, perhaps fewer beaux would be willing to take the character of husbands."

They now descended the lower staircase, and went to inspect the kitchen, which formed a part of what in Philadelphia is called the back building. Woodbridge pointed out to his wife its numerous conveniences; upon which she told him that she was sorry to find he knew so much about kitchens. They then took a survey of the chambers; and on afterwards descending the stairs they came to a few steps branching off from the lower landingplace, and entered a door which admitted them into a narrow room in the back-building, directly over the kitchen. This room had short windows, a low ceiling, a small coal-grate, and was in every respect very plainly finished.

"This" — said Woodbridge — "is the room I intend for my library."

"I did not know I had married a literary man" — said Charlotte looking highly discomposed.

"I am not what is termed a literary man" — replied her husband — "I do not write, but I take much pleasure in reading. And it is my intention to have this room fitted up with book-shelves, and furnished with a library-table, a stuffed leather *fauteuil*, a reading-lamp, and whatever else is necessary to make it comfortable."

"Where then is to be our sitting-room?"

"We can seat ourselves very well in either the back parlor or the front one. We will have a rocking-chair a-piece, besides ottomans or sofas."

"But where are we to eat our meals?"

"In the back parlor, I think — unless you prefer the front."

"I prefer neither. We never ate in a parlour at ma's in spite of all pa' could say. Down in the basement story we were so snug, and so out of the way."

"I have always been accustomed to eating quite above ground" — said Woodbridge — "I am quite as much opposed to the burrowing system as you say your good father was."

"Oh! but he had to give up" — replied Charlotte.

"Which is more than I shall do" — answered her husband — looking very resolute. "On this point my firmness is not to be shaken."

"Nobody asks you to eat in the basement story" — said Charlotte — "because there is none. But this little room in the back-building is the very thing for our common sitting-place — and also to use as a dining-room."

"We can dine far more agreeably in one of the parlors."

"The parlors, indeed! — suppose somebody should chance to come in and catch us at table, would not you be very much mortified?"

"By no means — I hope I shall never have cause to be ashamed of my dinner."

"You don't know what may happen. After a trial of the expenses of housekeeping, we may find it necessary to

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economize. And whether or not, I can assure you I am not going to keep an extravagant table. Ma' never did in spite of pa's murmurings."

"Then we will economize in finery rather than in comfort" — said Woodbridge. "I do not wish for an extravagant table, and I am not a *gourmand*; but there is no man that does not feel somewhat meanly when obliged, in his own house, to partake of a paltry or scanty dinner; particularly when he knows that he can afford to have a good one."

"That was just the way pa' used to talk to ma'. He said that as the head of the house earned all the market-money — (only think of his calling himself the head of the house,) and gave out a liberal allowance of it, he had a right to expect, for himself and family, a well-supplied and inviting table. He had some old saying that he who was the bread-winner ought to have his bread as he liked it."

"And in this opinion I think most husbands will coincide with Mr. Stapleford" — said the old gentleman's son-in-law.

"There will be no use in that, unless their wives coincide also" — remarked the old gentleman's daughter. "However, to cut the matter short, whatever sort of table we may keep, this apartment must certainly be arranged for an eating room."

"But we really do not require it for that purpose" — replied her husband, with strange pertinacity— "and I must positively have it for a library."

"The truth is, dear Harvey" — said Charlotte, coaxingly — "I am afraid if I allow you a regular library, I should lose too much of your society — think how lonely I shall be when you are away from me at your books. Even were I always to sit with you in the library, (as Mrs. Deadweight does with her husband,) it would be very hard for me to keep silent the whole time, according to *her* custom. And if, like Mrs. Le Bore, I were to talk to you all the while you were reading, perhaps you might think it an interruption. Mrs. Duncely, who has had four husbands (two lawyers, one doctor, and a clergyman,) all of whom spent as little time with her as they could, frequently told us that libraries were of no use but to part man and wife. Dear Harvey, it would break my heart to suppose that you could prefer any thing in the world to the company of your own Charlotte Augusta. So let us have this nice little place for our dining-room, and let us sit in it almost always. It will save the parlors so much."

"Indeed my dear Charlotte, I do not intend to get any furniture for the parlors of so costly a description that we shall be afraid to use it."

"What! — are we not to have Saxony carpets, and silk curtains, and silk-covered lounges, and large glasses, and chandeliers, and beautiful mantel-lamps; and above all, a'n't we to have elegant things for the centre-table?"

"My design" — answered Woodbridge — "is to furnish the house throughout, as genteelly, and in as good taste as my circumstances will allow: but always with regard to convenience rather than to show."

"Then I know not how I can look ma' in the face!"

"You may throw all the blame on me, my love."

"Pray, Mr. Harvey Woodbridge (if I may venture to ask) how will these plain, convenient, comfortable parlors look when we have a party?"

"I do not furnish my house for the occasional reception of a crowd of people, but for the every day use of you and myself, with a few chosen friends in whose frequent visits we can take pleasure."

"If you mean frequent tea-visits, I can assure you, sir, I shall take no pleasure in any such trouble and extravagance — with your few chosen friends, indeed! when it is so much cheaper to have a large party once a year (as we always had at ma's:) asking every presentable person we knew, and every body to whom we owed an invitation; and making one expense serve for all. Though our yearly party was always an absolute squeeze, you cannot think how much we saved by it. Pa' called it saying grace over the whole barrel — some foolish idea that he got from Dr. Franklin."

"For my part"—remarked Woodbridge—"I hope I shall never be brought to regard social intercourse as a mere calculation of dollars and cents. I would rather, if necessary, save in something else than make economy the chief consideration in regulating the mode of entertaining my friends and acquaintances."

"Then why do you object to saving our parlors by using them as little as possible?"

"When our furniture wears out, or ceases to look *comme il faut*, I hope I shall be able to replace it with new articles, quite as good, and perhaps better—particularly if we do not begin too extravagantly at first."

"I suppose then *your* plan is to fit up these parlors with ingrain carpets, maple-chairs, and black hair-cloth

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sofas, and instead of curtains, nothing but venetian blinds."

"Not exactly — though young people, on commencing married life in moderate circumstances, have been very happy with such furniture."

"More fools they! For my part, I should be ashamed to show my face to a morning visitor in such paltry parlors. That sort of furniture is scarcely better than what I intend for this little up-stairs sitting room."

"If this little room is devoted to the purpose you talk of, we must there show our faces to each other."

"Nonsense, Mr. Woodbridge! — How can it possibly signify what faces married people show to each other?"

"It signifies much — very much indeed."

"To put an end to this foolery" — resumed the bride — "I tell you once for all, Harvey Woodbridge, that I must and will have this very apartment for an eating-room, or a dining-room or a sitting-room or whatever you please to call it — to take our meals in without danger of being caught at them, and to stay in when I am not dressed and do not wish to be seen."

"The hiding room I think would be the best name for it" — murmured Woodbridge.

"Only let us try it awhile" — persisted the fair Charlotte, softening her tone, and looking fondly at her leige-lord — "think how happy we shall be in this sweet little retreat, where I will always keep a few flower-pots — you know I doat on flowers — imagine your dear Charlotte Augusta in a comfortable wrapper, seated on a nice calico sofa, and doing beautiful worsted work: and yourself in a round jacket, lolling in a good wooden rocking chair either cane-colored or green, with slippers on your feet, and a newspaper in your hand. We can have a shelf or two for a few select books. And of an evening, when I do not happen to be sleepy you can read to me in the Summer at Brighton, or the Winter in London, or Almacks, or Santo Sebastiano. I have them all. Brother Jem bought them cheap at auction. But I never had time to get to the second volume of any of them. So we have all that pleasure to come. And I shall be delighted to have those sweet books read aloud to me by you. You will like them far better than those Scotch novels that people are always talking about."

Woodbridge looked dubious. Finally, being tired of the controversy, he thought best to end it by saying — "Well, well — we'll let this subject rest for the present." — But he resolved in his own mind to hold out for ever against it.

At their boarding-house dinner-table, Mrs. Woodbridge informed a lady who sat opposite, that she was delighted with her new house; and that it was a love of a place; particularly a snug little apartment in the back building which Mr. Woodbridge had promised her for a sitting-room, to save the parlors, as they were to be furnished in very handsome style. Woodbridge reddened at her pertinacity, and to divert the attention of those around him from a very voluble expose of what she called her plans, he began to talk to a gentleman on the other side of the table about the latest news from Europe.

From this day our heroine spoke of the little sitting-room as a thing course, without noticing any of the deprecatory lookings and sayings of her husband. And she succeeded in teasing him into allowing her to choose all the furniture of the house without his assistance: guided only by the taste of one of the female boarders, Mrs. Squanderfield, a lady who had been married about a twelvemonth, and after commencing house-keeping in magnificent style, her husband (whose affairs had been involved at the time of their marriage,) was obliged at the close of the winter, to make an assignment for the benefit of his creditors; and the tradesmen who had supplied it took back the unpaid furniture.

After her parlors had been fitted up in a very showy and expensive manner, (not forgetting the centre-table and its multitude of costly baubles,) Mrs. Woodbridge found that these two rooms had already absorbed so large a portion of the sum allotted by her husband for furnishing the whole house that it was necessary to economize greatly in all the other apartments; and to leave two chambers in the third story with nothing but the bare walls. This discrepancy was much regretted by Mr. Woodbridge, even after his wife had reminded him that these chambers could only have been used as spare bed-rooms, which in all probability would never be wanted as they did not intend keeping a hotel; and that as to encouraging people to come and stay at her house, (even her own relations) she should do no such expensive thing. "You may depend upon it, my dear," said she — on the day that they installed themselves in their new abode, "I shall make you a very economical wife."

And so she did, as far as comforts were concerned, aided and abetted by the advice of her friend Mrs. Squanderfield, who consulted her in what to spend money; and in what to save it she was guided by the precepts of Mrs. Pinchington, an other inmate of the same boarding-house, a widow of moderate income, whose *forte* was

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the closest parsimony, and who had broken up her own establishment and gone to boarding ostensibly because she was lonely, but in reality because she could get no servant to live with her. The advice of these two counsellors never clashed, for Mrs. Squanderfield took cognizance of the dress and the parlor arrangements of the pupil, while Mrs. Pinchington directed the housewifery: and both of them found in our heroine an apt scholar.

We need not tell our readers that the fair bride carried her point with regard to the little apartment at the head of the stairs, which she concluded to designate as the dining-room, though they ate *all* their meals in it; and it became in fact their regular abiding place, her husband finding all opposition fruitless, and finally yielding for the sake of peace.

It took Mrs. Woodbridge a fortnight to recover from the fatigue of moving into their new house: and during this time she was denied to all visitors, and spent the day in a wrapper on the dining-room sofa, sometimes sleeping, and sometimes sitting up at a frame and working in worsted a square-faced lap-dog, with paws and tail also as square as cross-stitch could make them; this remarkable animal most miraculously keeping his seat upon the perpendicular side of an upright green bank, with three red flowers growing on his right and three blue ones on the left. During the progress of this useful and ornamental piece of needle-work, the lady kept a resolute silence, rarely opening her lips except to check her husband for speaking to her, as it put her out in counting the threads. And if he attempted to read aloud, (even in Santo Sebastiano,) she shortly desired to him to desist, as it puzzled her head and caused her to confuse the proper number of stitches allotted to each of the various worsted shades. If he tried to interest her by a really amusing book of his own choice, she always went fast asleep, and on raising his eyes from the page he found himself reading to nothing. If, on the other hand, he wished to entertain himself by reading in silence, he was generally interrupted by something like this, precluded by a deep sigh — "Harvey you are not thinking now of your poor Charlotte Augusta — you never took up a book and read during the week you were courting me. Times are sadly altered now; but I suppose all wives must make up their minds to be forgotten and neglected after the first fortnight. Don't look so disagreeable; but if you really care any thing about me, come and wind this gold-colored worsted — I want it for my dog's collar."

The fortnight of rest being over, Mrs. Woodbridge concluded to receive morning visitors and display to them her handsome parlors; which for two weeks were opened every day for that purpose during the usual hours for making calls. Also she availed herself of the opportunity of wearing in turn twelve new and beautiful dresses, and twelve pelerines and collars equally new and beautiful.

Various parties were made for his bride by the families that knew Harvey Woodbridge, who was much liked throughout the circle in which he had visited; and for every party the bride found that she wanted some new and expensive articles of decoration, notwithstanding her very recent outfit; she and her ma' having taken care that the *trousseau* should in the number and costliness of its items be the admiration of all New York, that is of the set of people among which the Stapleforths were accustomed to revolve.

When the bridal parties were over, Woodbridge was very earnest that his wife should give one herself in return for the civilities she had received from his friends; for though he had no fondness for parties he thought they should be reciprocated by those who went to them themselves, and who had the appliances and means of entertaining company in a house of their own and in a customary manner. To this proposal our heroine pertinaciously objected, upon the ground that she was tired and worn out with parties, and saw no reason for incurring the expense and trouble of giving one herself.

"But" — said her husband — "have you not often told me of your mother's annual parties. Did she not give at least one every season?"

"She never did any such thing" — replied Charlotte — "till after *I* was old enough to come out. And she had as many invitations herself, *before* she began to give parties as she had afterwards. It makes no sort of difference. Ladies that dress well and look well, and therefore help to adorn the rooms are under no necessity of making a return (as you call it) even if they go to parties every night in the season. Then, if, besides being elegantly dressed, they are belles and beauties (here she fixed her eyes on the glass) their presence gives an *eclat* which is a sufficient compensation to their hostess."

"But if they are *not* belles and beauties" — observed Woodbridge, a little mischievously.

"I don't know what you are talking about!" — replied the lady with a look of surprise.

"Well, well" — resumed the husband — "argue as you will on this subject, you never can convince me that it is right first to lay ourselves under obligations, and then to hold back from returning them, when we have it amply

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in our power to do so."

"I am glad to hear you are so rich a man. It was but last week you told me you could not afford to get me that case of emeralds I set my mind upon at Thibaut's."

"Neither I can. And excuse me for saying that I think you have already as many articles of jewelry as the wife of a Market-street merchant ought to possess."

"Are the things you gave me on our wedding-day to last my life-time? Fashion changes in jewelry as well as in every thing else."

"It cannot have changed much already, as but a few weeks have elapsed since that *giorno felice*. However, let us say no more about jewels."

"Oh! yes — I know it is an irksome topic to husbands and fathers and all that sort of thing. Pa' was always disagreeable whenever Marquand's bill was sent in."

"To return to our former subject" — resumed Woodbridge — "I positively cannot be satisfied, if after accepting in every instance the civilities of our friends, we should meanly pass over our obligation of offering the usual return. I acknowledge that I do not like parties; but having in compliance with your wishes accompanied you to so many, we really *must* make the exertion of giving one ourselves."

"If you disapprove of parties you ought not to have a party. I thought you were a man that always professed to act up to your principles."

"I endeavor to do so. And one of my principles is to accept no favors without making a return as far as lies in my power. I disapprove of prodigality, but I hate meanness."

"It is wicked to hate any thing. But married men get into such a violent way of talking. When pa' *did* break out, he was awful. And then, instead of arguing the point, ma' and I always quitted the room, and left him to himself. He soon cooled down when he found there was nobody to listen to him: and the next day he was glad enough to make his peace and give up."

Woodbridge could endure no more, but hastily left the room himself: and Charlotte walked to the glass and arranged her curls, and altered the tie of her neck-ribbon; and then sat down and worked at the everlasting dog.

PART II.

Finding it utterly impossible to prevail on his wife to consent to a large party, Woodbridge next endeavored to persuade her to invite a few families at a time (sociably, as the ladies call it,) till they had thus gone round all their acquaintances.

"Why this is worse than the other way" — exclaimed Charlotte — "really, Mr. Woodbridge, I am surprised at you. Did I not tell you, when we were first married, that ma' never had any evening company whatever, except when she gave a squeeze once in the season. The expense of having a few people at a time is endless, and there is no *eclat* in it either, as there is with a large general party; so it is an absolute throwing away of money."

"Then let us have a large general party."

"Harvey you really make me sick. Will you never cease harping on the same subject. Is it an affair of life and death, our paying back again what we owe to the people who saw proper to invite us. Shall we lose our characters if we do not?"

"Yes."

"Was there ever such nonsense."

"Our characters will so far suffer that we shall be justly considered mean, sordid, and inhospitable."

"Will any one ask us why we do not invite company. How can they know what reasons we may have? And then again how business-like to regard the thing as an affair of debtor and creditor! But men will be men."

"Charlotte" — said Harvey Woodbridge — "I am tired of this foolish contention — and I insist, (yes — I positively insist) on a few of our friends being invited to take tea with us to-morrow evening. Next week we will have a few more, and so on, till we shall have entertained at our own house, the whole circle of our acquaintances."

"But when these people paid me their bridal visits" — said Charlotte, — "I carried my politeness so far as to hint to every one of them a general invitation to come and see us of an evening without ceremony, as soon as they chose."

"No matter" — returned her husband — "why should they hasten to avail themselves of a mere general invitation, when there is no reason for their not receiving a special one. Among women I know very well that volunteer visits are only made where there is a very familiar intimacy; and never when the parties are but newly or slightly acquainted. Again — supposing that any of these ladies or gentlemen were to take you at your word — are we ever prepared for unexpected guests? — Could we receive them in this vile room that you insist on living in; or in the cold dark parlors, with the fire out, and no lamp lighted."

Mrs. Woodbridge began to conclude that, for this time, she had best give up to her husband; and therefore, with a very ill grace, she finally consented to his desire; and he felt so happy at having carried his point, that he apologized for the epithet he had bestowed on the sitting-room; and conceded that, used in moderation, there was some convenience in having such places.

Accordingly, invitations were given to three married couples, one widow, two young ladies and three young gentlemen; all of them being among those of our hero's friends, who stood highest in his esteem, from whom his wife had received the utmost civility, and in whose eyes she was most anxious that she and her domestic arrangements should appear to the greatest advantage. In the interim, he took particular care to be as amiable to her as possible: only once giving her occasion to say that "all men were fools."

Harvey Woodbridge came home from his store in excellent spirits, anticipating the most splendid evening he had yet enjoyed in his own house. Anxious to keep his wife in good humor, he had foreborne during the day to offer any suggestion as to the preparations for the evening; merely hinting his hope that every thing would be arranged in a liberal and convenient manner."

"Why should you doubt it?" — replied Charlotte — "But I am not going to tell you a word beforehand. Perhaps I shall surprise you."

"So much the better" — said Woodbridge gaily — and he resolved to trust entirely to his wife, and to ask no questions; calculating greatly on this surprise that was in store for him, and feeling persuaded that, on this, their first reception of evening company, she would take care that all should be *sclon les regles*.

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But, a "change came o'er the spirit of his dreams" when he found that at seven o'clock the parlors were not lighted; Mrs. Woodbridge, who had not yet began to dress, averring that people never arrived till at least one hour after the time specified, and that she would encourage no useless waste of oil. About ten minutes past seven the door-bell rang, our heroine flew to her toilet, and Mr. Woodbridge had the mortification of seeing the first detachment of visitors make their entrance by the light of a dim and newly-kindled fire; the ladies leaving their cloaks and hoods in the entry; Charlotte having given orders that nobody should be shown up stairs. The servant man now hurried to light the lamps which stood on the centre-tables in each parlor, omitting those on the mantel-piece, because he knew that they were unfurnished with oil, as they had never yet been prepared for use.

In a very short time all the guests had arrived, and Woodbridge was obliged for nearly an hour to entertain them entirely himself; his consort not being ready to made her appearance. Finally, the beautiful Charlotte came down elegantly and elaborately drest: and smiled, and looked sweet, and expressed to the company her regret at not being aware of their intention of coming so early, and her delight at their having done so, as by that means she should have the pleasure of enjoying a larger proportion of their society.

Then she took her seat, changing it occasionally so as to afford each of the guests a share of her talk. They were all intelligent people, with cultivated minds and polished manners, and Woodbridge, who was well able himself, to sustain apart in rational and amusing conversation, thought his wife had never talked with less tact and more folly. She discoursed with untiring volubility on new style bonnets, new style shawls, and remembered with surprising accuracy the exact figures of certain new style mouselines de laines, embroidered chalys, and brocaded satins. And she varied her declamations by describing divers patterns for worsted work, particularly the new style dog that she was doing for the cover of a tabouret, and to which she was going to give a companion in the shape of a basket of fruit, to be taken in hand for another tabouret as soon as the present occupant was out of the frame.

After a while, the attention of the visitors began to flag; all seemed to grow dull and tired, and our hero felt that he was becoming dull and tired himself, and in fact quite out of spirits. The truth was, he wanted his tea, and thought that all the company did the same; and his only hope was now in the exhilarating influence of "the cups that cheer but not inebriate." The time-piece showed the hour of nine, and still there was no sign of tea. He wondered it did not appear, and was at a loss to conjecture what had retarded it.

At last, the conversation subsided into silence, and after a dead pause, Mrs. Woodbridge proposed music. For herself she had never been able to acquire any proficiency in the art, and therefore did not profess to play. But she had insisted on the purchase of a highly ornamented instrument as an elegant piece of furniture for the back parlour, and because, as she — "No decent house is without a piano."

She sat two young ladies down to the overture to *La Cenerentola* played as a duet, and which she said was "ma's favorite." During the move which generally takes place when music is about to commence, Woodbridge found an opportunity of saying in a low voice to his wife — "I wish the music had been deferred till after tea. We have already waited too long, and want something to brighten us."

"People must be badly off when their brightness depends upon tea" — replied Charlotte, also *soto voce* — "is that the only excuse you can make for being so stupid this evening — you and your select friends. But sensible people are always stupid — at least *I* find them so." — Then turning away from her husband, she walked into the other parlor, and taking her seat beside a lady who was looking over the splendid annuals that lay on the table, our heroine remarked that a figure in one of the plates reminded her of a celebrated actress then performing at the Chesnut street theatre; and from thence she ran into a minute description of the costume of that actress in every character in which she had seen her. The truth was that our fair Charlotte never observed or remembered any thing concerning a play, except the habiliments of the performers; her eyes being chiefly engaged in wandering round the boxes, and taking cognizance of the caps, turbans, feathers, flowers, and other head ornaments there displayed.

The overture to *La Cenerentola* was played mechanically well, the musicians (like the hearers) being tired before they began. When it was over, the young ladies rose from the instrument, and returned with the rest of the company to the other room; and it was well they did so, for in a few minutes the back-parlour lamp died out, self-extinguished for want of sufficient oil.

At length, Mrs. Woodbridge desired her husband to touch the bell, and he obeyed with alacrity, thinking to himself — "Now we shall have tea, to a certainty."

The servant man made his entrance: and (to the utter dismay of our hero) he handed round a waiter set out with

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diminutive glasses of weak sour lemonade, and a silver basket half filled up with a large thickly folded damask napin, upholding some very small thin slices of stale tasteless sponge cake.

"Is this the surprise she promised me" — thought Woodbridge — almost betrayed into an audible exclamation. But he checked himself, and with heightened color proceeded to do the honors of the banquet, imagining (and it was not altogether "fancy's sketch") that he perceived a look of disappointment in the countenances of the whole company, none of whom had taken tea at home, having all understood that Mrs. Woodbridge's invitation included that refreshment. His wife, however, smiled on; and assured the ladies that they would not find the lemonade too strong, and that if any cake could be considered wholesome, it was sponge-cake eaten in moderation.

The remainder of the evening dragged on still more heavily than the former; Woodbridge being too much annoyed either to talk himself or to be the cause of talking in others; and also watching anxiously, but vainly, for the appearance of something else in the way of refreshments. It was scarcely ten o'clock when one of the married ladies signified to Mrs. Woodbridge that she must go home on account of her baby. All the other guests seemed eager to avail themselves of the first system of breaking up, and hastened to take their leaves; their hostess assuring them that it was quite early: that she had not enjoyed one half enough of their company: that she hoped they had spent as pleasant an evening as she had done: and that she trusted it would not be long before they repeated their visit, and that they might rely on being always treated in the same unceremonious manner. "You had better not put that in" — thought her husband, as he glanced at her with ill-concealed disapprobation.

When all the company had departed, and the husband and wife were left to themselves, our hero (making an effort to throw as much mildness into his tone as possible) inquired why there had been no tea for the visitors.

"Because I did not choose to go to any unnecessary trouble and expense" — was the reply:

"You went round yourself," — said Woodbridge— "and gave the invitations verbally. Of course you asked them to come to tea."

"There is no `of course' in the case. I do not remember saying any thing to them about tea. Perhaps I did, and perhaps I did not. None of ma's friends ever gave tea, whether the company was large or small. And Mrs. Pinchington told me herself that when *she* kept house she always expressly asked her friends to come *after* tea. I wish *I* had done so, and then these people would not have expected any."

"But why should they not expect any? At their own houses they on all occasions have tea. Is tea and its appendages so enormously expensive that we cannot afford to give them to our friends?"

"I am always at a loss to know what you can afford, and what you cannot. When after a great deal of trouble I had made you understand what blond was, did you not object to my giving eight dollars a yard for seven yards of blond trimming to go round the skirt of that gros d'Afrique I had made for Mrs. Hillingdon's ball. To be sure I *did* get the blond notwithstanding; and it was not my fault if it caught in the flowers of Miss Wireblossoms skirt and was half torn to pieces that very evening. Then when I fell in love with that superb gold card-case at Thibault's did you not meanly refuse to let me have it, merely because you had given me a silver one already. And now when I try as much as I can to economise in things that are of no consequence you are displeased at my not giving tea to these people, as if they could not just as well have all drank their tea at home."

"Undoubtedly they would have done so, had it been possible for them to foresee that they would get none at our house. Did you not invite them to come at an early hour?"

"Yes but I did not suppose they would be so simple as to take me at my word. And I asked them to come *socially*, just to meet half a dozen friends. Therefore they need not have expected any thing."

"Socially! — Yes, we were all very social indeed. The truth is that persons accustomed to the refreshment of tea, feel the want of it in the evening after the fatigues of the day are over. And if they chance to go without it, they always miss its exhilarating effects. I wonder you did not want it yourself."

"Oh! I am not such a fool as to let my vivacity depend on a cup of tea. Besides, I had some made for myself, and I drank it in the sitting room before I came down. When I had done, the pot was filled up with water, and left by the fire — I dare say it is there yet, and if you are in distress for tea, you can get some of that. For my part I am very sleepy, and very tired of all this nonsense, and I will not hear another word on the subject. But I can assure you this is the last time you shall ever prevail on me to invite evening visitors. If *my* society is not good enough for you, I shall not assist in bringing other people here to entertain you."

So saying, she flounced up stairs, and her husband sighed, and went out to a restaurant in quest of something by way of refreshment: experience having taught him that nothing was to be had in the house. The lovely

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Charlotte did not speak to him all next day, and gave no token of her knowledge that he was in existence, except that she contrived for dinner something that she knew he particularly disliked. Finally, he was fain to bribe her into good humor by the gift of a turquoise ring.

Time passed on, and Harvey Woodbridge became sadly apprehensive that for him the bonds of married life would never be "golden chains inlaid with down." As his mental vision cleared, the beautiful Charlotte Augusta seemed every day to grow less and less beautiful. And too often his recollection dwelt on some favorite adages of his grandmother, such as — "Handsome is that handsome does" — and "Marry in haste and repent at leisure."

No home could be more cheerless than that of our hero; notwithstanding that his wife piqued herself greatly on her domestic qualifications, after the pattern of her ma'. But her housewifery consisted only in the perpetual practice of a mean, sordid, and annoying parsimony, carried into the most minute details of every thing connected with comfort. While at the same time there were no limits to her extravagance in all that related to the adornment of her own person. And her passion for dress, increasing by indulgence, soon superceded even her love for fine parlor furniture; taking care only to preserve what they had already by using it as little as possible. Till they learn by experience, men have a very faint idea of the sums that can be expended on the external decorations of a woman who is resolved on being the first to adopt every new fashion, and the first to throw it aside for another, and who takes a silly pride not only in the costliness but in the number of her dresses. As Mrs. Woodbridge never gave any thing away, a spare room (or rather a room which could not be spared, and ought to have been appropriated to a better use) was filled with receptacles for her discarded finery: discarded in many instances after having been worn but two or three times.

With the usual selfishness and folly of women whose ruling passion is a love of dress, our heroine seemed to think that almost every cent expended for any other purpose was taken wrongfully from the fund which ought to be devoted exclusively to the adornment of her own person. Now that her parlors were furnished, she appeared to consider all expenditure for the comfort or convenience of the establishment as an encroachment on her selfassumed right to be indulged in every new and costly vanity that fashion and ostentation was continually introducing into female attire. Yet though her milliner and mantua-maker were the most modish, and therefore the most extravagant in their charges that Philadelphia could support, if she wanted any other sort of work to be executed she would walk to the most distant suburbs of the city in all the torture of tight shoes, to make a hard bargain with a cheap seamstress; or she would absurdly hire a carriage for the purpose of conveying her to cheap (or rather low-priced) stores in remote places: where, by Mrs. Pinchington's account, she could buy articles of household necessity at a cent or two less than in the best part of the town.

In charity Mrs. Woodbridge gave nothing. When her feelings sometimes prompted her to afford relief in a case of severe distress that chanced to fall in her way, her hand was stayed by some such reflection as that a quarter of a dollar would buy her a yard of ribbon, or a half dollar the same quantity of narrow edging: that seventy-five cents would pay for a pair of white kid gloves, and that a dollar would purchase a flower sprig. Therefore the money remained in her purse to be expended in some article of similar utility to the above.

A book was one of the last things she would have thought of purchasing for herself; and she even looked displeased whenever her husband bought a new one for his own reading; and wondered what people that had the Athenæum to go to, and also a share in the City Library, could possibly want with any more books.

As is usually the case in families where the practice is ultra economy our heroine was always in difficulties about servants, some of whom left her or were dismissed by her in two or three days: and few that were worth having remained more than a week, for good servants can easily obtain good places. She usually began her daily routine by keeping her husband waiting an hour or more beyond the appointed breakfast time, for it was always a difficult task to her to get up in the morning, and it was deferred and delayed as if it could be dispensed with altogether. On this subject no remonstrance on the part of her husband ever made the slightest impression; her pretence being that early rising was injurious to her health. And if he resorted to the desperate measure of eating his breakfast without her, he was punished by her not speaking to him for the remainder of the day. When breakfast was over, Mrs. Woodbridge devoted an hour to scolding the servants, and five minutes to arranging her scheme of parsimony for that day. This she called superintending her household affairs. Then, having taken off her wrapper, and spent two hours in making a very *recherche* toilette, she issued forth in a superb dress-bonnet, with every thing to match, and passed the remainder of the morning in costly visits to the fashionable shops, and to the fashionable milliners and mantua-makers; and in leaving cards at the doors of such of her acquaintances as

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lived in handsome houses, and dressed expensively. The only persons with whom, on making her calls, she desired an interview, were her cronies Mesdames Squanderfield and Pinchington. Friends she had none.

About three o'clock Mrs. Woodbridge went home and undressed for dinner, which in her house was always a paltry and uninviting repast: such as her husband would have been really ashamed of if seen, and which it was certainly politic to serve up in the privacy of the little dining-room. As it was, he thought that at his own table he never felt exactly like a gentlemen; and his genteel feelings were brought still lower at times when for a day or two he found his house without a single domestic: a condition to which a *menage* of this description is not unfrequently reduced. Indeed, their servants very often left them on account of the scanty supply of kitchen utensils, averring that they were not allowed things to do their work with.

Of afternoons, the fair Charlotte, continuing in her dishabille, and establishing herself permanently up stairs for the remainder of the day, pursued her worsted work for a while, and then took a nap till tea-time, and another after tea, while her husband went to the Exchange to read the news by the eastern mail. During the remainder of the evening, by the glare of a small, low, shadeless lamp, she made herself an occupation with a bit of trifling and useless sewing, interrupting him every few minutes with some querulous remark if he was reading to himself, and falling into a doze if he was reading aloud. About nine o'clock, (and sometimes before) she always began to be very fidgety on the subject of having the lights and fires extinguished, the house shut up, and preparations made by all within it to go to bed with the utmost dispatch: implying that she saw no use in wasting fuel and oil any longer; and always worrying without ceasing till she had carried her point of a general retirement at an unseasonably early hour.

If a gentleman called in the evening to see Mr. Woodbridge, the parlor fire had gone out, no lamp had been lighted there, and all below was gloomy and cheerless. It was a formidable undertaking to clear out the grate and rekindle the fire, and to make an astral lamp burn which was not in order for want of being in nightly use; and our aggrieved hero soon found that of the two evils, the least was to entertain his friends in the ever obnoxious dining-room: Mrs Woodbridge, to avoid being caught in dishabille, always taking flight to her own chamber before the guest could find his way up stairs. Under these circumstances, it was not surprising that their house was soon relieved from the inconvenience of visitors, and that the husband and wife were left to the full enjoyment of each other's society; except when he occasionally indulged himself by going to the Athenæum for an evening of quiet reading in a well-warmed and well-lighted room: even though sure to incur the penalty of finding his lady speechless all the next day.

Mrs. Stapleford had several times volunteered to quit for a while the delights of her beloved New York, and make a visit to her daughter even in Philadelphia; but was always put off with some trifling excuse from our heroine. Mrs. Woodbridge was well aware that notwithstanding the close parsimony that prevailed in the paternal (or rather maternal) mansion, her mother, when a guest at the house of another person, was greatly displeased if all things were not conducted on the most liberal scale.

Finally, however, Mrs. Stapleford was allowed to come. She disappointed her daughter by not admiring sufficiently the handsome parlor furniture which (on inquiring the prices of all the articles) she took much pains to prove could have been purchased far better and infinitely lower in New York. In return, Mrs. Woodbridge resolved to make no alteration in her domestic arrangements during the visit of her mother; saying when any thing was unusually mean or comfortless — "You see, ma', I keep house exactly on *your* plan." And indeed she rather outdid her pattern.

Mrs. Stapleford sometimes hinted a desire that this strict adherence to *her* plan might be dispensed with, but her dutiful daughter would make no improvement, and endeavored to persuade her mother that, in Philadelphia, servants and all other things were far worse, and more difficult to procure than in New York. Woodbridge was annoyed, ashamed, and angry nearly the whole time. The visit was by no means a satisfactory one to any of the parties: and Mrs. Stapleford, instead of remaining a month (as she had at first intended) stayed but a week; alledging that she was obliged to hurry back to New York that she might not lose Mrs. Legion's grand annual ball, for which there were never less than six hundred invitations sent out.

Each of the two brothers of our heroine came at different times on business to Philadelphia, but wisely stayed at a hotel. Both were invited to take a family dinner at their sister's house: she assuring them that they need not expect any thing more than she would have had for her husband and herself—"As you know"—said she—"that one never stands on ceremony with one's brothers." This entire absence of ceremony was indeed so very apparent

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that the young Stapleford concluded for the future, not to forego an excellent dinner at an excellent hotel for the scanty and unpalatable repast provided by their sister.

On the first of these occasions, our hero bore his vexation in silence; on the second he expostulated with his wife when they were alone in the evening. But she replied that the dinner was quite as good as any they ever had in ma's house, and just such as her brothers were used to at home; adding — "Harvey Woodbridge, I wonder you are not tired of continually trying to make me change my plans. What reason have you to suppose me one of those trifling, weak-minded persons that can be persuaded to any thing? No — from my earliest childhood I was always distinguished for firmness of character. I remember when only five years old, because pa' bought me a doll for a Christmas gift, when he knew I wanted a pearl ring, I held out for a whole week; and all that time I would neither play with the doll or even look at it, nor kiss pa' at bidding good night. So that on New Year's day he was glad to get the pearl ring for me, as ma' had been advising him all the while. No — no — have you yet to learn that firmness is my forte?"

"That obstinacy is, I have learnt most thoroughly" — replied her husband — "and *that* united with your other fortes is fast wearing away the peace of my life. You really seem to be trying your utmost to make my home irksome to me."

"Then you will have the more excuse for spending your evenings at your beloved Athen æum. You had better go there now."

"I will take you at your word" — replied Woodbridge, rising to depart.

"Harvey" — said his wife, as he was about to leave the room — "as you have to pass Mustin's in your way, you may as well take this bit of brown worsted and try and match it for me — I can't go on with my work to-morrow, till I get some more of it."

"Confound the worsted!" — exclaimed her husband, turning angrily away from her.

And as he hastily shut the door and precipitately ran down stairs, she struck up melodiously the *refrain* of "Sweet — sweet home."

PART III.

During a slight access of graciousness (purchased by the gift of a diamond ring) Harvey Woodbridge prevailed on his consort to engage a cook that had lived a long time in his father's family; and also to take a waiter that had been for many years a servant to the brother of our hero, a gentleman residing in Baltimore. Both these domestics were excellent in their way, and (as far as permitted by what Mrs. Woodbridge called her plans) they performed their duties well. Her husband now thought that he would avail himself of the convenience of having a very good cook and a very good waiter, and invite some gentlemen to dine with him: trusting that the displeasure he had evinced on the occasion of the evening visitors, &c., would operate as a warning to his wife and induce her to make a proper provision for the dinner party.

But the dinner party, as soon as he ventured to propose it, met a decided disapproval from the lady, who said she did not see the use of a parcel of men dining together, and that if money *must* be spent, there were better ways of spending it: and that she fully expected she should have to live all her life without an India shawl. Her husband being very anxious to carry his point, reminded her that they had not yet had an opportunity of displaying their fine French china dinner set and other elegances appertaining. And then he called her Charlotte Augusta, and assured her that a pretty woman always looked peculiarly well presiding at her own table, and doing the honors to a company of gentlemen.

At length, after much assenting and dissenting, and agreeing with a bad grace and disagreeing with no grace at all, the dinner was finally undertaken, and fixed for the following Thursday. Interviews between Mrs. Woodbridge and Mrs. Pinchington commenced forthwith.

In the mean time, as the appointed day drew near, our hero had frequent and increasing misgivings, and at last ventured to question his wife: concerning her preparations.

"You need not be afraid to leave every thing to me" — replied Charlotte — pa' often had gentlemen to dine with him (much as it annoyed ma') so I know very well what arrangements to make. And I have very good advices, besides my natural judgment. Even if I were incapable of preparing for dinner company, men have no business to be cot-betties."

"What is a cot-betty?" asked her husband.

"I wish you were as ignorant of the character as you are of the name" — replied the lady sharply. "A cot-betty is what ma' used to call pa.' A man that meddles with house affairs, and undertakes to advise his wife about her domestic concerns; instead of sticking to his store or his office (or whatever place he goes to) and giving his whole attention to providing the money for his family expenses, as all men ought."

Harvey Woodbridge did not like to be classed among the cot-betties; though, as young ladies are *now* brought up, a capable cot-betty may prove a very valuable husband. Therefore, he, after this, held his peace with respect to the dinner-party: which forbearance he was only enabled to exercise by closing his eyes, ears, and understanding against much that he saw, heard, and suspected.

At length the eventful afternoon arrived, and Mr. Woodbridge left his store at an early hour, and repaired to his dwelling-house to be ready for the reception of his guests. To his surprise he found that no table had been set in the back-parlor. This was a thing he could not on this occasion have anticipated: and hastily running up stairs, he found it laid in the more-than-ever obnoxious little dining-room, which looked even smaller and meaner than usual. His vexation was intense, and hastening to the apartment of his wife, whom he found at her toilette. "How is this" — said he — "I had not the most distant idea of the dinner-table being set to-day in any other place than the back-parlor. That vile little room will not do at all. It is too small, too narrow, and the ceiling is too low."

"I did not expect we were to dine on the ceiling" — replied Mrs. Woodbridge. But this attempt at a witticism did not succeed; and her husband plainly expressed his displeasure at finding that his friends were to be entertained in what he called in his anger "that abominable hole."

"It is neither a hole nor abominable" — answered the lady — "but a nice comfortable apartment. And you pay me a great compliment by talking of it in that outrageous manner, when you know it is my pet place, where you have spent so many happy hours in my society."

"Fudge!" — exclaimed Woodbridge, turning away from her, completely out of patience.

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"If domestic happiness is fudge" — resumed his wife — "I shall be sorry enough for having quitted ma', and left my own city to go away to a new place and live with a strange man."

"It is true" — said her husband, with a sort of sigh — "we *were* almost strangers to each other when we married."

"And all this fuss" — pursued Charlotte — "is about dining in a dining-room, as if it was not always the most proper place. Do not we continually read of dining-rooms in the English fashionable novels. The very lords and ladies do not dine in their parlors or drawing-rooms even when they have company."

"The dining-rooms of the English gentry" — replied Woodbridge — "are very different apartments from that paltry little place of ours. I have no objection to a dining-room, provided that it is commodious and pleasant, and that it has an air of gentility as well as convenience. But I cannot endure the idea of making my guests eat their dinner in the worst apartment of my house, though I have yielded to the infliction myself."

"And I" — said Mrs. Woodbridge — "cannot endure the idea of having our parlor furniture greased or stained or injured in any way, even by one single dinner. Never supposing such a thing would be wanted, I did not get a parlor crumbcloth, and the one we have up stairs is too small to save any other carpet than that of the dining-room."

"And is this the reason you have set so small a table. Worse than all, my friends will not have elbow-room."

"I never saw a man yet" — replied Charlotte — "who would not somehow or other manage to convey his dinner to his mouth. When a large table is set, there must be a great deal to cover it: and it is not my way to provide more than is necessary. I know very well how ma' managed when pa' *would* have dinner company. And besides I have consulted Mrs. Pinchington. She was so kind as to accompany me to market yesterday."

"Surely on *this* occasion" — said Woodbridge, with a look of alarm — "you are not going to mortify me before my friends with the sight of a mean and scanty dinner."

"There will be dinner enough" — replied his wife coolly — "and even if there should not, (as I heard a man say in a play,) nobody calls for more at another persons table. The fact is, I so hate extravagance that, as I have often told you it is really a pleasure to me to save in every little thing as much as I can."

And she finished adjusting before a glass, a new laced pelerine that she had bought the day before and which Mrs. Squanderfield assured her was cheap at forty dollars.

"You Philadelphians" — she added — "think there can never be too much on the table, and I am told that the further south the worse."

"Two of my guests are southern gentlemen" — said Woodbridge — "and I am convinced that all who dine with me to-day have been accustomed to `sit at good men's feasts.' "

"Harvey" — said his wife — "do not make me uncomfortable, or I won't come to table. I feel very much like hysterics already. I have been annoyed enough with Phillis this morning."

"Phillis, who was brought up by my mother" — exclaimed Woodbridge — "there cannot be a more excellent cook."

"Rather too excellent for me" — replied Charlotte, "I have been thinking for some time of parting with her. Mrs. Pinchington tells me (and I have found it so myself,) that it is cheapest to keep cooks that are not considered very good. And as to particularity about food, it is a thing I am not going to encourage. Ma' never did. Phillis is the last professed cook I shall ever be troubled with. This morning she was so vexed at my not having things as extravagant as she thought proper, that she said something that made me angry, and I packed her out of the house. So then I had to coax Mary to get the dinner."

"What, Mary — the raw Irish girl — the chamber-maid. Surely she knows nothing about cooking. It would have been better at once to have sent out and hired a professed cook for the day."

"So Cæsar had the assurance to tell me, and he did prevail on me to let him go for an aunt of his, who goes out cooking at what she calls a low price, a dollar a day. But, as Phillis had already made a begining, I was determined not to give more than sixty-two cents, so we could not agree; though at the last I *did* offer her seventy-five. As for my giving a dollar for cooking one dinner, it was quite out of the question: so there was nothing to be done but to set Mary about it."

"I would rather have given ten dollars! Mary is little better than an idiot."

"How *can* you say so, when she came from New York, where she had lived a whole month with ma'. And even if she *is* rather stupid, there is the less danger of her objecting to any thing I tell her to do. Ma' could never get

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along with smart servants. But I wish you would go down stairs. Your friends will be arriving presently."

"Cæsar, of course, has obeyed the orders I gave him about the wine" — said Woodbridge.

"He wanted to do so" — replied the wife — "but between you and him I found there was wine enough got out for twenty people instead of eight. So I made him put back the half of it. He began to look gruff, and then —"

"Charlotte! Charlotte!" — exclaimed the alarmed husband — "if you have turned Cæsar out of doors — Cæsar who had lived ten years with my brother, and is so useful and so faithful —"

"Do not be frightened" — replied Charlotte — "Cæsar would not go. He had the insolence to say he should wait till Mr. Woodbridge came home."

"He is a good fellow" — said Woodbridge — "and I am obliged to him for not deserting me this day."

"Don't talk of his goodness. When I threatened to tell Mrs. Pinchington of him, he held down his head to keep from laughing in my face."

A ring at the door-bell now announced that the guests were beginning to come, and Woodbridge smoothed the discomposure of his countenance, and hastened down stairs to receive them. His lady did not appear till the gentlemen had all assembled, and she then made her entrance through the folding-doors of the back-parlor, and proceeded gracefully to the front; elegantly drest, and looking as sweet and innocent as if incapable of uttering one unamiable word, or conceiving one unamiable thought. Just so she had looked when Woodbridge was first introduced to her at a party in New York.

All the gentlemen having arrived, Woodbridge took an opportunity of asking his wife, in a low voice, if it was not time that dinner was announced. Upon which she whispered to him that she was waiting for Mrs. Pinchington, who had kindly volunteered to come and support her on this her first appearance as hostess at a gentlemen's party. In about half an hour Mrs. Pinchington came, excusing herself for being detained by an unexpected visitor; but in reality having prudently stayed to secure a good dinner at her boarding-house. Mr. Woodbridge, though she had become his besetting antipathy, was obliged to offer Mrs. Pinchington his arm; and his face flushed with shame as Charlotte, all smiles and sweetness, accompanied by his principal guest (a gentleman from Virginia) led the way up stairs into the paltry dining-room: and he bit his lips at the first glance at the table, though it was profusely ornamented with flowers.

The festive board was so short, that the guests could scarcely squeeze into their places, and the dining room was so narrow that the said table had to be set over to one side, that Cæsar might have space to pass on the other. When all were with some difficulty seated, Mrs. Woodbridge with great *sang froid* began to send around some thin greasy ash-colored broth, being a decoction of cold veal with a few shreds of vermicelli floating in it, and highly-flavored with smoke: Mary having forgotten to cover it while it was simmering over an ill-made fire. This potation, Mrs. Pinchington, after swallowing a spoonful or two, announced to be a delicious white soup. The unfortunate man whose duty it was to perform the part of host, proceeded to help a piece of boiled halibut served up without draining, but it looked so sanguinary that no one chose to try it; for even the lovers of what is called *rare* beef seldom have a fancy for rare fish. For the second course, the soup was replaced by a small tough round of *par-baked* beef, black on the outside, and raw within, and denominated *boeuf-a-la-mode*: the *a-la-mod*ing being a few cloves stuck over the top which had been previously rubbed with powdered allspice; this beef Mrs. Pinchington declined tasting lest it should prove too rich for her. The bottom dish was a meagre roast pig, (called "delicate" by Mrs. Pinchington) accompanied by a tureen of watery panada termed, on this occasion, bread-sauce. After the company had pretended to eat these things, Cæsar was desired to bring on the third course. The third course was mutton chops, which were to have been *cotillettes a la Maintenon*, but which Irish Mary had produced *au naturel*: and also a dish of something begun as *croquettes*, but ended as mere minced veal, washy and tasteless. Afterwards was introduced as a *bonne-bouch*, two pair of split birds sprawling on greasy slices of ill-made toast, and called game by the ladies but known to be pigeons by Cæsar and the gentlemen. All the vegetables prepared for this dinner were few in number, small in quantity, half-boiled, halfdrained, and mixed with that disgrace to a lady's house, *cooking* butter, its disagreeable taste predominating through all disguise, and rendering every thing unpalatable. The fourth course was at the top a superb glass bowl *half* full of a pale lilac liquid, consisting of faintly sweetened milk that had been skimmed till blue, and was then tinged with something pinkish. This was dignified by the name of floating island; the island being a spoonful of cream taken from the said milk and beaten up with sufficient white of egg to give it "a local habitation and a name," by forming a small heap in the centre of the bowl. At the bottom sat a dish containing a few cones of boiled rice that had been

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moulded in wineglasses, the summit of each cone decorated with a red spot made by sticking on a mashed cranberry. This part of the dessert was highly recommended to the company by Mrs. Pinchington, who assured them that rice was a delicious thing and "so pure." The centre confection was a flat leathery pancake denominated *omelette soufflee*, the very sight of which would have made Fossard tear his hair. This strange affair had been manufactured under the immediate superintendence of Mrs. Woodbridge herself, who did it exactly "ma's way." The side-dishes held a few very small stale tartlets about the size of a half dollar procured at a low-priced cake-shop, each containing a half tea-spoonful of mysterious marmelade, made of some indescribable fruit mounted in marvellous heavy paste. These tartlets Mrs. Pinchington called "little loves."

We need not attempt to depict the sufferings of our excitable hero during the progress of this dinner, or to tell how continually his resolutions to bear it manfully were on the point of giving way. In vain did he try to repress the outward and visible signs of vexations, mortifications, indignation and all the other *ations* that in spite of his efforts to conceal them were flushing his cheek, knitting his brow, compressing his lips, and trembling in his voice. Once he found his hand rambling through his hair, and once he found his teeth gritting against each other; but on both these occasions he recollected himself in time to smile an unnatural smile, and to talk some ransom talk.

But Mr. Woodbridge's disgust and anger did not quite rise to its climax till he tasted the madeira which, when he purchased it, he knew to be of the first quality, and which he now found had been greatly diluted with water after being decanted; evidently to make it go further. On glancing at his wife he met her eye watching his, and he saw by her guilty look to whom he must attribute the adulteration. Had she been able to draw the corks, it is most probable that the hock and champagne would not have escaped a similar *allongement*.

Poor Cæsar well understood and deeply sympathized in the numerous annoyances that assailed Mr. Woodbridge at this unhappy dinner: to say nothing of the griefs that were more particularly his own. He prided himself greatly on his skill and alertness in the art of waiting on company, on his *savior faire* in arranging, on his dexterity in executing, and in the harmonious but unquestionable authority with which he could give a tone to the movements of the apt and well-tutored "coloured gentlemen," that on similar occasions had always been employed to assist him. Mrs. Woodbridge having persisted in not hiring a single additional waiter, Cæsar had so much to do that he had no chance of doing any thing well, or of displaying his usual tact in seeing without seeming to see, and anticipating the wishes of the guests. To-day he felt "his laurels withering on his brow," but his crowning horror was the sight of Irish Mary, when he had to receive from her the dishes at the door of a little back staircase that led down to the kitchen. Having put on her worst costume to cook in, she presented herself in full view, slip-shod, and bareheeled, in an old dirty gown its sleeves dipped in grease, a ragged and filthy apron, her handkerchief pinned awry over one shoulder and leaving the other exposed, and her elf-locks hanging about her ears. On handing in each dish she took an opportunity of standing awhile with her stupid whitish eyes and her large heavy mouth wide open, to stare at the company, till Cæsar shut the door in her face; upon which affront her murmurs and threats were audible all the way down stairs.

This dinner appeared endless to all concerned in it, except to Mary, who taking no note of time, and being unprovided with the organ of clockknowledge, had nothing ready when wanted, or indeed for a long while after. The dusk of evening had darkened the table, and the guests were feeling about among the spotted oranges and worm-eaten apples, the *cooking* raisins and the stony-shelled almonds that had been set on subsequent to the removal of the cloth. Mr. Woodbridge after waiting in vain for his wife to order lights till it became so dark that he could scarcely discern her, gave several hints to that effect: but she continued hint-proof. He then audibly desired Cæsar to bring them. Cæsar on passing near Mrs. Woodbridge was detained a few moments by a low talk from her, and the result was two candles only. Immediately after their introduction, she made a signal to Mrs. Pinchington, and both ladies left the table; Mrs. Woodbridge taking an opportunity of telling Cæsar that it was not worth while to light the entry-lamp as the gentlemen would soon go. Having reached her own apartment Mrs. Woodbridge changed her dress and threw herself on the bed, exclaiming that she was dead with fatigue: and Mrs. Pinchington prepared to go home, escorted by Cæsar, who was rung up for the purpose. She took an affectionate leave of her hostess, assuring her that she should report every where how delightfully the dinner had gone off, and expressing her hope to be at many more exactly like it. "Oh! Jupiter!" exclaimed Cæsar, for a moment forgetting where he was. Mrs. Woodbridge frowned, and Mrs. Pinchington stooped down to tie her walking-shoes.

In consequence of having to walk behind this lady to her lodgings, Cæsar to his vexation was unable to

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superintend the making of the coffee, and when he got home he found that Mrs. Woodbridge, in her impatience to hurry the departure of the gentlemen, had ordered Irish Mary to prepare and carry it in herself; and the weak, cold and muddy beverage was left in every cup, almost untasted by the company.

The guests departed: and Cæsar cleared away the table sighing heavily over the disgraces of the day: and confirmed in his resolution of seeking another place when he found his Hibernian colleague lying intoxicated on the kitchen floor.

Harvey Woodbridge passed the remainder of the evening extended on one of the parlor sofas, and endeavoring to devise some plan for expanding the mind and heart of his wife, improving her disposition, and rendering her ideas and practices less mean and less selfish. Knowing, however, that she could not have been blind to all the inconveniences and vexations which, on this occasion particularly, had arisen from her ill-judged parsimony and her wilful perseverance in it, he imagined her touched for once with compunction, and perhaps sincerely disposed to try and do better for the future. "This after all" — thought he — "may prove a salutary lesson to her. She cannot be always incorrigible. I will spare her feelings to-night, and refrain from all expostulation till to-morrow; and then I will reason with her as calmly and mildly as I can."

He rose early next morning and took a walk to Schuylkill, willing to defer a little longer his intended remonstrance. On his return, breakfast was not ready, and Charlotte had not come down. He tried in vain to read the newspaper: but threw it aside, and traversed the room till she made her appearance; and Cæsar at the same time brought in the tray.

As soon as the repast was over and the breakfast apparatus removed, our hero commenced his expostulation, making a strong effort to control his feelings and to speak with calmness. Without referring to former subjects of similar annoyance, he tried to confine himself entirely to the dinner-party: setting forth with all the eloquence of truth the shame and mortification she had caused him by her unhappy notions of ultra-economy, so absurdly and annoyingly put in practice on that much-to-be-regretted occasion; lessening both her and himself in the eyes of his guests, all whom, as he said, had a just right to consider themselves treated with disrespect at being set down in a gentlemen's house to so paltry an entertainment, and in so paltry a room.

"If you talk in this way, Harvey" — said Charlotte Woodbridge — "I shall go off into strong hysterics."

This threat, however, had lost its effect; for though Harvey had often heard of hysterics he had never seen them.

"Charlotte" — said he — "this is no time for folly. Believe me when I assure you that I am seriously determined to insist on a general reform in the whole tenor of your household arrangements. I am completely disgusted with living in this manner, and will submit to it no longer. My patience is exhausted with the vain effort of suppressing my vexation, and in trying to endure in silence the innumerable petty annoyances with which you contrive to embitter every hour of my life; and I am still more tired of ineffectual remonstrances, and useless bickerings about trifles."

"Why then do you bicker?"

"Nonsense! — Is not domestic misery composed chiefly of trifles: each a unit in itself, but the whole when added together making a large sum total."

"I despise business talk."

"Charlotte — Charlotte! — I doubt if in reality you are as silly as you would seem to be."

"Yes, I am — and so you will always find me. As I never had the least wish to be sensible, I did not trouble myself to try. Ma' always said that sensible girls got but few beaux, and did not go off well. Her only care was that I should grow up pretty, and be handsomely and fashionably drest. So I always had plenty of beaux, and I did go off — to be sure it was no great go. And, now, though I am a married woman, I see no reason why I should not wish to look as well and be admired just the same as before. As to the management of the house and all that sort of thing, I again assure you that I shall not make the least change in my plans now or ever — do *you* attend to *your* business, and I will manage mine."

"Oh! Charlotte" — exclaimed her husband, having listened to this *tirade* as much in sorrow as in anger, "Can nothing make any impression on you. Or rather, why are all your sayings and doings so perverse and wilful, when there must at the bottom of your heart be some latent touch of tenderness for the man who loving you sincerely, was willing to take you upon trust, without any previous knowledge of your temper and habits; and who so frankly and fondly entrusted his happiness to your keeping."

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"'Nobody asked you, sir,' she said"— was the reply of our wayward heroine, singing a line from a well-known ballad, and making a low curtesy; "did you not fall in love the moment you were introduced to me at Mrs. Vanvernigen's party, where I wore my rose-colored ærophine with the satin corsage and the coquille trimming, and carried in my hand a silver bouquetaire with six dollars worth of hot-house flowers in it? And did not you steal a sprig of heliotrope from my bouquet, and put it to your lips instead of your nose — I saw you do it! And did not you follow me all about the room, and talk to nobody else, and give me your arm to the supper-table, and go without your own supper that you might accompany me back to the front drawing-room and get a seat on an ottoman beside me? And did not you wait at the door to put me into the carriage, tho' my pa' and brothers were along? And then you know very well how you came next morning the clock struck eleven, (a full hour before any reasonable creature thinks of making a visit:) and how you bespoke yourself to escort me to Miss Semibreve's musical soiree; and whenever a song finished and a piece began did not you look delighted, because then you could talk to me all the while, as nobody is bound to listen to pieces? Did you not from that time visit me twice a day, and go every where with me even to church, and actually come to a proposal on our way home, at the corner of Broadway and Warren street. And did not you detain me on the door-step till I consented, scrambling hold of my hand and tearing my white kid glove? And the very moment we were engaged did not you bounce after me into the front parlor and ask pa'?"

"I plead guilty to all this" — replied Woodbridge — "Next time I will be less precipitate."

"So will I" — said Charlotte.

"We are talking very absurdly" — resumed Woodbridge — after a short pause — "I began this conversation with an earnest desire to make a serious impression on you, and to awaken your good feelings; for I hope and trust you are not entirely without them."

"Feelings" — replied our heroine — "I do not know why I should be suspected of want of feeling. I am sure I always cry at the theatre when I see other ladies with their handkerchiefs to their eyes, for then I am certain there is something to be cried at. When I was a little girl I actually sobbed one night at the play, when Cinderella's sisters made her stay at home from the ball. It is not a month ago that I looked very serious when every one else was laughing at that wicked Petruchio not allowing his wife to have her new gown and cap. However, I suppose I had best say nothing about Petruchio — as it may not be quite safe for me to put him into your head."

"Charlotte — Charlotte" — exclaimed her husband — "no more of this folly: but listen attentively to what I am going to say. In the first place I insist on your giving up Mrs. Pinchington and Mrs. Squanderfield."

"What, my best friends! — my most intimate friends! — the only true friends I have!"

"Your husband is your best and truest friend."

"You really make me laugh — as if husbands and friends were not totally different things! — Do you think I could ever talk to you, and consult you on all occasions, as I do these two ladies."

"Supposing then that that were impossible — have you not become acquainted with other ladies far superior to these for all purposes of conversation and consultation."

"How should you know — men are no judges of women. I can assure you that of all the ladies I have met with in Philadelphia, Mrs. Pinchington and Mrs. Squanderfield are the most to my taste."

"I am sorry to hear it."

"I tell you again that I shall always regard them as my best and dearest and only friends. Both of them are so fond of me that they actually grieve if they do not see me every day. They have nothing so much at heart as me and my good."

"I wish they would let you and your good alone!"

"That is not your writ, Mr. Woodbridge — I heard a man say something like it in a play. No— the interest they feel in me is quite astonishing, and they always give me proper advice, just such as I like to take; and as they have nothing to do but to go about and see people, they always have a great deal to tell me of such things as I like to hear. As to this dinner that has so much affronted you, I have the most cause to be offended at your finding fault with it after all the trouble it gave me. So I assure you it is the last dinner party I will ever preside over."

"Would you wish me to invite my friends to dine with me at a hotel, as if I had no means of entertaining them at home."

"No, indeed — when ma' was on here, she told me that pa' had tried that experiment, and that the expense was enormous; and besides, the leavings were all lost, as they could not be had to furnish family dinners afterwards."

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People can *live*, I suppose, without having dinner company, or indeed any company at all. And much as you despise yesterday's entertainment, the expense of it actually frightened me. However, I can tell you, for your comfort, that we dine to-day upon the cold things that were left."

"What cold things?"

"No matter what. When pa' *would* have dinner company, ma' never sent to market for a week afterwards."

"And was he contented to dine on scraps for a week?"

"Contented or not, he had to do it for years and years. To be sure at last he got into a very provoking way of dining at a hotel whenever he expected a scrap dinner (as you call it,) at his own table."

"I will follow your worthy father's example, and dine to-day at a hotel."

"Are you in earnest."

"Yes, I am. If you will not listen to talking, I will try what virtue there is in acting."

"Why it will cost you a dollar or more."

"I know it. But I shall at least obtain a dollars worth of comfort, and have a chance of composing my temper, and dining in peace."

"I have no more time to waste with you" — said his wife, seeing that he was determined on accomplishing this new feat. "I must go to Madame Tourtelot's at eleven o'clock, to be fitted for my pearl-colored figured satin and my fawn-colored lustre-silk. But to think of your throwing away a dollar upon a dinner for yourself. The extravagance of men is awful."

She then repaired to her own apartment; and her husband too much ruffled to pursue his expostulation with the temper he desired, prepared to go out.

In the entry he was way-laid by Cæsar, who informed him that he wished Mr. Woodbridge to suit himself with another waiter by the end of the month, adding — "Indeed, sir, I am sorry to leave you, but I seem as if I could not stand things no longer, 'specially Irish Mary. Her head is so muddled from yesterday, that I found her, when she was getting breakfast, haggling at the loaf with the side of a fork instead of a knife, and saying — "Oh! but it's hard this bread is to cut, then." And I caught her greasing the griddle with the end of a candle, and when I stopped her short in her wickedness, she said — "Ah! and what would ye have then — grase is grase all the world over." Indeed, sir, you don't know how hard it is to live day in and day out with a woman that's a born fool."

"Yes, I do" — thought Woodbridge — and he almost sighed to think that he had not, like Cæsar, the resource of changing his home. However, he merely replied — "Very well, Cæsar — you may refer to me for a character" — and with a heavy heart he walked to his store.

That day, resolving to put his threat into practice, our hero *did* dine at a hotel. His wife, after finishing her dress-fitting, shopping, and cardleaving, went to take her dinner, as the guest of Mesdames Squanderfield and Pinchington, at their boarding-house. She found that both these ladies had gone together up the river; one on a visit to an acquaintance at Burlington, the other to see a relative living at Bristol. Nevertheless she accepted the slight invitation of her former hostess, the mistress of the establishment, to stay and dine with *ker*, as the dinner-bell was about to ring.

Towards evening, Mr. Woodbridge came home in much better temper; and was disposed to enter into a cheerful conversation with his wayward Charlotte. But she kept a sullen silence; and at the tea-table she steadily put aside every thing he offered her, helping herself to it immediately after. When their uncomfortable tea was over, her husband again tried to reason with her on the subject of that perverseness which was undermining his affection and destroying their peace. She made not a word of answer, but lay motionless and speechless, reclining on the sofa. After a while, she turned to the wall and threw a handkerchief over her head. "She is touched at last" — thought Woodbridge. "To hide her face and weep in silence is a good symptom. I have hopes of her yet." He then softened his tone, and made a tender and powerful appeal to what he called her best feelings. In conclusion, he rose from his chair, went to her in much emotion, and taking her passive hand, addressed her as his beloved Charlotte. Still, she replied not. He gently withdrew the handkerchief from her face. She was fast asleep.

Her husband sighed — replaced the handkerchief; resumed his seat before the dull and ashy fire; folded his arms: and gazed awhile on the ceiling. Then he took up a book, but held it unconsciously for half an hour, forgetting to open it. At last he started up, and went out to revive himself by a walk in the open air. Finally, on passing one of the theatres he strolled in and placed himself in the back of a box; but though his eyes were fixed on the stage, he had no perception of any thing that he saw, and no comprehension of any thing he heard. He only

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knew when the performance was over by finding that the lights were extinguishing and the benches vacated. He then went to his cheerless home, and found that his wife had retired for the night and was sleeping with her usual tranquility.

Next morning their breakfast passed exactly like the tea of the preceding evening, and Woodbridge went to his house in silent despair. When he again came home he found that though yesterday he had dined at a hotel to escape the threatened leavings of a vile dinner, his wife, with *malice prepense*, had kept these "shadows of a shade" to set before him to-day, and as long as they could be made to last.

PART IV.

It chanced that just at that time Mr. Stapleford the father of our heroine, had some commercial business which made it necessary for him to visit Philadelphia and Baltimore. He left New York in the earliest morning line, and having reached the Delaware and dined in the boat, his attention as he sat reading on deck, was withdrawn from the newspaper by the conversation of two ladies who occupied seats just in front of him. One of the dames proved to be Mrs. Squanderfield. She had come on board at Bristol, and expressed great delight at meeting her friend, Mrs. Pinchington, who had been taken in at Burlington. Both ladies talked in a very audible under-tone, and Mr. Stapleford thought of changing his place 'till he was startled by hearing the name of his daughter. Curiosity then triumphed over every other consideration, and, keeping his eyes on the paper, he sat still and listened.

"*A-propos*, my dear Mrs. Pinchington" — proceeded Mrs. Squanderfield — "you have not yet told me the particulars of the great Woodbridge dinner. I was out when you came home from it— and yesterday morning, as we went up the river, you know how I was beset by that persevering man, Mr. Bulkworthy, who monopolized me the whole time; as, to say the truth, he always does whenever we meet."

"You seemed very well pleased to be thus monopolized" — replied Mrs. Pinchington, with a Sardonic smile. "If you had chosen to change your seat, he could not have made much progress in following you, with his immense size and his gouty foot. However, my dear Mrs. Squanderfield, let me advise you, as a friend, to take care what you are about. Old fat men are not always rich: though silly girls and dashing widows seem to think so. Neither is the gout always caused by high living, and therefore a proof that they have a great deal to live on. Besides, by not paying their debts, they may get the gout at other people's expense."

"How you run on" — answered Mrs. Squanderfield— evidently desirous of changing the subject. "But do tell me how the Woodbridge dinner-party went off. I suppose, as usual, Mrs. W. was superbly drest. I know she got every thing new for the occasion, for I was with her when she bought all her paraphernalia. That pearl-colored figured satin could not have cost less than fifty-dollars by the time it was made up— and that laced pelerine was forty. What a passion she has for laced pelerines. I know that she has six others, all equally elegant and costly. Then the blond cap and French flowers, that she bought to wear on the back of her head, was fifteen. When I am out shopping with Mrs. Woodbridge, it almost makes my hair stand on end to see how readily she agrees to buying the most extravagant things, and things which she cannot possibly want. I cannot imagine where she finds room to stow away all her dead stock. Her husband will find that the dressing alone of his pretty doll will add to his annual expenses, not merely hundreds of dollars, but actually thousands. I was telling my friends at Bristol all about the Woodbridges; and they agree with me that the poor man little knows what is before him. I have asked several New Yorkers about her family, and they say that old Stapleford's wife is a bye word, even there, for her extravagance in dress."

Mr. Stapleford changed color, and looked off from his paper, and could not suppress a deep sigh — and then made an effort to appear more intent on his reading than ever.

"I have heard, also" — continued Mrs. Squanderfield— ("and from persons who have been at her house,) that in her domestic concerns there never was a meaner skin-flint than that same Mrs. Stapleford. One of my New York friends told me she had a cook that had once lived at Stapleford's. On some grand occasion, when they were to have an apple-pie, Mrs. S. gave out six apples to pare and quarter; and then she came into the kitchen and counted the bits of apple, and because there were only twenty-two pieces instead of twenty-four, she scolded the cook violently, and ended by calling her a thief. So the woman went right out of the house, leaving the dinner at a stand. Of course she told the apple story every where, and in a day or two it was all over New York."

Mr. Stapleford's sigh was now audible — for he remembered this cook, (the best they ever had,) and he was well aware of the circumstances attending her departure. The ladies, however, were sitting with their backs that way, and did not observe him. After pausing a minute to take breath, Mrs. Squanderfield proceeded —

"But about this dinner — it must have gone to Mrs. Woodbridge's heart to get it up. I long to know all the particulars."

"It would take me till to-morrow morning to tell the whole" — replied Mrs. Pinchington — "so at present, I can only give you a slight sketch. Well — in the first place we were ushered into that wretched hole that she calls

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the dining-room: though it's their sole abiding-place, morning, noon, and night. There was a little bit of a table set cater-cornered to give more space; notwithstanding which we were all squeezed flat by the time we had got wedged into our seats. The only waiter was their man Cæsar, for she could not open her heart so far as to hire an assistant even on that extraordinary occasion, the first dinner company they have ever had. The dishes were handed in by a horrid Irish girl, all filth and rags, who stood staring, open mouthed, the whole time— never having seen such great doings before."

"But do tell me what they had by way of eatables" — cried Mrs. Squanderfield.

"Why there was a soup which tasted exactly like smoked dish-water. And a hard, tough, black looking piece of beef — and a morsel of half-raw fish. The chief dish seemed to be a pig, that looked as if he had been killed just in time to save him from dying, and which I know she got at half-price, for I went to market with her myself. Then, by way of game, were some pigeons, with scarcely a mouthful of flesh on their bones, split in half, and looking as flat as boards. The butter was detestable, and would have spoiled every thing, only that every thing was spoiled before. The dessert was utter trash — milk — and rice — and froth — and a few miserable cheap tarts, made of nothing: and a little decayed fruit, turned with the best side uppermost. And as dusk came on, we had to poke about among the things all in the dark, for she would not allow us candles to eat by. But the wine — the wine above all — I forgot to tell you of the wine. It had actually been watered to make it go further. Think of gentlemen at a dining-party filling their glasses with wine and water!"

"Wretched, indeed! — But how did the sensitive Mr. Harvey Woodbridge live through all this?"

"Oh! poor miserable creature" — replied Mrs. Pinchington — "he really moved my compassion— I absolutely felt for him. I wish you could have beheld his face when his eye first glanced over the dinner table: I could scarcely keep from laughing all the time, to see how ashamed he was of every thing, and how he labored to conceal his mortification; the natural man peeping out in spite of himself. It was really too good to see how he tried to smile, not knowing that his smile was only a ghastly grin. And how he twinkled his eyes and essayed to look pleasant, when he felt the fire flashing from them; and how he twitched his brows to smooth them, when he found they were contracting into a frown; and how he endeavored to soften his voice and talk agreeably, lest he should break out into an open fury."

"And how did his wife take all this?"

"His wife — it was best of all to see how she sat in her finery, with a coolness that really amounted to impudence and looking as sweet and amiable as if she was presiding at the best spread table in the world, and enjoying the satisfaction of the company. That woman has not an atom of either sense or feeling. For my part, I was glad to get away as soon as I possibly could, that I might indemnify myself at my own tea-table for the miserable dinner I had *pretended* to eat.— Young as she is, Mrs. Woodbridge is certainly the meanest woman I ever yet met with — and I have a good chance of knowing, for she consults me about all her plans, as she calls them."

"And she is also the most extravagant, rejoined Mrs. Squanderfield. "I ought certainly to know when I so often go shopping with her."

"The fact is" — rejoined Mrs. Pinchington — "she will drive that husband of hers to desperation before long."

Mr. Stapleford could listen no more. He threw down his newspaper, started up, and walked the deck in unconcealed perturbation: forgetting where he was, and regardless of all observers. In the mean time, Mesdames Squanderfield and Pinchington continued to regale each other with alternate and exaggerated anecdotes of the meanness and extravagance of their friend Mrs. Woodbridge, till the boat arrived at Chestnut-street wharf from whence the two cronies proceeded to their lodgings, arm in arm.

The unhappy father of our heroine had been too much absorbed in his own irritated feelings to be conscious of the progress of the boat. He looked not at either shore — he recognized none of the landmarks; and he only started from his painful reverie when the boat touched the pier and the roaring of the steam announced that its work was over for that day. On landing, he almost unconsciously replied to the importunities of a hack-driver, threw himself and his baggage into a coach, and repaired to the dwelling of his son-in-law.

On arriving at the house, the front door was opened by Cæsar, (who yet lingered in the establishment) and the old gentleman exclaimed — "Where is that dining-room — I know she is there." He then before Cæsar could show him into the parlor, ran straight up stairs, and found the place intuitively.

The young couple had just concluded their slender dinner at which Woodbridge (to whom nothing was more

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intolerable than silent anger, and who already longed to conciliate his wife, almost on any terms) had been trying in vain to force a conversation. But Charlotte held out, and answered in sullen monosyllables — it being her way when she knew she had done wrong to behave always as if she was the person that had most cause to be offended. They were both struck with surprise at the unexpected appearance of Mr. Stapleford. When they recovered, Harvey shook hands with him, and Charlotte kissed her pa', and asked him if he had dined.

"Yes" — he replied, struggling to keep down his wrath — "I dined in the boat — I have had my dinner — Are you not glad? But I am hot and thirsty, and I want some drink."

"What will you have, pa'?" — inquired Charlotte. "Here is some nice water."

"I want some brandy also" — Said Mr. Stapleford. "Water is weak — it does not drive away care. Give me some brandy, too — I *must* have it."

Woodbridge rang the bell, and Cæsar was desired to bring some cool water; after which our hero silently brought some brandy himself, and placed it on the table, while Charlotte looked pale and amazed.

Mr. Stapleford mixed a tumbler full of strong brandy and water, and then said to his son-in-law — "Shall I mix one for you? — I have become quite clever at the business."

"I never drink brandy" — replied Woodbridge.

"Then I hope to Heaven you never may" — said the old man, fervently, and raising his eyes, in which the tears seemed to glisten. But he passed the back of his hand across them, paused a moment, then snatched up the glass, and hastily swallowed the half of its contents.

"There" — said he, throwing himself into a chair — "you see what I have come to, I, your father-in-law, and *her* father. Have you not heard it? Don't you know it? I am a drunkard now — I am — I am. It is a shameful, dreadful vice. It came upon me by slow degrees; but it *has* come, and every body knows it: you see it in my face, don't you? Look at me, look, I bear about me the unfailing signs, you know I do."

They looked at him: it was too true. There was that redness in his face which never can be mistaken for the honest glow of health.

"Do you know what has made me a drunkard?" — resumed Mr. Stapleford — "A bad wife. A wife may be bad, and yet she may neither play cards nor tittle, nor betray the honor of her husband. But she may destroy his peace, she may undermine his happiness, she may wear out his love by the everlasting rubbing of petty annoyances. I have read — (for I once *did* read) — that one of the severest tortures inflicted by the Romish Inquisition, was a contrivance which caused water to fall unceasingly, day after day, week after week, month after month, in single drops, one at a time, upon the head of the miserable captive. I too, have had my drops, and I know what I have suffered from them. And she that selfishly and heartlessly inflicted that suffering was my wife, your mother Charlotte, and I fear that you are indeed her true daughter."

"Dear pa'" — said Charlotte — "pray don't talk so dreadfully, and, above all, before Harvey."

"I will, I will" — exclaimed her father, "and before Harvey, above all, will I do it. Let him take warning, for I know that he needs the lesson. Do not exchange glances at each other, I am not intoxicated *yet*, I am quite sober still, and I know exactly what I am saying. But while I can yet do so, (for now I have begun with the poison I must keep on) I will tell you what I heard in the Delaware boat to-day. There were two women taken on board, (ladies I suppose I must call them.) I chanced to sit where I overheard their conversation, and I could not help listening, when my ear was struck with your name, and I found they were talking about my daughter. Perhaps it was dishonorable to sit and listen; but I am not an honorable man now; I do things every day that once I would have shuddered at. I found that these women knew you well."

"Mrs. Squanderfield and Mrs. Pinchington, I suppose" — said Woodbridge, turning to his wife.

"Yes" — continued Mr. Stapleford — "those were their names. One of them had been at a dinner-party, here, in this little room; and she detailed it all to her companion, broadly and coarsely enough, but still I knew that, in the main, her statement was true. She described and ridiculed the paltry, contemptible dinner, and its wretched arrangements; and Woodbridge's ill-concealed effort to repress his shame and mortification. Then as one of these women talked about your meanness, the other discussed your extravagance: and told of the money you were continually throwing away in useless finery for the decoration of your own person, while you denied your husband the comforts which every gentleman has a right in his own house to expect, if he can furnish the means of procuring them. I listened to their talk, and I understood it all, I felt it all, for I knew by sad experience what it was."

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"Is it possible," said Charlotte, with quivering lips, "that Mrs. Squanderfield and Mrs. Pinchington could have talked of me in that manner — and in a public steam-boat, too!"

"They were your friends, Charlotte" — said her husband, "your dearest, best, your only friends; your aiders and abettors in the practice of your two besetting sins."

"The vile, false, wicked creatures" — exclaimed Mrs. Woodbridge — "I will never speak to them again."

"I am delighted to hear it" — said Woodbridge — "and earnestly do I hope you will keep that resolution."

"Listen to me, Charlotte" — said Mr. Stapleford, trying to speak with more composure — "Listen to me, also, Harvey Woodbridge, and may both of you profit by the lesson. I married Mary Holman when we were both very young. I was then a clerk in a merchant's counting-house, she was the daughter of a poor clergyman. Her beauty first attracted me, and I thought she had been well brought up. Necessity had obliged the family to be notable and industrious, and to economize in superfluities. Her mother often told me of Mary's talent of housewifery, and of her ingenuity with her needle, and how clever she was in the art of making a genteel appearance at a small expense. I thought I had drawn a prize in the lottery of marriage, and I loved her with my whole heart. We took possession of a small plainly-furnished two story house in a remote street, and I thought we might live respectably and comfortably with my salary. I soon discovered my wife's innate passion for dress, which in her father's house, she had been unable to indulge. But now that she was a married woman, and emancipated from the control of her parents, she seemed resolved to run her course as she chose. In a very short time, I found a great falling off in every thing connected with household comforts, and a corresponding increase in the finery of my wife's attire. I saw her in silks, and laces, and feathers, and flowers; all being such as were worn by ladies whose husbands had five times my income. But our servant woman (we could keep but one) was dismissed for a half grown girl, at half wages. These girls (we had a succession of them) were changed at least every month, as most of them were found to be worthless, idle, dirty, or dishonest; and all were incapable of doing work. If by chance we obtained a good one, she would not stay above a week in a house where she had to work hard and fare badly, for low wages. Often, when at our late dining hour I came home tired and hungry, I found no dinner — and when, after waiting an hour or two, the repast was at last produced, it was scanty, poor, and unpalatable. My wife had been out nearly all day, visiting, shopping, and going after mantua-makers. When our dinners was unusually late, she said it would save the trouble and expense of tea, so she went early to bed, and obliged her girl to do the same by way of saving fire and light in the kitchen; and I passed the evening alone in our cheerless parlor, laboriously engaged in extra book-keeping, or some other such job, which I was glad to undertake for the purpose of obtaining a little addition to our income, and which frequently occupied me till midnight. I had hoped by this means to gain some improvement in our way of living. But I found it only encouraged my wife to run up bills for finery, which she knew I would be obliged eventually to pay for. Vain, selfish woman, at what sacrifices was her trumpery obtained? For the price of one or two of her expensive dresses we could have kept a grown servant a whole year. One French bonnet less, and we could have had *good* fires all winter, and the cost of one of her embroidered muslin collars would have furnished me every evening with a better light to toil by.

"After a while I obtained another situation at a higher salary. I then proposed allowing a certain sum weekly for the household expenses alone — and I made this allowance as ample as I could. It was in vain — she pinched off so much of this money for additional finery, that we lived as badly as ever. At length, the death of my uncle James put me in possession of sufficient property to enable me to emancipate myself from the drudgery of clerkship, and to commence business on my own account. I did so, and was soon considered a prosperous man.

"From the time that I went into business there were no bounds to my wife's extravagance — that is, in articles of show. But in all that regarded comfort and convenience, her penurious habits remained unchanged — and so they always will. In a few years we had a handsome house, and she furnished the parlors elegantly — but she made us take all our meals in a little, low, cheerless room in the basement story; and in fact, it became our chief abiding place. How I despised it, and how long I held out against it!"

"I wonder you submitted at all" — said Woodbridge.

"I submitted to that, and to all the other proceedings of my wife, because I found resistance was in vain — as it always must be with a heartless, selfish, obstinate woman. Often, after the fatigues of the day, I was too tired to undertake the trouble of altercation. Nothing then seemed so desirable as peace and quiet, and, for the sake of present peace, I let the evil grow till it darkened my whole life with its baleful shadow. Naturally my disposition is cheerful, and as I could not be quarrelling for ever, I sometimes tried to laugh at the inconvenience and

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mortifications to which my wife continually subjected me. But it would not do — the iron, notwithstanding, had entered my soul and was fast corroding it. My affection for my wife was at last worn out. How could I love her, when I had daily proof that she had no regard for me? It was still worse when I was left alone with her — after Charlotte was married and gone, and my son Frank went to live in New Orleans. To James and myself our home was more than ever uncomfortable, for she allowed us no society; indeed, things were so managed that we became ashamed to invite any one to the house. Jem could endure it no longer — so he took lodgings at a hotel, where he is drinking wine every day, and going to destruction. For myself, I became reckless — desperate. I had long ceased to remonstrate with my wife on the sums she expended in dress — but I had grown very tired of the petty squabbling about fires, and lights, and food, and servants, and all other necessary expenses, which for five-and-twenty years had embittered my married life. I hated my home — and I was driven to seek elsewhere for peace and comfort; such, at least, as I could get in houses of public resort. I took my meals at restaurants and hotels — I frequented oyster-cellars — I joined a club. Gradually the vice of intemperance came upon me — wine was not enough, I took brandy also. I drank to raise my spirits, and to drown the sense of degradation that always oppressed me when I was sober. My wife did not care — she dressed more than ever, and went almost every night to a party — making me come for her when I was not fit to be seen — and thus exposing me to her 'dear five hundred friends,' when it was she, herself, that made me what I am. I shall grow worse — I shall be seen reeling through the streets, with the boys hooting after me — I shall be taken up out of the gutter, and laid dead drunk on my own door step. I know I shall — I see it all before me — yet, when it comes to that, and my children hear of it, let them remember it is the fault of their mother. Look what she has made of me — and what my wife's daughter is going to make of her husband — *She* knows how wretchedly we lived — she knows how all domestic happiness was worried away from her father's house — and still she has been walking fast in her mother's footsteps. — Charlotte — Charlotte — do you not tremble?"

Charlotte did tremble — and pale and terrified she threw herself into the arms of her husband, hid her face on his shoulder, and burst into a flood of tears. Woodbridge also was deeply affected. But he saw at that moment a dawn of hope — and he hailed this first indication of feeling on the part of his wayward wife as an omen of reform and happiness.

"I am glad to see you cry" — said the old man after a pause. — "I have never seen *my* wife shed a tear, except when a splendid dress has been spoiled by the mantua-maker. I begin to hope that the daughter may be better than the mother."

"Dear sir," said Woodbridge, "do not persist in speaking so harshly of your wife."

"I will — I will" — exclaimed the old man — swallowing the remainder of the brandy and water. "Has she not embittered my life, and turned to gall the love I once felt for her. What has Mary Stapleford ever done to make me happy? Has she ever cared for *me* — why then should I care for her? Has she ever regarded my tastes, my wishes? Why then should I have any respect for hers? And now I am a drunkard — disreputable, despised — looked at askance by respectable men, (I was once a respectable man myself,) obliged to associate now with those that have degraded themselves as I have done. And my wife has caused it all. She has made me wretched, and she has brought up her daughter to make *you* so too."

Mrs. Woodbridge now threw herself on the sofa, buried her face in one of the cushions, and sobbed aloud: and, on her husband approaching, she motioned him to leave her to herself. Woodbridge, after removing the brandy, prevailed on his father-in-law, (who had sunk back in his chair, and thrown his handkerchief over his face) to go to the spare chamber, and lie down and repose himself: and Charlotte in a faint voice said, *she* would also retire to her room. As she passed her husband she caught his hand and pressed it fervently: but her eyes again overflowed, and she was unable to speak.

"Dear sir" — said Woodbridge — "do not persist in speaking so harshly of your wife."

Woodbridge having ascertained that the sparechamber was in order, conducted Mr. Stapleford to its door, now thought it best to leave his wife awhile to the retirement of her own apartment. He then repaired to his store, where he recollected his presence at this time was particularly essential; and he endeavored, but in vain, to occupy his mind with business during the short remainder of the day.

When he came home in the evening, he found that Mr. Stapleford, having requested that some tea might be brought to him, had gone to bed for the night, and was now asleep. Charlotte remained also in her room, and at her desire the tea-table had been set for her husband alone. After he had somewhat refreshed himself with a cup

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of tea, he went up to see her. He found her lying on the bed, and looking very pale and dejected. "Harvey" — said she — "don't talk to me to-night — I shall feel better in the morning— I know all you would say. I have indeed made you a very bad wife — I acknowledge and regret it: my eyes are opened at last, and I will try to do better in future. But I am so shocked at my father, to see him as he is now, and to hear all he thinks and feels, and all that he fears. Oh! — no — no — you shall never be brought to his condition by *me*. Indeed, indeed you never shall. It is too dreadful. But leave me now, dear Harvey, and when I deserve it, I will beg you to forgive me all."

In compassion to the distress of her feelings, Woodbridge quitted the room in silence. He passed the evening alone, in perturbed meditation; hope for the future and regret for the past, alternately casting their lights and shadows on his mind. But, the sunbeam of hope rested there at last.

Our heroine passed a restless night of bitter retrospection, and silent tears. Towards morning, she had wept herself into an uneasy slumber. Woodbridge rose with the dawn, resolved to try and compose himself by an early walk, his usual remedy after an extraordinary excitement. On descending the stairs, he overtook his father-in-law who had risen for the same purpose. They walked together as far as the Schuylkill, and had much conversation on the subject that was upper-most in both their minds.

When the two gentlemen returned, they were met in the entry by Cæsar, who, while his face shone with smiles, stopped them as they were proceeding to the staircase, and with a flourish of his hand as he threw open the door, said to Mr. Woodbridge, "We breakfast in the back parlor sir."

They found the table nicely set out with a better breakfast than either of the gentlemen had ever seen in their own house: and Cæsar said, with increasing smiles, "Mrs. Woodbridge was up early, sir. She came down soon after you went out. And we have been to market already. And after we came home, I got the breakfast myself, and would not let Irish Mary put her paws to any thing. Mrs. Woodbridge has given Mary a short warning, and I am to get Phillis to come back, for our everlasting cook. Please to excuse my saying *paws*: but that Paddy woman is enough to make the genteelest colored gentleman forget himself. People of the best polishment can't be decoromous when they have to deal with Irish."

At these excellent signs of the times, our hero's smile became almost as bright as Cæsar's. And Mr. Stapleford said, in a low voice to Woodbridge, "I was just going to ask for my early dram, but I believe I will not take any this morning."

"I have made the coffee very good and strong" said Cæsar, "Mrs. Woodbridge told me to do so. And we bought the best butter that was to be had in market; and we took cream this morning instead of milk."

At this moment the lady of the house appeared. Her father and her husband kissed her as they bade her good morning. Her heart and eyes filled and she held her handkerchief to her face, while each the gentlemen turned to a window and seemed to look out. There were a few minutes of silence: after which our heroine took a seat at the table, and Woodbridge and Mr. Stapleford did the same. Cæsar entered with a damask napkin and a silver salver, and waited on the table *con amore*. Woodbridge introduced a cheerful conversation, and though he had to sustain it himself, he was repaid by an occasional smile from Charlotte, and a laugh from her father.

When breakfast was over, and Mrs. Woodbridge had left the room, Mr. Stapleford said to his son-in-law, "She is touched at last. She is going to set about a reform — I only hope she will stay reformed. Ah! there is no touching her mother. I have tried often to work on *her* feelings: but she has none. Vanity, sordidness, and selfishness have hardened her heart till it is like 'the nether millstone.' But Charlotte is not so bad; and I trust she will do well yet. I must have a bottle more than usual to-day at dinner, in celebration of this joyful change."

"Rather celebrate it," said Woodbridge, "by a day of entire temperance."

"Ah!" replied Stapleford, "that is easier said than done. I am ashamed to confess that a day of temperance will be a day of suffering to me. The habit of drinking once formed, the craving once acquired, it is hard indeed to abstain. A drunkard is not easily cured."

"Let me beg of you, dear sir," said Woodbridge, "not to give yourself that detestable appellation."

"Do I not deserve it?" replied Stapleford. "Am I not really what I call myself? But *she* made me so. I know that many men who are blest with excellent and affectionate wives have become sots notwithstanding — to their eternal shame be it spoken. But that was not *my* disposition. No man was more capable of enjoying domestic happiness if it had been allowed me. However, I cannot trust myself on this theme. So let it drop for the present."

Mr. Stapleford and his son-in-law went out together, but parted at the corner: each going his own way to his respective business. That morning Mrs. Woodbridge did no shopping or visiting, but busied herself at home in

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improving her *menage*. Irish Mary, being dismissed, was loud in her vociferations at parting, asserting that she had never seen a raal lady or gentleman since she came to Philadelphia, and that she would never more darken the doors of a Philadelphia house: for she knew scores of places in New York where they would jump out of their skins for joy to get her back again, and where the silver would come pouring into her lap. A week's wages extra, however, somewhat quieted her wrath: but on leaving the presence of Mrs. Woodbridge, she slammed the door, and exclaimed as soon as she got into the entry, "Bad luck to ye any how, and I wish to the holy Patrick ye may never have nobody but black nagurs to cook your bit of victuals for you."

"That's a good wish instead of a bad one," said Cæsar, who had just come in at the front-door, triumphantly conducting Phillis.

That day an excellent dinner was served up in the back-parlor: and as all were now in good spirits it would have gone off pleasantly, only that Mr. Stapleford filled his wine-glass too often. But he said, as he poured out the last, "I cannot help it — indeed I cannot. It is a dreadful vice— easily contracted and hard to cure. Shame on the woman that brought me to it. Well, well, enough of that, I wish I could forget her always. Come, I'll not drink any thing more to-day. Only *I must* have my glass of hot whiskey punch at bed-time."

As soon as the two gentlemen were alone, Woodbridge told his father-in-law that having now the most sanguine hopes of Charlotte's improvement, he thought it best to make no further reference to what had already passed; and that, unless he saw unequivocal symptoms of a relapse, he would gladly consign to oblivion every thing that had hitherto embittered their married life.

"I fear," said Mr. Stapleford, "her goodness will not last. However, even a little of it is better than none at all. Her mother never had a single fit of goodness — not, even for one day. Well, well, I will not trust myself to talk of her."

Next day the old gentleman set out at an early hour for Baltimore; and Woodbridge, (judging from appearances) found that in future the table was to be set always in the back parlor, and supplied in a liberal manner.

That morning Mesdames Squanderfield and Pinchington made together a visit to Mrs. Woodbridge. Her intention had been to send them each a concise indicative of her desire that their acquaintance should cease; and she had purposed consulting her husband that very afternoon on the best manner of wording these notes. But they had seen her as they came past the window, and the moment Cæsar opened the front door they pushed by him, and with their usual familiarity made their entrance into the room. At the first sight of her two perfidious friends, our heroine determined to meet them with calm and dignified resentment; but this wise determination soon gave way to the passion which she felt burning in her cheeks and sparkling in her eyes.

Mrs. Squanderfield began — "Dear Mrs. Woodbridge, it seems an age since I have seen you. But I was busy the whole day yesterday, shopping all through Chesnut street, with two ladies from the far west (who with their husbands are staying at our house) and taking them to milliners and mantua-makers. They have travelled more than a thousand miles, each bringing a young baby along; and their sole business is to get fitted out with the Philadelphia fashions. They take this journey twice every year, and carry wagon loads home with them."

"For my part," said Mrs. Pinchington, "I was all day yesterday going about in search of a cheap washerwoman. Mine has raised her price to six dollars a quarter, and rather than give more than five I will wash and iron my own things in my own room. But as Mrs. Squanderfield says, it seems an age since I have seen you. I really believe we have not met since the day of your delightful dinner-party."

"Delightful was it," said Charlotte, unable longer to restrain herself, "you did not think so in the boat coming down the river, when you were telling Mrs. Squanderfield about it: and I am very sure you made it out worse even than it really was."

Mrs. Pinchington changed color, and looked much embarrassed; but rallied in a few moments and said, "My dear Mrs. Woodbridge you must be misinformed. Some vile mischief-maker, some wicked slanderer has been trying to disturb our friendship."

"My informant," replied Charlotte, "is neither a mischief-maker nor a slanderer. It was my own father, Mr. Stapleford. He happened to be seated near you: and he heard every word. First, you led me on by your own advice to do all sorts of mean paltry things"—

"I found you willing enough to be led," interrupted Mrs. Pinchington.

"And now," continued Charlotte, "you have abused me for following your instructions. I should not have been

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half so bad, had you left me to myself. But my eyes are now opened, and as I intend to act very differently for the future, I shall have the better chance of keeping that resolution by declining all further intercourse with Mrs. Pinchington."

"With all my heart," said Mrs. Pinchington, rising angrily, "I have no occasion to force my acquaintance on any one. And from what I have heard of her, I am very sure your notions of economy came from your own mother far more than from me. I wish you all possible success in your new scheme of reform; which you will find a tough job, take my word for it."

So saying, Mrs. Pinchington flounced out of the room, and scuttled out of the house.

"What a strange woman that is" — remarked Mrs. Squanderfield. "I have thought several times of telling you how little she is, in reality, your friend, and how shamefully she talks about you wherever she goes. It is a great pity you asked her to that unlucky dinner-party; the account she gives of it is awful. I own I was a little hurt at your not inviting *me*. I should then have had it in my power to contradict her ill-natured reports."

"Perhaps not" — said our heroine — "for with shame I acknowledge that there was too much foundation for her statements, however unfavorable they might be. But the next time I prepare for company, things will be found very different. I have had a mortifying lesson."

"I must say" — pursued Mrs. Squanderfield — "that I greatly approve of liberality. People in genteel life should not mind expense. By the bye, have you heard of the splendid new style shawls that Levy has just opened. I saw them yesterday, and they are the most divine things I ever beheld. Get ready, and come with me, and secure one before all the best are gone."

"To be plain with you Mrs. Squanderfield" — said Charlotte — "my intention is, in future, to expend less money on dress, and more on things of greater importance. And I know that both my husband and myself will be happier for the change."

"Really" — observed Mrs. Squanderfield — "I thought all men were happy to see their wives handsomely drest."

"I begin to think" — said Charlotte — "that a woman may be drest handsomely without spending enormous sums, and getting five times as many new things as she can possibly want. My husband has not yet made his fortune: and in the mean time, that our housekeeping may be on a more liberal scale, I shall lessen my own personal expenses. But as I am going to reform both ways, I think it best to relinquish my intimacy with Mrs. Squanderfield as well as with Mrs. Pinchington, for I wish not to be led farther into temptation."

"I declare you are very polite" — exclaimed Mrs. Squanderfield, starting up — "I cannot think what has got into you to-day. You don't seem at all like yourself."

"So much the better, perhaps" — replied Charlotte; "but as my father could not have overheard Mrs. Pinchington, without also overhearing Mrs. Squanderfield, his report has convinced me that *neither* of these ladies has any right to call herself my friend."

"Upon my word" — said Mrs. Squanderfield, forcing a laugh, "it is really amusing to see how new you are. I thought you were old enough to know that in all circles, even in the highest, every body talks of every body without the least scruple. It is the way of the world: and I do not pretend to be better than my neighbors. However, as Mrs. Pinchington says, I have no occasion to force my society on any one. I have more friends already than I can possibly visit, even if I were to do nothing else from noon till midnight. I see we don't suit: but you will lose more than I shall. However, let us part decently, and be civil whenever we chance to meet. So I wish you good morning, and success to your plan of reforming both ways."

"Good morning" — said Charlotte, softening her voice; for in truth, she felt rather better disposed toward Mrs. Squanderfield than to Mrs. Pinchington, whose report of the dinner-party seemed unforgivable. She accompanied her visiter to the door, and ere they parted, our heroine found herself asking, "who did you say had just opened these elegant shawls, Levy or Vanharlingen?"

"Aha" — replied Mrs. Squanderfield, with a sneer; "still hankering after new shawls, I saw them at Levy's: and I fear the naughty child is not going to get quite good all at once."

"I wish it were more easy to do so" — said Charlotte, coloring highly, and hastily returning to the parlor, where she sat down awhile and pondered. She then went up to her chamber, and looked out some sewing. But her thread knotted and her needle broke, and she found she was not in the humor to sew. So she dressed herself, and went out, and habit directed her steps to Chestnut street. "At least," thought she, "I may as well stop in at Levy's and *see*

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the shawls. Tis certainly pleasant to look at things that are new and elegant. But I am determined that nothing shall tempt me to buy one."

She went into Levy's, saw the shawls, and *was* tempted to buy one. But she thought she would not mention it to her husband for some days at least; and, as a salvo, she resolved on paying extra attention to his comforts and wishes.

"My dear Harvey," said she, after helping him at dinner to a second piece of pie, "would you not like to have a carpenter or a cabinet-maker or some such person, to fit up the dining-room with book-shelves or book-cases. You can have it for a library if you wish, as in future we shall use the parlors entirely."

The delighted husband started from his seat, and replied by a kiss: and the same afternoon he bespoke both shelves and cases; and went to a bookseller's to begin his selection of books.

Next morning, shortly after breakfast, Harvey Woodbridge came home from his store with a look of consternation which much alarmed his wife; and as gently as he could, he broke to her the appalling intelligence of her mother's sudden death. A letter had just arrived from New York, written by her brother James, who stated that on the preceding day while a mantua-maker was fitting her for a new dress, Mrs. Stapleford had fallen down and instantly expired. Great was the horror of our heroine at this unexpected termination of her mother's mortal existence. And she and her husband set out by the first conveyance for New York, leaving a letter for Mr. Stapleford, who arrived that afternoon from Baltimore, and followed them in the mail.

The old gentleman was excessively shocked at his wife being so suddenly hurried to her last account, unprepared as she was for the awful change into eternity. He grieved exceedingly, and never made any farther allusion to her faults. The day after the funeral he took the temperance pledge.

The fate of her vain, selfish, and heartless mother made a deep impression on our heroine, and soon completed the work of reformation which her father's representations had begun. The old gentleman was prevailed on to return with his daughter and his son-in-law, and to pass a few weeks with them in Philadelphia. Though her father was completely sobered, Charlotte soon perceived that, after the first shock had subsided, the husband of such a woman as Mrs. Stapleford, could not be inconsolable for her loss: and that (though he said nothing) he soon began to feel it a relief. "Ah!" — thought she — "I must make Harvey happy while I live — or he too will regard my death as a deliverance from misery."

On Mr. Stapleford's return to New York, it was arranged that his sister, an excellent woman who had been left a widow with a small income, should take charge of his house: and that his son James should again reside beneath the roof of his father. This change had a most salutary effect on the habits of the young man, and he found it easy to abandon the incipient vice which as yet had not fixed itself upon him.

Mr. Stapleford found an affectionate and intelligent companion in his amiable and considerate sister, (though she had always been his wife's aversion) and now that he had a well-ordered and happy home, he had no inclination to seek for pleasure elsewhere. The entire abandonment of liquor soon restored his good looks and his selfrespect: and his visits to Philadelphia were always anticipated with delight by his son-in-law and daughter.

We will not say that our heroine had not for a while occasional lapses from her good resolutions: but these aberrations gradually became slighter and less frequent. Love for her husband once awakened, she no longer took pleasure in wilfully annoying him, either by word or deed: and when she showed any indication of her former waywardness, a gentle remonstrance from Harvey always brought her to reason. Also, having so unceremoniously dismissed her two evil counsellors, she felt the advantage of being released from their blighting influence.

She now formed an intimacy with some of the most valuable of her husband's female friends. These ladies set her in every respect an excellent example, particularly in improving her mind, and cultivating a taste for books. Her heart and hand also expanded to the relief of the unfortunate and the indigent. Her reform at length became complete, both with regard to extravagance in dress and parsimony in house-keeping; and there is not, at this day, in Philadelphia, a more happy or a more popular couple than Mr. and Mrs. Woodbridge.

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TO A WITHERED ROSE.

Nature's warm spirit's! from thee fled, As now thou hangst upon thy stem All sapless, withered, wan and dead,
Yet fragrant still, sweet gem! So is it with the pure in life; When, from this earth, they pass away; Their deeds,
with virtue's sweets are rife, They live beyond *decay*. R. H.

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A SISTER'S LOVE.

Bind on your heart this jewel rare, Oh, ye to whom this prize is given! Nor let rude hands your treasure tear,
But hold it as the gift of heaven! Till death its shining worth improve, And angel's crown a sister's love.

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MY SISTER'S CHILD.

BY MRS. ANNAN, LATE MISS A. M. F. BUCHANAN. It had my sister's gentle eyes, Her soft and shining hair; Her cheek, in form and changeful dyes, And placid brow are there. My darling! when with merry laugh I echo back thine own, 'Tis oft that I forget me, half, What cares my way have strown; The partner of my being's spring, Herself, while seemest thou, I scarce can feel the world-worn thing That acts thy mother now. Yet while by yonder turf-bank low Thou hid'st in feigning sleep, Thine eyes, a glance may hardly know From violets, when they peep; While o'er the runlet thou dost lean And from its eddies dip The foam, in cups of oak leaves green, To wet thy smiling lip; Though bounds my heart to meet thy play, 'Tis sometimes chilled with fear;— Thus rang *her* voice but yesterday — How long shall *thine* be here? "*My sister's child!*" — how well that sound Recalls the happy hour, When, looking innocent and fond As thou upon yon flower, A mother's title sweet she heard And on the accents hung, While first thou marred the tender word With thy unpractis'd tongue: How proud I spoke! your beauty rare To me was triumph high;— Ye formed a picture strangely fair, Its owner rich was I! "*My sister's child! my sister's child!*" With aching heart I said, To watch her stroke thy ringlets wild, Upon her dying bed. She gave thee to my love, her trust Most precious and the last, To guard, when unto silent dust Her worshipped form had passed; I clasped thee from her thin white hand, She faded as she smiled;— God helps me in her stead to stand And bless her angel child!

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TO ONE BELOVED.

BY PARK BENJAMIN. Dost thou not turn, Fairest and sweetest, from the flowery way, On which thy feet are treading every day, And seek to learn Tidings, sometimes, of him who loved thee well— More than the pen can write or tongue can tell? Gaze not thine eyes (Oh, wild and lustrous eyes, ye were my fate!) Upon the lines he fashioned, not of late, But when the skies Of joy were over him, and he was blessed That he could sing of treasures he possessed? Treasures more dear Than gold in ingots or barbaric piles Of pearls and diamonds—thy most precious smiles! Bring, bring me here, Oh ruthless Time, some of those treasures now, And print a hundred wrinkles on my brow. Make me grow old Before my years are many—take away Health, youth, ambition—let my strength decay, My mind be sold To be the slave of some strange, barren lore— Only those treasures to my heart restore! Ah, I implore A boon that cannot be, a blessing flown Unto a realm so distant from my own That, could I soar On eagle's wings, it still would be afar As if I strove by flight to reach a star! The future vast Before me lifts majestic steps on high, Which I must stand upon before I die; For, in the past Love buried lies; and nothing lives but Fame To speak unto the coming age, my race and name.

MARK MERIDEN.

BY MRS. H. E. B. STOWE.

"Come, Mark Meriden! don't settle down into an old grandfather before your time — a pretty wife's a pretty thing, Mark, and a pretty house is a pretty thing — but hang it! — one must have a little of life."

Mark Meriden stood at his desk, giving a last look at his books, while Ben Sanford — the roguish — the merry — the song singing — the Ben of all Bens, was thus urging on him the claims of a projected frolic that evening. Now Ben was precisely the messenger for such an embassy — there was fun in the twinkle of his blue eye, and a world of waggery in the turn of his head, and in a pair of broad roguish dimples that went merrily dodging in and out of his cheeks every time he spoke, and he had laid hold of Mark's arm to drag him away. But Mark shook off his hand, and finished summing up a column of figures — put the blotting paper into the book, and the book into the place, wiped his pen — all with an air of great thoughtfulness, and, at last, turning to Ben, said — "I think I won't go this time."

"Now why not?" said Ben, eagerly.

"Because — because," said Mark, smiling; "because I have an odd fancy that I should like Mrs. Meriden's company better this evening."

"Hang Mrs. Meriden — beg pardon, Mark, hang myself for saying so, but one don't like to see a fine fellow buried alive! come, take a real wake up with us."

"Thank you, Ben, but I hav'n't been asleep and don't need it. So I'll go home and see my wife" — and thereat Mark turned a resolute footstep homeward as a well-trained husband ought.

"Now," says one of our readers, "who was Mark Meriden?" You would not have asked, good reader, if you had lived in the town of —, when his name first appeared on the outside of one of its most fashionable shops `Mark Meriden,' surrounded by these waving insignia of grace and fashion that young belles need to have their eyes turned off from beholding. Every thing in the tasteful establishment told of well arranged business, and Mark himself, the mirror of fashion, faultless in every article of costume, quick, attentive, polite, was every day to be seen there winning "golden opinions from all sorts of people." Mark's store became the resort of high ton — the fashionable exchange, the promenade of beauty and wealth, who came there to be enlightened as to the ways and means of disposing of their surplus revenue — to see and to be seen. So attentive, polite, and considerate was Mark, so profound his bows, so bright his eyes, so unexceptionable his whiskers, that it might have proved a dangerous resort for the ladies, had not a neat, tasteful house, going up in the neighborhood, been currently reported as the future residence of an already elected Mrs. Meriden; and in a few months, the house neatly finished, and tastefully furnished, received a very pretty lady who called herself to that effect. She was as truly refined and lovely a woman as ever formed the centre flower in a domestic bouquet, and Mark might justly be pardoned for having as good again an opinion of himself for having been fortunate enough to secure her.

Mark had an extensive circle of business and pleasure acquaintances, for he had been one of the social, companionable sort, whose money generally found its way out of his pocket in very fair proportion to the rate it came in. In short, he was given to clubs, oyster suppers, and now and then a wine party, and various other social privileges for elevating one's spirits and depressing one's cash, that abound among enlightened communities.

But nevertheless, at the bottom of Mark's head, there was a very substantial stratum of a certain quality called common sense, a trait, which though it was never set down in any chart of phrenology, may very justly be called a faculty, and one too which makes a very striking difference among people as the world goes. In consequence of being thus constituted, Mark, when he found himself in love with, and engaged to a very pretty girl, began to reflect with more than ordinary seriousness on his habits, ways, and manners of life. He also took an accurate survey of his business, formed an average estimate of his future income on the soberest probabilities, and determined to live a little even within that. He also provided himself with a small account book, with which he intended to live in habits of very close acquaintance, and in this book he designed to note down all the savings consequent upon the retrenching of certain little extras, before alluded to, in which he had been in the habit of pretty freely indulging himself.

Upon the present occasion, it had cost him something of an effort to say "no," for Mark was one of your easy

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"clever fellows" to whom the enunciation of this little syllable causes as much trouble as all the gutturals of the German. However, when he came in sight of his parlor windows through which a bright fire was shining — when he entered and found a clean glowing hearth, the easy chair drawn up in front, and a pair of embroidered slippers waiting for him quite at their leisure, and above all, when he read the quick glance of welcome in a pair of very bright eyes, Mark forgot all about Ben Sanford, and all bachelor friends and allurements whatsoever, and thought himself the happiest fellow on earth.

The evening passed off rapidly by the help of music, and the little small talk of which newly married people generally find a supply, and the next morning saw Mark at early business hours with as steady a hand and as cool a head as if there had been no such things as bachelor frolics in existence.

Late in the forenoon, Ben Sanford lounged in to ogle a few of the ladies, and above all, to rally Mark on losing the glorious fun of the evening before.

"Upon my word, Mark," he began, "we must have you put up for Selectman, you are becoming so extremely ancient and venerable in your ways— however, you are to be excused," he added, "circumstances considered; female influence! — ah! well! its a fine affair this marriage!"

"Better *try* it, Mr. Sanford," said a bright saucy girl, who, with her laughing companions, was standing by while Ben was speaking.

"Ah, madam! the wherewithal!" said Ben, rolling up his eyes with a tragic expression. "If some clever old fellow would be so obliging as to die now and leave me a few thousands, then, ladies! you should see!"

"But speaking of *money*," said Mark, when he saw the ladies busy over some laces he had just thrown on to the counter, "what did your `glorious fun' cost you?"

"Pooh! nothing! only a ten dollar bill — nothing in *my* purse, you know!"

"Nothing in your purse! not an uncommon incident after these occasions," said Mark, laughing.

"Oh, hang it all!" said Ben, "too true! I can get no remedy for this consumption of the purse, as old Falstaff says; however, the world owes me a living and so good morning!"

Ben Sanford was just one of that class of young men of whom common report goes, that they can do any thing they please, and who consider this point so well established, that they do not think it necessary to illustrate it by doing any thing at all. He was a lawyer of talents, and would have had an extensive run of business, had he not been one of the class of people never to be found when wanted. His law books and law office saw far less of him than certain fashionable places of resort, where his handsome person and various social accomplishments, always secured to him a welcome reception. Ben had some little property left him by his father, just enough as he used laughingly to quote, "to keep him in gloves and cologne water," and for the rest, he seemed vastly contented with his old maxim, "the world owes me a living," forgetting that the world can sometimes prove as poor a paymaster as the most fashionable young gentleman going.

But to return to Mark. When he had settled his accounts at night, he took from a pigeon-hole in his desk, the little book aforementioned, and entered as follows: "To one real wake up, \$10," which being done, he locked his desk, and returned once more to Mrs. Meriden.

Days flew on, and the shop of Mark became increasingly popular, and still from time to time he was assailed by the temptation we have described. Now it was, "Mark, my dear fellow, do join us in a trip to G — 's;" and now, "Come, my old boy, let us have a spree at F — 's;" now it was the club, now the oyster supper — but still Mark was invincible and still as one or another gaily recounted the history of the scene, he silently committed the account of the expense to his little book. Yet was not mark cynical or unsocial. His refusals, though so firm, were invariably good natured, and though he could not be drawn abroad, yet he was unquestionably open handed and free in his own home. No house had so warm a welcome— no dinner table could be more bountiful or more freely open for the behoof of all gentlemen of the dining-out order — no tea-table presented more unexceptionable toast, and no evening lounge was more easy, home-like, and cheerful, than on the warm sofas in the snug parlors of Mark Meriden. They also gave evening parties, where all was brilliant, tasteful, and well ordered; and, in fine, notwithstanding his short comings, Mark was set down as a fine open-handed fellow after all.

At the end of the year, Mark cast up the account in his little book, and was mightily astonished at it, for with all his ideas of the power of numbers, he had no idea that the twos, and fives, and tens, and ones, which on greater or smaller occasions, had found their way into its columns, would mount up to a sum so considerable. Mark looked about him — the world was going well — his business machinery moving in exact touch and time — his

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house — where was there a prettier one? — where a place more replete with every home-drawing comfort? Had he lost any thing *in pleasure* the year past? Mark thought not, and therefore as he walked homeward, he stepped into a bookseller's and ordered some books of superb engravings for Mrs. Meriden, and spoke to a gardener to send some elegant flowering exotics for which he had heard her express an admiration some evenings before.

That same evening came in Ben Sanford, as he expressed it, "*in the very depths of indigo*," for young gentlemen whose worldly matters invariably go on wrong end foremost, will sometimes be found in this condition, however exuberant may be their stock of animal spirits.

"Pray Ben, what is the matter?" said Mark kindly, as the latter stretched himself at length, in an arm-chair, groaning audibly.

"Oh, a *bilious* attack, Mark! shoemakers' bills! tailors' bills! boarding house bills! all sent in for new years' presents! hang 'em all!"

Mark was silent for a few moments, and Ben continued "Confound it, Mark! what's the sense of living, if a fellow is to be so cursedly poor! Here you, Mark, born in the same town with me, and younger than I by some two years — you have a house, as snug, as cosy, and comfortable as man need ask — a wife like an angel — peace and plenty by the bushed, and all comes of having a good run of luck in the money line" — and Ben kicked his slippers against the andiron most energetically.

"What has become of Emily P —?" asked Mark, after a pause.

"Poor soul!" said Ben, "there she is yet, with all sweetness and patience, waiting till such a luckless scapegrace as I can give her a home and a husband, I wish to my soul, for her sake, I could afford to be married, and have a home of my own; besides, to tell the truth, I am tired of this rambling, scrambling, out-at-elbow, slip-shod life."

"Why don't you get married?" said Mark.

"Why don't I? to be sure — use my tailors' bills for fuel, and my board bill for house rent, and my shoe bill for bread and butter — hey? Would you recommend a poor girl to try me, Mark — all things considered?" said Ben, bitterly.

Mark reflected awhile in silence, and then drew out his book — his little book, to which we have before alluded.

"Just look at this account, Ben," said he; "I know you hate figures, but just for once."

Ben glanced at it impatiently — laughed when he read over the two or three first items, but his face lengthened as he proceeded, and Mark detected a sort of whistle of astonishment as he read the sum total.

"Well, Mark!" he exclaimed, "what a very old gentlemanly considerate trick is this of yours — to sit behind your curtain so coolly noting down the 'cost and come to' of all our little frolicks — really it is most edifying! How much you must have enjoyed your superior discretion and forethought," and Ben laughed, but not with his usual glee.

"Nay, you mistake," said Mark. "I kept this account merely to see what *I* had been in the habit of spending myself, and as you and I have been always hand and glove in every thing, it answers equally for you. It was only yesterday that I summed up the account, and I assure you the result surprised myself; and now Ben, the sum here set down, and as much more as you please, is freely at your disposal, to clear off old scores for the year, provided you will accept with it this little book as a new year's gift, and use it one twelve-month as I have done; and if at the end of that time, you are not ready to introduce me to Mrs. Sanford, I am much mistaken."

Ben grasped his friend's hand — but just then the entrance of Mrs. Meriden prevented his reply — Mark however, saw with satisfaction that he put the book carefully in his vest pocket, and buttoned up his coat with the air of a man who is buttoning up a new resolution.

When they parted for the night, Mark said with a smile, "In case of *bilious attacks*, you know where to send for Medicine." Ben answered only by a fervent grasp of the hand, for his throat felt too full for him to answer.

Mark Meriden's book answered the purpose admirably. In less than two years Ben Sanford was the most popular lawyer in —, and as steady a householder as you might wish to see, and, in conclusion, we will just ask our readers their opinion on one point, and it is this:

If Mrs. Meriden had been a woman who understood what is called "catching a beau," better than securing a husband — if she had never curled her hair except *for company*, and thought it a degradation to know how to keep a house comfortable, would all these things have happened?

THE COSSACK'S CHARGE.

BY F. A. DURIVAGE.

The following verses refer to the fate of a small detachment of the Imperial army, on their retreat from Moscow. I. Night on the boundless waste! And the snow—flakes wildly driven, A shroud on the face of earth, And a frown on the face of heaven! Is it the tempest's howl That sweeps o'er moor and glen? Or is it the deep drum that times The march of martial men? II. Against the storm they move, With manly port and tread, And thy glorious engles, France, Are waving overhead. With features proud and stern The serried warriors come, While ever in their van is heard The deep sepulchral drum. III. And some are there who fought On Egypt's burning sand, And met the savage Austrian At Lodi, hand to hand, Who saw their eagles fly Above Marengo's plain, And proudly marched to victory O'er dying men and slain. IV. From Moscow's scorching flame, From the Kremlin's fallen walls, The remnant of her bravest brave, A tearful nation calls. Yet proudly come they back, As if from victory won, For the spell words breathed by each platoon, Are France! Napoleon! V. The conscript dreams of home — A cottage by the Seine — The lips that smiled upon him once, He seems to press again. Once more he joins the dance, With Julie hand in hand, As the sailor in his fever—dreams, Appears to tread the land. VI. "Halt!" Is't a cloud that flings Its shadow o'er the snow — A shifting cloud, that moves as oft As storm—gusts wildly blow? But hark! a sound — a shout Arises from afar; It is no tempest—voice — it is The Cossack's wild hurrah! VII. Through wreaths of blinding snow They marked, those men of France, The well—known Cossack steed, The well—known Cossack lance. Halt! at the chief's command, The advancing steps are staid, Promptly as in the Champ de Mars, Of old, upon parade. VIII. "Fix bayonets!" At once Is heard the crash of steel — They form the hollow square — At a word — the front ranks kneel There, in the biting cold, Equal to either fate, The brave, devoted regiment, The Cossack's charge await. IX. The Hetman waves his blade — On dash the Cossack horse — No volley from the hollow square Arrests their headlong course. No chieftain's rallying shout, His troop to action calls — But heavily, without a groan, The front rank slowly falls. X. The Hetman reins his steed With a wild and troubled air — What need of Cossack's levelled lance? The hand of death is there! The valiant were no more — From the soil that foemen trod — From the tempest and the battle, Sped their stormy souls to God.

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE GERMAN OF RICHTER, (JEAN PAUL.)

BY MRS. F. M. BAKER.

Reflection of Mt. Vesuvius from the Sea.

"See how the flames rise from below, under the stern; red streams roll heavily around the mountain of the deep and consume the beautiful garden. But safe we glide over the cooling flames, and our countenances smile from the burning wave." Thus said the delighted navigator, and then glanced fearfully towards the thundering mountain. "But," I said: behold, thus presents the poet in the everlasting mirror, the heavy calamities of the world, and the unfortunate glance carelessly on, but the sorrow even gladdens them."

Beyond the sun, in the farthest blue, rest other suns, their strange beams flying for thousands of years upon the road to this small earth, have come not yet near. O, thou softer, nearer God, scarcely can'st injure the weak spirit of man, so mildly thou beamest into his young eye. O, Sun of Suns and Spirits.

In the day spoke the full Sunflower: Apollo sends forth his rays and I spread myself out; he travels round the earth and I follow after him. In the night said the Violet: Lowly stand I and concealed — and bloom in brief night: sometimes Venus' mild sister glistens upon me, then I am discovered and gathered and die in the bosom.

As the beautiful but pale and tender Flowers of May fell off and perished, thus said the leaves: "What infirmity and uselessness! scarcely born, they sink in all their loveliness; but we, how we stand firmly and outlast the summer heat, always large, brilliant and strong, till we finally reach a good age, when we produce and give the earth the richest fruits, and under a cannonade of storms remain with fine variegated colors at rest." But the early fallen Flowers said: "Willing were we to fall; yet before had we produced the fruit." You silent unobserved men in your homes, or in the counting room; you with little parade and display of learning; you noble benefactors unnamed in history; and you unknown mothers, never disheartened, never affected by the glitter in public greatness, in wealth, in that glory which rises over victims slain in battle,—you are the flowers!

Where think you is the likeness of that female mind, which endures much but continually looks up to God, which always appears joyous before the world, while secretly she weeps and suffers, and which the storms of life neither disturb nor obscure?— Near the Heavens: where stands the rainbow; the clouds and winds that fly near him move him not, but he shines forth before his sun and his drops become colors, and he lies upon the Heavens like brilliant morning dew in a clear day.

Who is greatest? the philosopher, who raises himself above the tumults of time and only contemplates without engaging in them, or the one, that from the heights of repose can throw himself amid the bustle and confusion of the world? It is noble, when the eagle soars upward through the tempest, to the serene sky; but it is more noble when floating in the blue vault above the storms, he precipitates himself through them, upon the rocky eyrie, where lay his unfledged and trembling brood.

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ON THE DEATH OF A CHILD.

"Of such is the kingdom of Heaven." Withdrawn in love from earthly pain, And every evil passion's power;
Borne from the world ere sin could stain Or sorrow blight the opening flower: How sweet to think the cherub fair,
That so on earth absorbed our love, Transplanted by an angel's care, Blooms in the Paradise above! And shall we
meet *him* in the sky, So loved and so lamented here? And shall we greet again on high The face and form on earth
so dear? Then let us calmly wait the day, The glorious day of Heavenly bliss; Joy cannot speed nor sorrow stay
The hour that brings a boon like this! B.

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THE PORTRAIT OF TWO SISTERS.

BY MRS. LYDIA H. SIGOURNEY. Sweet sisters — blest the art that keeps The form of grace, the brow of snow, From Time's dark wing, that coldly sweeps To blight those beauties while they glow; But that which gives each charm its power, The heart sincere — the thought refin'd — The love that soothes affliction's hour — The calm and holy light of mind — These ask no limner's magic skill, Nor shrink at adverse fortune's moan; Through fading years they flourish still — Sweet sisters, guard them as your own.

The above lines were suggested on seeing the portrait of two beautiful sisters, the daughters of Robert Walsh, Esq. of Philadelphia, at the studio of Mr. Healy, in Paris.

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THE MOTHER'S OFFERING.

BY MISS A. D. WOODBRIDGE. I Hannah, to Shiloh, brought her child, The beautiful, the pure; The weary way he had beguil'd With many an artless lure, Yet now she nerv'd herself to part — Ah! *woman's strength is in her heart* . II Once and again she fondly press'd Her own, her cherish'd one; With tearful eye, the babe she bless'd, And then she felt 'twas done! He was the Lord's! an off'ring fair, The mother joy'd to leave him there.

GENTILITY.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"Didn't I see you walking up the street with a young lady yesterday, William?" said Anna Enfield to her brother, who had but a few days before returned from New York, after an absence of some months.

"Perhaps you did; I was in company with a young lady in the afternoon," replied the brother.

"Well, who was she? I did not see you until after you had passed the store I was in, and then I could not see her face."

"It was Caroline Murry; you know her, I suppose."

"Caroline Murry! Why, brother! what were you doing in her company?" and Anna's face expressed unfeigned astonishment.

"Why, really, you surprise me, sister! I hope there is no blemish on her character. But what is the matter? I feel concerned to know."

"There's nothing much the matter, brother; but, then, Caroline Murry is not genteel. We don't think of keeping her company."

"Indeed! and you don't associate with her because she is not genteel. Well, if I am any judge of gentility, Anna, Caroline Murry is about as genteel and lady-like as any girl I know, always excepting, of course, my own dear sister."

"Why, brother, how you talk! You don't certainly pretend to compare her with Ernestine Eberly and Zepherine Fitzwilliams, whom you have seen here several times?"

"No, I do not," replied the brother, emphatically.

"Well, they're what I call genteel; and Caroline Murry wouldn't be tolerated in the society where they visit."

"And why not, sister?"

"Havn't I told you? Because she is not considered genteel; that is the reason."

"But I don't understand what you consider genteel, Anna. If I know what gentility means, Caroline, as far as that is concerned, is in every way superior to Ernestine Eberly and Zepherine Fitzwilliams."

"Now, William, that is too bad! If any other man had said so to me, I would never have spoken to him again as long as I lived."

"But seriously, Anna, what do you mean by gentility?" asked the brother.

"That's a question more easily asked than answered; but you know, as well as I do, what is meant by gentility. Every body knows."

"I know what I mean by it, Anna. But it seems that we don't agree on the subject; for I call Caroline Murry genteel, and you don't: so you see that different things may be called by the same name. Now, what I wish to know is, what precise meaning you attach to the word? or, why you do not think Caroline genteel?"

"Why, in the first place, she don't go into genteel company. People of the first rank won't associate with her."

Here ensued a pause, and the brother said —

"Well, why won't they associate with her, Anna? I hope she has not been guilty of improper or immoral conduct."

"O, no! nothing of that. I never heard the slightest reflection on her character," replied the sister. "But, then, genteel young ladies don't work in the kitchen, like hired servants; and she does. And, besides this, call on her when you will, and she is always doing something. Why, I am told that she has even been seen at the chamber windows, fronting on the public street, with her head tied up, sweeping and making the beds! And Clarrissa Spigglar says that she saw her once, with the parlor windows open, sweeping and dusting like a servant! Nobody is going to associate, or be seen in the street with any one who hasn't the spirit to be above the condition of a hireling. And, besides this, whenever she was invited to balls or parties, she never would stay later than ten or eleven o'clock, which every one knows to be vulgar. Somebody had to go home with her, of course; and the choicest beau in the company was almost sure to have his good nature and his politeness taxed for this purpose. Once I heard her say, that she considered the theatre an unfit place for any young lady; she offended the whole company, and has never been invited to a party among genteel people since."

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"And is that all?" said William Enfield, taking a long breath.

"Yes, and I should think that was enough, in all conscience," replied the sister.

"So should I, Anna, to make me respect her."

"Why, William!"

"Why, Anna!"

"But seriously, William, you cannot be in earnest?"

"And seriously, Anna, are you in earnest?"

"Of course I am."

"Well, sister, I'm afraid my old fashioned notions, for such I suppose you will call them, and your new fangled notions, for such I must call them, will not chime well together. All that I have heard you allege against Caroline Murry, raises, instead of lowering her in my estimation. So far as a gentle, and truly lady-like deportment is concerned, I think her greatly superior to the two friends you have named as the pinks of gentility."

Anna looked into the face of her brother for some moments, her countenance exhibiting a mingled expression of surprise and disappointment.

"But you are not going to walk with her in the street any more, I hope," she at length said.

"And why not, Anna?"

"Because, as I have said before, she is not gen —"

"Genteel, you were going to say. But that allegation, you perceive, Anna, has no weight with me; I do not consider it a true one."

"Well, we won't talk any more about it just now, for it would be no use," said the sister, changing her voice and manner; "and so I will change the subject. I want you to make a call or two with me this morning."

"On whom?"

"On Miss Eberly and Miss Fitzwilliams."

"It wouldn't be right for me to do so, would it? You know I don't consider them genteel," said the brother, with affected gravity.

"O nonsense, brother? why will you trifle so?"

"But, seriously, Anna, I do not consider that those young ladies have any very strong claims to gentility; and, like you, I have no wish to associate with those who are not genteel."

"If you talk in that way, William, I shall get angry with you, I cannot hear my most intimate friends spoken of so lightly; and, at the same time accused of a want of gentility. You must remember that you are reflecting upon your sister's associates."

"You must not, and I know you will not, get angry with me, sister, for speaking plainly; and you must do me the justice to believe that in speaking as I do I am in earnest. And you must also remember, that, in saying what you did of Caroline Murry, you spoke of one with whom your brother has associated, and with whom he is still willing to associate."

Anna looked very serious at this, nor could she frame in her own mind a reply that was satisfactory to her. At last she said —

"But, seriously, brother William, won't you call on those young ladies with me?"

"Yes, on one condition."

"Well, what is that?"

"Why, on condition that you will, afterwards, call with me, and see Caroline Murry."

"I cannot do that, William," she replied, in a positive tone.

"And why not, Anna?"

"I have already told you."

"I cannot perceive the force of that reason, Anna. But, if you will not go with me, I must decline going with you. The society of Miss Murry cannot be more repulsive to you, than is that of the Misses Eberly and Fitzwilliams to me."

"You don't know what you are talking about, William."

"That is my own impression about you. But come, now, sister, let us both be rational to each other. I am willing to go with you, if you will go with me."

"Yes, but, William, you don't reflect, that, in doing as you desire me, I will be in danger of losing my present

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position in society. Caroline Murry is not esteemed genteel in the circle in which I move, and if it should be known that I visit her, I will be considered on a level with her. I would do any thing to oblige you, but, indeed, I would be risking too much here."

"You would only be breaking loose," replied the brother, "from the slavery you are now in to false notions of what is truly genteel. If any one esteems you less for being kind, attentive, and courteous, to one against whom suspicion has never dared to breathe a word, and whose whole life is a bright example of the pure and high-toned principles that govern her, that one is unworthy of your regard. True gentility does not exist, my sister, merely in a studied and artificial elegance of behavior, but in inward purity and taste, and a true sense of what is right, all exhibiting themselves in their natural external expression. The real lady judges of others from what they are, and neglects none but the wilfully depraved. True, there are distinctions in society, and there are lines of social demarcation — and all this is right. But we should be careful into what social sphere we are drawn, and how we suffer ourselves to be influenced by the false notions of real worth which prevail in some circles that profess a high degree of gentility. I hold that every one, no matter what may be his or her condition in life, fails to act a true part if not engaged in doing something that is useful. Let me put it to your natural good sense, which do you think the most deserving of praise, Caroline Murry, who spends her time in `doing something' useful to her whole family; or your friends, the Misses Eberly and Fitzwilliams, and those constituting their particular circle, who expect service from others, but never think of rendering any, and who carry their prejudices so far as to despise those who work?"

Anna did not reply, and her brother said —

"I am in earnest, sister, when I say, that you cannot confer a greater favor upon your brother, than to go with him to see Caroline Murry. Cannot I induce you to comply with my wishes?"

"I will go," she replied to this appeal, and then hurried away, evidently no little disturbed in her feelings.

In half an hour she was ready, and, taking her brother's arm, was soon on the way to Miss Ernestine Eberly's residence. That young lady received them with all the graces and fashionable airs she could assume, and entertained them with the idle gossip of the day, interspersed with an occasional spice of envious and ill-natured remark. Knowing that her brother was a close discriminator, and knowing that he was by no means prepossessed in her friends favor, Anna herself observed her more narrowly, and, as it were, with his eyes. It seemed to her that Miss Eberly never was so uninteresting, or so mal-apropos in what she said. The call on Zepherine Fitzwilliams came next in turn. Scanning her also with other eyes than her own, Anna was disappointed in her very dear friend. She looked through her, and was pained to see that there was a hollowness and want of any thing like true strength or excellence of character about her. Particularly was she displeased at a gratuitous sneer thrown out at the expense of Caroline Murry.

And now, with a reluctance which she could not overcome, Anna turned with her brother, towards the residence of the young lady who had caste, because she had good sense and was industrious.

"I know my sister's lady-like character will prompt her to right action, in our next call," said the brother, looking into Anna's face with an encouraging smile.

She did not reply, yet she felt somehow or other pleased with the remark. A few minutes walk brought them to the door, and they were presently ushered into a neat parlor in which was the young lady they were seeking. She sat near a window, and was sewing. She was plainly dressed in comparison with the young ladies just called upon; but in neatness, and in all that constitutes the lady in air and appearance, in every way their superior.

"I believe you know my sister," said Enfield, on presenting Anna.

"We have met a few times," she replied with a pleasant, unembarrassed smile, extending at the same time her hand.

Miss Enfield took the offered hand with less reluctance than she had imagined she could, but a few hours before. Somehow or other, Caroline seemed to her to be very much changed for the better in manner and appearance. And she could not help, during all the visit, drawing contrasts between her and the two very dear friends she had just called upon; and the contrast was in no way favorable to the latter. The conversation was on topics of ordinary interest, but did not once degenerate into frivolity or censoriousness. Good sense manifested itself in almost every sentence that Caroline uttered, and this was so apparent to Anna, that she could not help frequently noticing and involuntarily approving it. "What a pity," Anna once or twice remarked to herself, "that she will be so singular."

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The call was but a brief one. Anna parted with Caroline under a different impression of her character than she had ever before entertained. After her return with her brother, he asked her this abrupt question.

"Which of the young ladies, Anna, of the three we called upon this morning, would you prefer to call your sister?"

Anna looked up, bewildered and surprised, into the face of her brother, for a few moments, and then said; "I don't understand you, brother William."

"Why, I thought I asked a very plain question. But I will make it plainer. Which one of the three young ladies we called upon this morning, would you advise me to marry?"

"Neither," replied Anna promptly.

"That is only jumping the question," he said, smiling. "But, to corner you so that there can be no escape, I will confess that I have made up my mind to marry one of the three. Now tell me which you would rather it would be."

"Caroline Murry, said Anna, emphatically, while her cheeks burned, and her eyes became slightly suffused.

William Enfield did not reply to the hoped for, though rather unexpected admission, but stooping down, he kissed her glowing cheek, and whispered in her ear,

"Then she shall be your sister, and I know you will love one another."

He said truly. In a few months he claimed Caroline Murry as his bride, and her good sense, and winning gentleness of character, influenced Anna, and effectually counteracted the false notions which were beginning to corrupt a good heart and to overshadow a sound judgment. It was not long before she was fully sensible of the real difference which there was between the character of her two friends, and that of her brother's wife; and also between true and false gentility. Although Caroline Murry had been proscribed by a certain circle in which false pride, instead of principle, was the governing motive, she had still been esteemed among those who knew how to look beyond the surface. As the wife of Enfield, she at once took a position in circles where those who had passed her by as unworthy would have sought in vain for admission, and in those circles she shone as a bright particular star.

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THE SAILOR BOY'S LAMENT.

BY MRS. CAROLINE ORNE. Alas! why did I leave My pleasant home A wanderer o'er the waves, Afar to roam? Ah! why was I the first To rend apart Those household ties that long Bound heart to heart, 'Tis night: the waves are round, The sky above, Whence the bright stars look down On those I love; On those whose fondest thoughts Will still be given To me, whene'er they lift Their hearts to Heaven. For this yon beaming stars Seem friends to me, But soon on distant seas My course will be — Seas where a stranger host Will meet my gaze, That ne'er on those I love, Poured their soft rays. Then will there nought be left Save mem'ry's chain, To link my thoughts with those Beyond the main; But many a lovely flower, Unheeded when I mingled joys with them, Will bloom again. The sunny places where The violet Nestled amid the grass, With dew still wet — The fount, the mossy rock, The old oak tree, Will, in my night-watch, oft Come back to me. Oh, for one hour with those I left behind, Whose voices in the night, Borne on the wind, Like the low wind-harp's notes Oft seem to come, Wafted from flowery fields, Near by my home. Why did I leave the fount, The rock, the tree — The glades where wild-flowers bloomed, And roved the bee? Why did I leave my home, And those I love, O'er the wild, pathless sea, Afar to rove?

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THE SUMMER RAIN.

When parched and dewless is the ground, And wither'd herb and flower, New life is spread the earth around,
As falls the summer shower. Each drooping flower new strength receives, And brightly blooms again, As gently
falls upon its leaves The cool refreshing rain. Then, when the clouds has pass'd away, How radiant all appears,
The rain drops glitter on each spray, Like childhood's *laughing tears!*

EXPERIENCE OF A MECHANIC.

"Two young men, both of them mechanics, were married about the same time, and entered life with apparently equal prospects—except that one was rather given to extravagance and fashion, while the other was more prudent and frugal.— The wife of the latter, however, being of a different turn from her husband, became uneasy because the former, without any superior advantages, made more show than they did, and had many more *fine things*. She told her husband that *his* income must be as much as the other's, and that she knew they were able to appear as well as their neighbor. "I want to do as other folks do," was her all conquering argument. Her husband yielded again and again to her entreaties, although professing that he was not *able* .

"At length his more showy neighbor *failed!* And seeing their *fine things* sold under the hammer of the auctioneer, his wife, who was far from being destitute of good feelings, began to mistrust whether by imitating them, and "doing as other folks do" they might not meet with a similar fate. She anxiously inquired of her husband how his affairs stood. He told her that his expenses had exceeded his income, but he hoped to get through and pay what he owed.

"Before long, however, he was *sued for debt*. Then his wife was in *panics!* She knew that his misfortune was chargeable to her folly; although he never reproached her, nor cast any unkind reflections. Disturbed with contending emotions she tried to plan some way to get along in this terrible difficulty! But finding all her endeavors fruitless, she said to her husband, with unfeigned distress, "What *shall* we do? What *can* we do?" "Do?" he calmly replied, "we must do *as other folks do* have our fine things sold under the hammer!"

"This was enough for her. She had seen the beginning and ending of this common folly, and she was satisfied. From that time he had no trouble to persuade her to be frugal and prudent. They were both agreed in pursuing the same course. And it is almost useless to say, that their prosperity was in proportion to their wisdom and prudence."

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WOMAN.

BY FRANCIS W. THOMAS, *Author of 'Clinton Bradshaw,' Etc.* How beautiful is woman's life, When first her suppliant woos and kneels, And she with young and warm hopes rife, Believes he deeply feels. Then day is gladness, and the night Looks on her with its starry eyes, As though it gave her all their might Over men's destinies. Wrapt watchers of the skycy gleam, Then men are like astronomers Who gaze and gladden at the beam Of that bright eye of hers. And if a frown obscure its light, 'Tis like a cloud to star-struck men, Through the long watches of the night, — Oh! for that beam again! How heart-struck that astrologer, A gazer on the starry zone, When first he looked in vain for her, The lovely Pleiad gone. But men watch not the stars always — And though the Pleiad may be lost, Yet still there are a thousand rays From the surrounding host. And woman, long before the grave Closes above her dreamless rest, May be man's empress and his slave, And his discarded jest. Still may that Pleiad shine afar, But pleasure-led o'er summer seas, Who dwells upon a single star Amid the Pleiades. Man courts the constellations bright, That beam upon his bounding bark, Nor thinks upon the left lone light, 'Till all above is dark. Then when he knows nor land nor main, And darkly is his frail bark tossed, He counts the separate stars in vain And mourns the Pleiad lost.

THE SOFT ANSWER.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"I'll give him law to his heart's content, the scoundrel!" said Mr. Singleton, walking backwards and forwards, in a state of angry excitement.

"Don't call harsh names, Mr. Singleton," said Lawyer Trueman, looking up from the mass of papers before him, and smiling, in a quiet, benevolent way, that was peculiar to him.

"Every man should be known by his true name. Williams is a scoundrel, and so he ought to be called!" responded the client, with increasing warmth.

"Did you ever do a reasonable thing in your life, when you were angry?" asked Mr. Trueman whose age and respectability gave him the license to speak thus freely to his young friend, for whom he was endeavoring to arrange some business difficulty with a former partner.

"I can't say that I ever did, Mr. Trueman.— But now, I have good reason for being angry; and the language I use in reference to Williams is but the expression of a sober and rational conviction," replied Singleton, a little more calmly.

"Did you not pronounce him a scoundrel before you received his reply to your last letter," asked Mr. Trueman.

"No, I did not. But that letter confirmed my previously formed impression of his character."

"But I cannot find in that letter any evidence proving your late partner to be a dishonest man. He will not agree to your proposed mode of settlement, because he does not see it to be the most proper way."

"He won't agree to it, because it is an honest and equitable method of settlement, that is all! He wants to over-reach me, and is determined to do so if he can!" responded Mr. Singleton, still excited.

"There you are decidedly wrong," said the lawyer. "You have both allowed yourselves to become angry, and are both unreasonable, and, if I must speak plainly, I think you the most unreasonable, in the present case. Two angry men can never settle any business properly. You have very unnecessarily increased the difficulties in the way of a speedy settlement, by writing Mr. Williams an angry letter which he has responded to in a like unhappy temper. Now, if I am to settle this business for you, I must write all letters that pass to Mr. Williams in future."

"But how can you properly express my views and feelings?"

"That I do not wish to do, if your views and feelings are to remain as they now are, for any thing like adjustment of the difficulties under such circumstances, I should consider hopeless," replied Mr. Trueman.

"Well, let me answer this letter, and after that, I promise that you shall have your own way."

"No, I shall consent to no such thing. It is the reply to *that* letter which is to modify the negotiation for a settlement in such a way as to bring success or failure; and I have no idea of allowing you, in the present state of your mind, to write such a one as will most assuredly defeat an amicable arrangement."

Singleton paused for some time, before making a reply. He had been forming in his mind a most cutting and bitter rejoinder to the letter just alluded to, and he was very desirous that Mr. Williams should have the benefit of knowing that he thought him a "tricky and deliberate scoundrel," with other opinions of a similar character. He found it, therefore, impossible to make up his mind to let the unimpassioned Mr. Trueman write this most important epistle.

"Indeed I must write *this* letter, Mr. Trueman," he said, "There are some things that I want to say to him, that I know you won't write. You don't seem to consider the position in which he has placed me by that letter, nor what is obligatory upon me as a man of honor. I never allow any man to reflect upon me, directly or indirectly, without a prompt response."

"There is, in the Bible," said Mr. Trueman, "a passage that is peculiarly applicable in the present case. It is this—*A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger.*— I have found this precept, in a life that has numbered more than double your years, to be one that may be safely and honorably adopted, in all cases. You blame Mr. Williams for writing you an angry letter, and are indignant at certain expressions contained therein. Now, is it any more right for you to write an angry letter, with cutting epithets, than it is for him?"

"But, Mr. Trueman—"

"I do assure you, my young friend," said the lawyer interrupting him, "that I am acting in this case for your

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benefit, and not for my own; and, as your legal adviser, you must submit to my judgment, or I cannot consent to go on."

"If I will promise not to use any harsh language, will you not consent to let me write the letter?" urged the client.

"You and I, in the present state of your mind, could not possibly come at the same conclusion in reference to what is harsh and what is mild," said Mr. Trueman, "therefore I cannot consent that you shall write one word of the proposed reply. I *must* write it."

"Well, I suppose, then I shall have to submit. When will it be ready?"

"Come this afternoon, and I will give you the draft, which you can copy and sign."

In the afternoon Mr. Singleton came and received the letter prepared by Mr. Trueman. It ran thus, after the date and formal address.

"I regret that my proposition did not meet your approval. The mode of settlement which I suggested was the result of a careful consideration of our mutual interests. Be kind enough to suggest to Mr. Trueman, my lawyer, any plan which you think will lead to an amicable adjustment of our business. You may rely upon my consent to it, if it meets his approbation."

"Is it possible, Mr. Trueman, that you expect *me* to sign such a cringing letter as that?" said Mr. Singleton, throwing it down, and walking backwards and forwards with great irritation of manner.

"Well, what is your objection to it," replied Mr. Trueman, mildly, for he was prepared for just such an exhibition of feelings.

"Objection! How can you ask such a question? Am I to go on my knees to him and beg him to do me justice. No! I'll sacrifice every cent I've got in the world first, the scoundrel!"

"You wish to have your business settled, do you not?" asked Mr. Trueman, looking him steadily in the face.

"Of course I do!—*Honorably* settled!"

"Well, let me hear what you mean by an honorable settlement?"

"Why I mean—"

The young man hesitated a moment, and Mr. Trueman said,

"You mean a settlement in which your interest shall be equally considered with that of Mr. Williams."

"Yes, certainly. And that—"

"And that," continued Mr. Trueman, "Mr. Williams, in the settlement, shall consider and treat you as a gentleman."

"Certainly I do. But that is more than he *has* done!"

"Well, never mind. Let what is past go for as much as it worth. The principal point of action is in the present."

"But I'll never send that mean, cringing letter, though."

"You mistake its whole tenor, I do assure you, Mr. Singleton. You have allowed your angry feelings to blind you. You, certainly, carefully considered, before you adopted it, the proposed basis of a settlement, did you not?"

"Of course I did."

"So the letter which I have prepared for you, states. Now as an honest and honorable man, you are, I am sure, willing to grant to him the same privilege which you asked for yourself, viz, that of proposing a plan of settlement. Your pro position does not seem to please him: now it is but fair that he should be invited to state how he wishes the settlement to be made. And in giving such an invitation, a gentleman should use gentlemanly language."

"But, he don't deserve to be treated like a gentleman. In fact, he has no claim to the title," the young man.

"If he has none, as you say, *you* profess to *be* a gentleman, and all gentlemen should prove by their actions and their words that they are *gentle* men."

"I can't say that I am convinced by what you say, but, as you seem so bent on having it your own way, why, here, let me copy the thing and sign it," said the young man, suddenly changing his manner.

"There now!" he added, passing across the table the brief letter he had copied, "I suppose he'll think me a low spirited fellow, after he gets that. But he's mistaken. After it's all over, I'll take good care to tell him, that it didn't contain my sentiments!"

Mr. Trueman smiled, as he took the letter, and went on to fold and direct it.

"Come to-morrow afternoon, and I think we'll have things in a pretty fair way," he said, looking up with his

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usual pleasant smile, as he finished the direction of the letter.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Singleton," he said, as that gentleman entered his office on the succeeding day.

"Good afternoon," responded the young man. "Well, have you heard from that milk and water letter of yours? I can't call it mine."

"Yes, here is the answer. Take a seat, and I will read it to you," said the old gentleman.

"Well, let's hear it."

"Dear George—I have your kind, reasonable, and gentlemanly note of yesterday, in reply to my harsh, unreasonable, and ungentlemanly one of the day before. We have both been playing the fool; but you are ahead of me in becoming sane. I have examined, since I got your proposition for a settlement, and it meet my views precisely. My foolish anger kept me from seeing it before. Let our mutual friend, Mr. Trueman, arrange the matter, according to the plan mentioned, and I shall most heartily acquiesce. Yours, &c."

"He never wrote that letter in the world!" exclaimed Singleton, starting to his feet.

"You know his writing, I presume," said Mr. Trueman, handing him the letter.

"It's Thomas Williams' own hand, as I live!" ejaculated Singleton, on glancing at the letter.— "My old friend, Thomas Williams, the best natured fellow in the world!" he continued, his feelings undergoing a sudden and entire revolution. "What a fool I have been!"

"And what a fool *I* have been!" said Thomas Williams, advancing from an adjoining room, at the same time extending his hand towards Singleton.

"God bless you, my old friend!" exclaimed Singleton, grasping his hand. "Why what has been the matter with us both?"

"My young friends," said old Mr. Trueman, one of the kindest hearted men in the world, rising and advancing towards them. "I have known you long, and have always esteemed you both. This pleasant meeting and reconciliation, you perceive, is of my arrangement. Now let me give you a precept that will both make friends, and keep friends. It has been my motto through life; and I don't know that I have an enemy in the world. It is

"A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger."