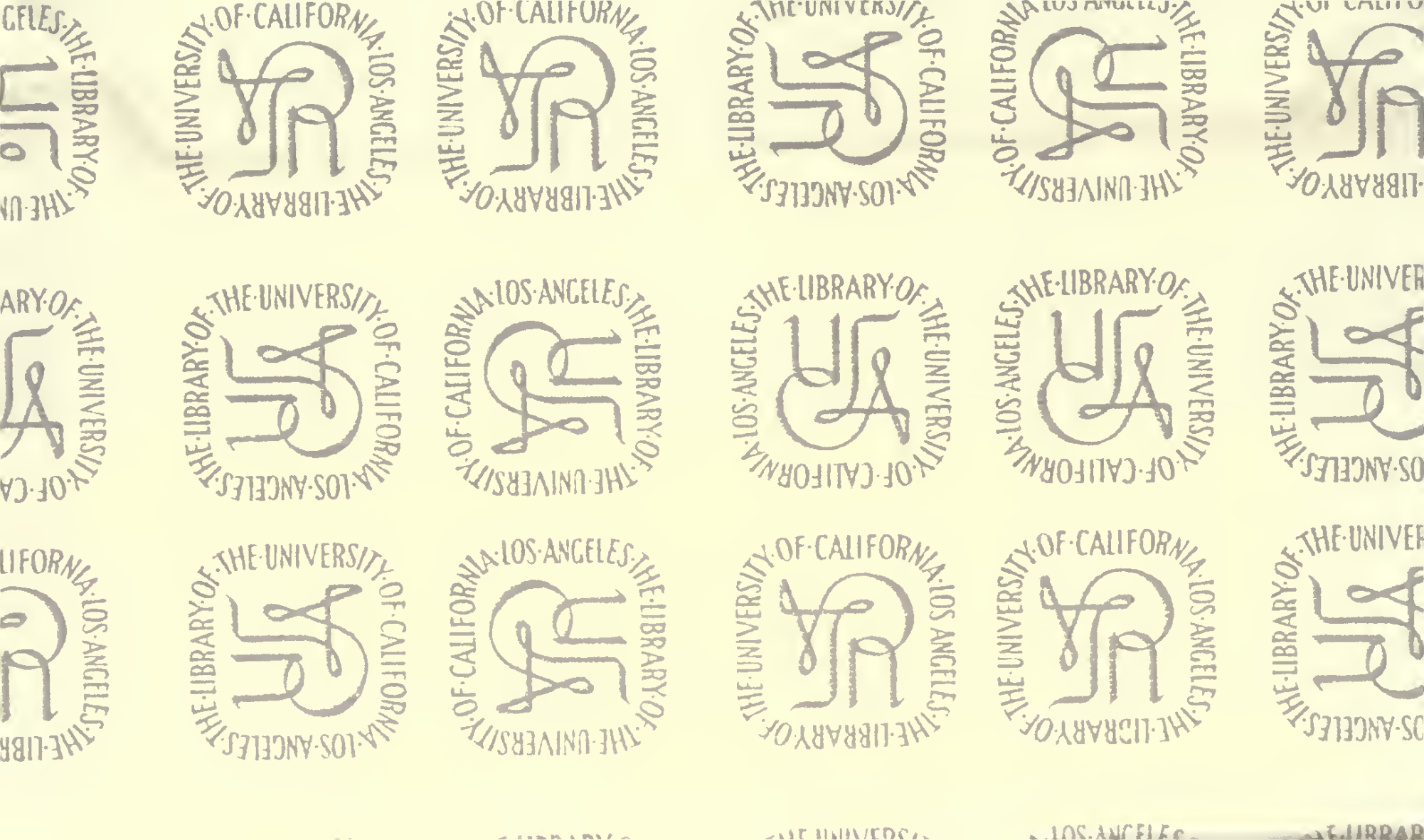
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# RECOLLECTIONS

OF A

# HOUSEKEEPER.

BY MRS. CLARISSA PACKARD.

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*Quickly.* Look you, I keep his house, and I wash, wring, brew, bake, scour, dress meat and drink, make the beds, and do all myself.

*Simple.* 'Tis a great charge to come under one body's hand.

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PS
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TO MRS. FAY,

Of Cambridge, Massachusetts,

THE FOLLOWING AUTHENTIC SKETCHES,

THE MINGLED RESULT

OF

OBSERVATION AND EXPERIENCE,

ARE AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR.

*Charleston, S. C.*

1732016

# RECOLLECTIONS

OF A

# HOUSEKEEPER.

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## CHAPTER I.

Ici tout est vivant, tout parle à ma memoire

TRENEUIL.

Far up the tide of time I turn my sail.

ROGERS.

My maiden name was Clarissa Gray. I was born in the neighbourhood of Boston (Mass.), in 17—, and educated with the few facilities at that time afforded for the young; that is, I read "No man may" in Webster's Spelling-book, then advanced to the more elaborate "Art of Speaking," and committed to memory, page by page, Morse's Geography, without maps, of course in glorious uncertainty with regard to the position even of my own country. My

ciphering-book, however, was my pride, and my mother's too. With what delight did she display those sums, that rose like Banquo's ghosts,

"And drew at each remove a lengthening chain."

At the age of eight years I recollect seeing my mother reading a thin black book, which attracted my attention. It was "Blair's Grave," and she read me the passage,

——"But see, the well-plumed hearse comes nodding on."

How distinctly my imagination pictured that hearse and those nodding plumes! I recollect no other books, until I saw and *devoured* Shakspeare, at the age of nine, except an odd volume of Pope, containing "The Messiah," and "The Rape of the Lock." I sometimes look around on the mass of books collected by my children, and am half skeptical with regard to the value of juvenile literature, when I remember how my mind opened under the mysteries of those writings.

In justice, however, to the good tendency of

engravings, I must mention, that the effect produced on me by the only two picture-books I possessed was an important one. One of them was "Watts's Hymns for Infant Minds," where fighting animals are portrayed. When friends have wounded or foes oppressed me, the strong but simple lines which elucidate the picture,

"Let *dogs* delight to bark and bite,"

have arisen to my memory, and calmed my chafed spirit, when mere flimsy sentiment would have afforded me no shelter against wrong.

The other book, and it is as distinct to my imagination now as the rich landscape by Fisher which hangs before me, contained a representation of Miss Kitty Greedy leaning both elbows on a table, with her mouth crammed to repletion, trying in vain to address her mamma. The *morale* has clung to me to this day, and I never see a young or old *gourmand*, or detect myself in a superfluous mouthful, without thinking of Kitty Greedy.

The utmost term of my *solid education* was

one year of attendance at the town school,—a square building, with one room for both sexes, near an open common, without a shrub or tree to grace or shade it. Thither, bearing my own satchel, I walked a mile, being a journey of four miles daily, to make my "young idea shoot." I will not say much for my ideas, but my limbs were not backward in the process. I *shot* up into a tall girl, and was allowed to go occasionally with my mother to take tea sociably with her friends at four o'clock, carrying my knitting-work for occupation.

My accomplishments are soon told. I opened an exhibition ball with one of the slow minuets of the last century, and I cannot but stop to render a tribute of admiration to that charming movement, in spite of the admirers of the lazy quadrille, or the seductive waltz.

A single courtesy or bow, when well ordered, is graceful; think then how delightful must be the spectacle of a series of these beautiful curves, performed to slow and appropriate music, by so attractive a couple as I certainly be-

lieved Clarissa Gray and my partner Benjamin Homes to be. He was a red-cheeked boy of thirteen, and had a pair of new white gloves for the occasion, unharmed by contact with mine, for the minuet allows but the meeting of the extremities of the fingers, and that lightly. I know not thy destiny, Benjamin, but I have sometimes wished thou mightst tread through life on such polished footing, with sweet music to lead thee, and a partner as kind.

My teacher honoured, or rewarded, me with a choice of fancy dances, and I decided on the slow minuet. How brilliant was the scene! Our old clergyman and his lady were stationed in conspicuous seats, and looked on with benevolent smiles. We scarcely felt the floor while moving with a step closely resembling the waltz, our hands raised, the top of each fore-finger making a circle with the thumb, then slowly descending, while with sidelong glances, and sidelong steps, with measured obeisances, we evolved the "poetry of motion."

I commenced learning music upon an old

spinet of my mother's; but her indulgence soon imported for me a harpsichord of the latest fashion, and though my more fastidious ear may be critically pleased with the improvements in the modern piano-forte, I have never felt so rapt and raised as when I sang to a silent circle, "Henry's Cottage Maid," or "Her mouth which a smile," to my own harpsichord.

My sampler was one of unrivalled beauty. It possessed every shade and glory of tent-stitch. At the upper corners were cherubs' heads and wings. Under the alphabets stood Adam and Eve, draperied with fig-leaves, and between them these appropriate lines—

> Clarissa Gray is my name,
> My age is ten.
> This work in hand my friends may have,
> When I am dead and laid in grave.

This sampler was a matter of curiosity, and sometimes of ridicule, to my children; but now that they perceive my gray hairs and increasing infirmities, I find the sampler neatly folded and laid aside, and sometimes a conscious look re-

veals to me that they think I may soon be folded to rest in the grave.

Our pecuniary circumstances enabled us to indulge in the luxuries of life; but none of these interfered with my education for usefulness. My mother was proud to say that I could manufacture a frilled shirt in two days, with stitches that required a microscope to detect them. I made my own bed, swept and dusted the apartments, mended my own clothes, and when pudding or cake was to be made, rolled up my sleeves, and went to beating eggs, with strokes that I should half like to see given to lazy modern girls, lolling over new-fangled cookery-books. But this was not all.

"Clarissa," said my judicious mother, "by not knowing how to make puddings and pies, you may be occasionally mortified; but if you are ignorant of roasting and boiling, you may be annoyed every day."

On washing and ironing days, therefore, I spent a large portion of my time in the kitchen; well known, on such occasions, as the New-

England Pandemonium. Quite contented did I feel, if able to retire to my bed-room, "my loop-hole of retreat," by four o'clock in the afternoon. The only domestic I distinctly remember in my mother's establishment was a washerwoman, called Ma'am Bridge, whose mouth and chin resembled the modern pictures of old Mother Hubbard, and who was an extra assistant on washing days. She wore a mob cap, with a broad unstarched frill, which, in hanging out clothes against the wind, fell back, displaying her sharp physiognomy. One day I was laying some ham on the gridiron, my mother preferring it broiled to fried, while Ma'am Bridge was *sudsing* the clothes in a tub before her, and dexterously throwing them into a *rinsing* tub behind. A sudden thunder-gust had arisen, and a brilliant flash of lightning blazed through the kitchen. I heard a great splash, and turning round saw Ma'am Bridge seated in the wash-tub, with the water gushing out on all sides; her head was thrown back, and her broad frill with it, developing a mingled

expression of consternation at the danger, and joy at her escape. It was one of those odd combinations in which the ludicrous triumphs over the fearful. As she rose from the tub, like Venus from her shell, or Cowper's Rose, "all dripping and drown'd," I laughed until I brought upon myself her just indignation.

I do not feel myself called upon to say how many loaves of bread, under my apprenticeship, came out of the oven as heavy as a bad joke, or as sour as an unkind one; how my pickles turned soft and yellow; how I filled a bed without curing the feathers; how I put pepper instead of alspice into a batch of mince-pies; how many chemical separations instead of affinities took place in my baked beans and Indian puddings; and how my pan-dowdy disconcerted all the family, except my cousin Sam, a black-eyed boy, with a raging appetite, who dined with us every Sunday, and who affirmed that the paste was *not* tough, and that he did not mind if the apple cores did choke him a little. These mischances will happen in every department, and

I may claim the sympathy of the lawyer who blunders in his maiden speech, of the doctor who kills his first patient, and of the preacher who soothes his first hearers to sleep. This acknowledgment, however, I will make *en passant*, that my mother's persevering tuition in cookery has saved me a thousand mortifications, to which I have seen ignorant housewives exposed.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE FIRST TRIAL.

It were a goot motion if we give over pribbles and prabbles, and desire a marriage between Master Abraham and Mistress Page. PARSON EVANS.

IT was beginning to be a subject of deep calculation with me, whether a brunette should wear pink or yellow riband on her bonnet; and I had decided on the former, when one Sabbath, on entering the meeting-house, I observed a stranger outside the porch, and on glancing at the gallery, after I was seated, I again perceived him there. I thought he looked at our pew more than was correct, but, some how or other, I kept looking at him to see whether he would become more attentive to the exercises, and thus our eyes repeatedly met.

After service he came to the porch, for in New-England people retire from their pews

with a silent bow to their acquaintance, and introduced himself to my mother as Mr. Packard from Boston, the son of a friend. He remained a few days at the village on law business, for he was an attorney, and though my mother was one of the most unostentatious women in the world, yet before he left us she made him understand that I could skewer a goose, roll puff paste, complete a shirt, and make a list carpet, as well as I played on the spinet and worked tent-stitch. She was on the point of telling him that I could spin a little, but I protested against any thing so old-fashioned.

According to my motto, I "gave over pribbles and prabbles," and married, at the age of seventeen, Edward Packard. I remember the moment, when, after a short ride, I first entered my adopted home in the North Square, one of the most genteel quarters in the then town of Boston. The new carpet, new chairs, and new mahogany, with its virgin hue, undarkened by wax and turpentine, are all before me. My mother was with me, and though she held one

of my hands, and my husband the other, I could not restrain my tears from falling, happy though they were.

I felt half ashamed to praise the parlour furniture, though I secretly said, "It is mine." On recovering from my shyness, I visited the various apartments, and I think I was most attracted by the nicely sanded kitchen, not even excepting a closet, which I might now call a *boudoir*, fitted up expressly for me by my husband.

How bright were those new tins and brasses, arranged with ostentatious glitter on the walls and dresser! How comfortable that suspended warming-pan! How red and clean those bricks, that extended to the right and left, leaving space for a family in the corners. A *settle*, too, that glory of New-England kitchens, was there, now banished for the inhospitable chair, which accommodates one instead of three! I had often presided in a parlour, but never before was mistress of a kitchen!

A council had been called previous to my marriage, of the number of "help" which we

should require, and it was decided that a female cook, and a little girl to "wait and tend," would answer our purpose, and be sufficiently genteel.

I was introduced, on that memorable evening, to Nancy, the cook. She was the picture of cleanliness. She had on, what is called in New-England, a "calico short loose gown," and at the south, "a chintz wrapper," with a check apron, a little starched, tied round her waist. Both cook and kitchen were in perfect keeping.

"Well, Nancy," said I, with a half modest, half patronising tone, "I am a young housekeeper, but I dare say we shall get along very well."

"Oh, ma'am," replied Nancy, "*I* am not at all petikelar. I never has no differences with nobody."

How amiable! thought I; and I gave her a calico bag, containing iron holders, kettle holders, wipers, and dishcloths, presented me by an old aunt, who had quilted them for the occasion, and who said, with a commiserating voice,

as she presented them, "Young housekeepers have no rags, poor things!"

The same kind friend gave me a rag-bag, and repeated to me an anecdote she was fond of relating, of a lady in Cambridge, who sold rags enough at four cents a pound to buy herself a silver porringer. "And mind, Clarissa," continued she, "that you do not throw away the ends of your thread—they all help to fill up." I heeded her directions; and who knows but some act of diplomacy, or some effusion of genius, may have been perpetuated on the paper made from my "shreds and patches?"

My husband was at home nearly all the first week, and my mother, nominally my guest, relieved me from every care; but on the Monday following, she returned to her own residence, Edward went to his office, and I was left alone. I soon felt weary of idleness. How willingly would I have darned a stocking, or clear-starched a muslin; but, alas, every thing was *whole*, and in order. I tried to find a withered leaf on my geraniums, but they all looked as fresh as

if they too were just married. Centre tables were not then in fashion, or I could have beguiled a little time in disarranging them for effect; but no! every article of furniture was in its proper parallel, and every chair at right angles with its neighbour, while books and knick-knacks, as drawing-room luxuries, were unknown.

To amuse the tedious hours of my husband's absence, I went into the kitchen, and offered to assist Nancy in making a pudding. My overtures were coldly received, but I thought that that might be "her way," and I proceeded to break the eggs, giving little Polly the raisins to pick.

"*We* don't put so much milk as that ere in puddins," said Nancy, eying me keenly.

My mother had taught me culinary arts with great care, and I felt on strong ground while I defended *my* quantity of milk. Nancy answered me again with some heat, and when she found me following my own recipe in si-

lence, dashed the sieve full of flour on the table, and putting her arms akimbo, said,

"Well, *Miss* Packard, if you will spile the puddin, you must bake it yourself."

I was thunderstruck! A bride, to whom for a week all had submitted as to a queen; from whom commands were favours, and requests privileges! I felt the blood rush to my face, my hands trembled, and fearing to expose my agitation, I quietly laid down the materials I was preparing, and said, with a great effort at calmness,

"Finish this pudding, and bake it for dinner."

I just made out to reach the parlour, when I burst into tears, and sobbed like a child, comforting myself, however, with the idea that I should compose myself and bathe my eyes before Edward came home. But that was not to be. With a young husband's impatience, he had hurried through his business, and thinking to give me a pleasant surprise, stood by my side.

I cannot describe his concern at my situation,

while I, mortified to the heart at having exposed myself in tears for such a trifle, could scarcely explain the cause of my distress. When I did make him understand the nature of the provocation I had received, he grew angry (I had never seen him angry before), and walking with long strides into the kitchen, he dismissed Nancy on the spot.

With a woman's glance I saw the consequences. Nancy laid aside a raw steak, that she was making tender by her passionate treatment, and walked up stairs in high dudgeon, not forgetting to take up the wages which Edward had thrown on the table. Five minutes after, we heard her departing tramp on the stairs.

It was no time for crying now. Little Polly and I had to go to cooking in good earnest. My husband turned off the affair, when his temper was cooled, with a very pleasant grace, and as I placed the before-mentioned steak on the gridiron, exclaimed,

" Haste hither, Eve, with speed;
And what thy stores contain bring forth, and pour abundance.

When our dinner was cooked, we formed a procession from the kitchen to the parlour. Edward bore the steak, whistling a march. I followed, laughing, with the pudding, for we had to economize time, and little Polly, enjoying the joke, trudged after with the potatoes.

Still we felt that there was an effort in all this, and when my husband looked at me for the first time alone, at his table, he perceived that the kitchen fire, added to the effects of weeping, had deepened the hue of my complexion beyond the delicacy of beauty, and as I was assisting him to a potato, detected a spot of "smut" (pot-black) on the finger on which he had placed a pearl ring. I blushed deeper crimson; and tears, those trials to young wives, started to my eyes. Edward seemed not to notice it, and I transferred the sable stain to one of my bridal handkerchiefs.

## CHAPTER III.

### SALLY CURRY.

She is not the fairest, although she is fair,
O' nice education but sma' is her share,
Her parentage humble as humble can be.—BURNS.

NOTHING could be more calm than our evening meal after the excitement of our cook's departure. We felt the happiness of that intercourse where "love is." It was autumn.—The beauty and freshness of summer were in the heavens, and the warmth of winter on our hearth.

I felt no embarrassment in carrying my shining brass tea-kettle into the parlour, and making tea there, which, with blushing importance, I poured out for my husband. He was full of the gentle pleasantry of satisfied affection.

Little Polly superintended the toasting iron, that luxury so little known in some places, where forks are destroyed daily in *burning* one

piece of bread, while the iron *toasts* three in less time.

My mother was soon apprized of the loss of my cook, and the very next evening "help" came in the form of a gentle, but ignorant-looking girl of eighteen. She was one to whom I would willingly have extended my hand, and given my heart. I dreaded to think that so soft a creature should be visited by the elements "too roughly." She was however active, and her duties were soon well performed. Sally had been an inmate of my family but six weeks, when one day she came into the parlour, and, colouring very deeply, handed me a letter, which was written as follows.

"SALEM, ————.

"Dear Sally,—I've got home safe from Calcutta, and reckon that you will be glad to see me, tho' sometimes I aint so sure. I calculate to be in Boston by to-morrow, and shall find you out. If you haven't got another sweetheart I shall want to marry you Sunday night; if you

have, I shall take ship Monday morning and be off again.

"Yours till death,

"Sam'l. Curry.

"P.S.—I have had two lucky 'ventures, and we shan't want for nothing. I hope you aint lost the ring."

"Well, Sally," said I, smiling, "am I to lose you on Sunday night?"

"I am afeard so, ma'am," replied she, sliding behind the door.

"Don't be ashamed, Sally," said I. "I have shown you such an example of marrying one whom *I* preferred, that I am sure I cannot blame *you*."

Upon this Sally looked up, and I asked her how long she had known Mr. Curry.

Sally began twisting a gold ring that was on the fore-finger of her left hand, and said,

"My mother, ma'am, was a poor woman in Salem, the widow of a sea-captain. He was lost on a voyage, and she fell sick, declining,

like. I was her only child. It was a very stormy night, a year ago, and my mother was very ill. I sent to a neighbour to say that I was afeard she wouldn't stand it. Our neighbour sent back she daresn't leave her baby, who was sick, but a young man what was boarding there, a sailor named Curry, a very decent person, would come and watch with me. I was thankful to see a living countenance, and said he might come and welcome.

"That was a forlorn night; but Mr. Curry helped me a sight. My mother was in a kind of a faint like all night, and he was as tender as a child to her. Once he began to tell a sea story, to try and cheer me up, but he found he made me cry more, because it didn't seem somehow respectful to talk of the things of life by a death-bed, and he stopped talking, and only now and then, when he found he couldn't comfort me, nor raise her neither, he would fetch up such a pitying look, as if he wished he could.

"The day was just dawning when my mother

seemed to come to a little, and spoke right out, 'Sally, dear.'

"'What, mother?' says I, and my heart beat as if it would come through.

"'Is there anybody with you?' says she.

"'Yes, dear mother, a friend,' says I, whispering.

"'Will he take care of you?' says she, and she looked with her sunk eye full on Curry.

"Curry got right up, and came by the bedside, and knelt down, and took her thin hand, and said, in a voice quite loud and solemn, 'I *will* take care of her, so help me God.'

"She didn't say another word, but just gave a kind of sigh, as it were, not sorrowful, but as if she was satisfied, and squeezed his hand, and so she died.

"The sun rose then quite glorious. The light didn't look right to me; it shot to my heart like ice, and I would rather have had it dark again.

"Curry was very kind and serviceable to me, but just as he was going to call in the neigh-

bours, one of the crew came, and said, the vessel was gettin under way, and he must go.

"There wasn't much to be said, because he had to go so quick, but he kissed me once (you know I was in trouble, and that somehow brings us all equal), and took a gold ring out of his waistcoat pocket, and putting it on my finger, said, 'I bought that ring for my sister; but, Miss Sally, I love you more than I do her now, and if I live to come back, you shall see that I do, that you shall.'

"I felt as if my mother had died over again when he went out, but the neighbours soon came in, and she was decently laid out. Curry left twenty dollars to pay expenses. I was the only mourner at her funeral, and I cried enough for a hundred; and it seemed to me, the night after the funeral, that I should just like to go and throw myself into the ocean that poor Curry sailed on.

"Time passed on, and the ring was a kind of comfort to me. Sometimes I was so foolish as

to talk to it, as if it could understand, and I would ask it questions I wouldn't like to ask anybody else.

"The folks told me I should get higher wages in Boston than in Salem, and I have made out tolerable. I don't know how it was, it seemed to me that I would give myself a year to hear good news in, and I thought I might as well be laying up things with my earnings, when they turned up cheap, so that I have got pretty considerable beforehand.

"I hope, ma'am," said Sally after a pause, for I was silent from the emotion her simple story caused me—"I hope you don't think I've been over-quick in my liking. I heard a very good character of Curry from the folks he lodged with, and the image of him that night seemed to take the place of my mother's, and filled up a very heavy want in my heart."

"Oh no, Sally," said I, quite charmed with her simplicity, "I do not blame you, but I hear the sound of a chaise on the pavement at the side door."

Sally's colour went and came, but she answered a sailor-like knock from the outside, and I believe Curry was very well satisfied with his reception.

This was Friday. On the following day the kitchen had an extra cleaning. I beat up a wedding cake, and we made busy preparations for Sunday evening.

The bride looked very sweetly in a plain white cambric frock, and as she stood beside Curry, reminded me of those beautiful figures we sometimes see painted on the sterns of vessels; while he appeared like the good stout ship, which, though destined to bear her through winds and waves, was powerful enough to do it safely.

When our good pastor, the Rev. Mr. Lathrop, asked him the customary question, "Will you love, protect, and cherish this woman?" &c., Curry was not content with the simple bowing affirmative. Something seemed struggling in his mind. He grasped Sally's hand, and with such an utterance as she told me he had used

on the night her mother died, said, "I will, so help me God."

On Monday morning my husband presented Sally with a large brass kettle, a common New-England present on such occasions, and the happy couple bade us farewell. As they rode away, Curry waved his red handkerchief, and Sally put her new cambric one to her eyes, between tears and smiles. I never saw my pretty cook again.

# CHAPTER IV.

## CINDA TYLER.

How now, my headstrong?
Where have you been gadding?

*Romeo and Juliet.*

Frae morn to e'en its naught but toiling,
At baking, roasting, frying, boiling.

*The Twa Dogs.*

I HAD become so much attached to my gentle Sally, that I was really quite dispirited at her departure; but, not being provided with immediate assistance, was soon engrossed with household cares. And let no one underrate the value of those cares to an unoccupied or even a harassed mind, whose mental resources are limited. Who has not seen the tear of sorrow dry away amid their gentle but imperious demands? Who has not seen oppressed and tender women forget, in the routine which constitutes the comfort of a husband, that husband's unkindness? And then, what

an admirable outlet are household cares for a scold! View that face screwed up to moderation and even courtesy at the breakfast table. How gracefully is that cup forwarded! What gentle accents accompany it! But the lord and master of the household departs! Hear his last footstep, and then notice how the clouds gather round that delicate creature, until the brow is contracted, the voice is sharpened, the eye darts withering beams, and those lips open (shall I say it?) for the unequivocal terms *slut and hussy!* While sometimes, rarely I hope, the tender palm comes vibrating in unthought-of vigour on some uncovered ear, or (alas for delicacy!) that little implement which once won the heart of an Eastern Prince* is flourished over an extended and trembling hand.

My mother, with a mother's care, supplied me with new "help." She was from Vermont, and as green as her native hills. Cinda Tyler was her name, though she took some pains to tell me she was christened Lucinda.

* See Cinderella, or the Little Glass Slipper.

What a contrast to my Sally! No one could look at her without thinking of *strapper*, *bouncer*, or some such inelegant association. She had carrot-coloured hair of unmanageable thickness, even when the experiment of a comb was tried, which was rarely done except on the Sabbath, when even the poorest in New-England feel as if the purity of the body should honour the day, whatever may be the undress of the soul.

Cinda's arms were bare and red, large and short. She had a perpetual look of eager curiosity. There were a few things I never could break her of. She invariably nodded her head to my visiters, even if she had a dish full of meat in her hand, and said, "How fares ye?" And say it she would, until an answer was extorted, whatever might be the repulsive dignity of the person addressed. I endeavoured, at first by nods and signs, to make her understand that this ceremony could be dispensed with, but all in vain; with her eyes wide open, she stood at my parlour-door, "making her manners" (little

bobbing courtesies), until she obtained the sought-for notice. Finding her incorrigible to hints, I told her, as she was using one evening the whole artillery of her politeness on Judge ——, a friend of my husband's, that she might go out. She opened her great gray eyes wider than ever, and said, somewhat gruffly, "I ain't a goin to let his honour s'pose I was brought up mungst wild criters." His honour, who had been stating a case of great interest, roused by her voice, perceived her for the first time, and said, with perfect good-nature, "Ah, how d'ye do?" and Cinda set him down from that moment as a gentleman; and so he was. It is that immediate conformity to the *feelings* of individuals that marks a gentleman or lady, whether they address their equals or inferiors.

One morning, in my absence from home, a lady called to see me, and Cinda, from sheer curiosity, anticipated little Polly in going to the door.

"Is Mrs. Packard within?" said the lady.

"No, ma'am," said Cinda, with great prompt-

ness, "but you'd better come in and set with me a spell."

I met my intended guest at the gate, and could not account for her look of ill-suppressed mirth, until Cinda gave me a hint of what she called manners in her reception.

Another peculiarity of Cinda's was to examine every new purchase of mine, and ask the price, and sometimes the ornaments of my visiters did not escape this ordeal. I was getting somewhat wearied with these oddities, notwithstanding her skill in washing, hanging on pots and kettles, and all the drudgery of her calling, when one evening a few ladies visited me, and Cinda, after sufficient drilling, undertook to hand tea, solemnly promising me not to address them. As she passed from one to another, I felt a little anxiety at the look of scrutiny she cast, from the head downward, on every individual. Her appearance began to attract the attention of my friends, but she preserved silence, until, at the close of the service, a very sweet-looking girl bent her blue eye upon

Cinda with a smile. The temptation was irresistible. She had an empty tray in her hand, and lowering it suddenly, said, "I guess, miss, them 'ere beads of your'n cost considerable." The younger ladies thrust their pocket-handkerchiefs into their mouths, and the elder ones stared, while Cinda, catching my eye, and perceiving a frown, cried out, "Lud, Miss Packard, if I ain't spoke in the party;" and then, with a look of greater horror, "Lud, lud, I've spoke agin!" then catching up the tray, she retreated in confusion.

It was impossible for the most rigid muscles to refrain from laughter. The shouts reached poor Cinda's ears in her culinary domain, and it required all the inducements I could urge to prevail on her to carry the tray again.

Curiosity, which seemed to be her master-passion, prompted her to try on the garments of others. A French lady from St. Domingo, for whom Edward was employed in a law-suit, came to pass a few days with me. Her dress was fashionable in the extreme. It was Cin-

da's province to arrange the bed-rooms while we breakfasted. Mam'selle Ligne had occasion to leave the table one morning in quest of her handkerchief, and her light step was unperceived by Cinda, who stood before the glass. She had placed on her carroty locks Mam'selle Ligne's beautiful evening cap, and thrown a slight scarf over her shoulders; and there she stood, with an air of the most complacent satisfaction, gazing at her own charms. The joke was too good to be lost. Mam'selle tripped down, and asking Edward and myself to follow, we all went up softly, ignorant of what we were to behold.

Human gravity could not hold out at such a spectacle. Edward gave one of those laughs through his nose that always sound louder than a natural one, and poor Cinda started in dismay at beholding us. She took off the scarf in her hurry, but forgot the cap, which was of a very light material, and began making up the bed with great zeal.

Just at this crisis the butcher knocked at the

outer door, and Cinda, glad to escape, raced down, cap and all, to receive him. "Holla, Cinda," said he, "are you setting that 'ere cap at me?" This was too much for Cinda's nerves. She caught up the leg of lamb he had extended to her, and running into the kitchen, hid her blushes in her check apron.

## CHAPTER V.

### LUCY COOLEDGE.

Servitude is honour, not
Disgrace, when falling fortunes make it needful.
GOETHE. *Herman and Dorothea.*

CINDA blundered through ten months in my service, sometimes fretting and sometimes amusing me with her oddities, before her curiosity and love of change induced her to leave me. At length, with some little emotion, she announced her intention of removing.

"I know, *Miss* Packard," said she, "that you'll miss me more than enough; such a bird is not to be caught on every bough. 'Tisn't everybody that has my knack at thrashing about among the pots and kettles. I'm not the person that holds a frying-pan with white gloves on. But I've a notion to see a little more of the world. *Miss* Bachelor is going out to Roxbury to live, and I'm to try how she suits me a

spell. Howsomever, as I don't want to leave you without nobody, Mr. Tucker, the butcher, says one Lucy Cooledge is in petickelar want of a sitivation, being as how old Miss Amory died two weeks ago, and ain't left her no provision."

On the following morning I had a conversation with Mr. Tucker about Lucy Cooledge. The narration interested me, though I drew the inference that she would not be as dexterous in "thrashing about among the pots and kettles" as her predecessor. She had been adopted in orphan-infancy by Mrs. Amory, and educated as well as her slender means would permit. The tendency of her teaching, it appeared, was to form a religious character, and cultivate great original sensibility in her young charge. For two years, Mrs. Amory had been lingering with a chronic affection, and left Lucy, at the age of seventeen, without a shelter, except from the charity of neighbours.

"It was a crying sight," said Mr. Tucker, "to see the poor thing the day Mrs. Amory

died, looking around so piteous, as much as to say, 'I have nothing left now!' She sat as still as could be, for you know there are folks enough always busy at layings-out, and just watched what they did in a wistful kind of a way. I made a shift to get a neighbour to ride around with the meats for me, first picking out a real tender bit of mutton for some broth for Miss Lucy; and made as good a bargain as I could about the coffin. I happened in again on the afternoon of the burying, and I was scared to see her so quiet. When her name was called out to walk with Deacon Hodges as chief mourner, she just went straight forward, without putting her handkerchief to her eyes, and didn't seem to care to lean on his arm, even. She walked right on to the grave, and gave a look as if she could not look far enough, nor long enough, and then came back—but no crying, not a drop. She went into the sitting-room, where the chairs still stood thick and close, and sat down, and there wasn't one of us that know'd what to say. You know, ma'am, if she

had only took on, we could have comforted her. At last Deacon Hodges' wife went to take off her bonnet, seeing she didn't move, and took hold of her hand. 'My gracious, Lucy,' says she, 'your hand is like ice;' and so it was, though it was a warm day, and her cheeks were like ice too; and says she, with a kind of shiver, 'My heart is ice.' They fell to rubbing her hands, and gave her some wine to drink, and in a half an hour or thereabouts, she fetched a sigh, and large tears rolled down her cheeks; and them as stood by wiped them off, for she seemed not to know that she was a crying. She has come to now pretty much, but has an ugly cough, and I don't like the look of her eyes. Mrs. Amory taught her all kinds of housework, and I've a notion, if she was in a reg'lar family, she would be quite pert again. A man, you see, *Miss* Packard," continued Mr. Tucker, clearing his throat, "can worry through these things, and make shift for a living; but it's hard for young women to push on through thick and thin."

I should have been glad to assist Lucy in a pecuniary way, but to a character like hers independence was the better charity; and as Cinda had fixed on the day for quitting me, Mr Tucker promised to engage a seat in the Newton stage for her to Boston.

The stage arrived about ten o'clock on the day appointed, and Lucy was the only passenger. It was a great unwieldy vehicle, without glasses, the leathern curtains flapping all around, the worn cushions as slippery as glass, and so little spring in its construction, that Lucy's slight figure was thrown from side to side as the horses, for city display, whisked up to the door.

She was dressed in simple mourning. There was no affectation of better days about her; she entered the kitchen as the scene of her duties with quiet gravity, and went through her work with precision and fidelity, and only on Sunday evenings allowed herself the luxury of reading.

Servants' apartments, in New-England, are

always in the house with the family; Lucy's bed-room was near mine, and every night before she retired, for three months, we heard her sweet voice in an evening hymn. Gradually, however, from five or six verses she diminished to one, until at last no music was heard; but a hoarse, deep cough broke in even on my midnight slumbers.

Still she moved on in her daily duties, though I could not but regard with anxiety the colour that lit her cheek at evening, and made her intellectual face even beautiful. I gradually lightened her heavier employments, and gave her sewing in the parlour, for Polly had by this time become familiar with my arrangements, and with occasional assistance was strong enough to engage in carrying them out.

But Lucy drooped daily, struggling on; I was often obliged to take her work from her forcibly, so conscientious was she. I sent for a physician. She met him with a gentle smile. After parting with her, he said to me, "There has been some heart-sickness in this case, I

suspect.—There is a fine organization in some systems, tending to early decay, and yielding alike to mental and bodily pressure; and hers is of that stamp. The case is a call on your charity, and I will cheerfully co-operate with you."

When I returned to the parlour, Lucy had laid her sewing on her lap, and sat with her hands folded, as in revery.

"I see, by your countenance, Mrs. Packard," said she, "what Dr. Webster thinks of my case, and I am not *very* sorry. I am *only* sorry because I shall be a source of care and anxiety, in such a scene of quiet happiness as your house always presents.

"To me, dear madam," continued she, after a pause, turning her large dark eyes upwards, "to me, *to die is gain.*"

I had been educated religiously, attended church regularly, learned appropriate catechisms and hymns, and found in the example of my dear mother the best of all instruction; but I had never suffered, never seen death in

any form, and my religion was the overflowing of gratitude, not the want of poor humanity. I could not realize the force of Lucy's expression. To be willing to leave this bright world, so full of the blossoms of hope and love, to quit the pure air, and the bright skies, and be the mouldering tenant of the solitary tomb—how could it be *gain?* I looked at her thin pale cheek inquiringly, and could not restrain my tears.

Lucy smiled sadly—"Life appears," said she, "very differently to one who, like you, enjoys the sympathy of friends, of such friends too! I am now only a weed on the stream of time. When I pass into the ocean of eternity, who knows but that I may be attached to something bright and beautiful too?"

From that moment, that little moment of heart and sensibility, my relations with Lucy assumed a different aspect. I drew a chair near her—"Lucy," I said, cheerfully, "*I* will be the beautiful thing to which you shall be attached in *this* world; so do not talk of another,

dear." I was checked by the pressure of her thin hand, where even labour had not been able to shade the blue veins, so light was their covering.

From the moment that this delicate chain of sympathy was thrown over our minds, there was a quiet but distinct course of action between us. My part was to strengthen and animate her sinking frame. I brought her fresh flowers, new books, kind friends, and little luxuries that cool the feverish lip; but Lucy had a higher task to perform. It was, to direct my thoughts to a feeling of the value and necessity of Christianity; to teach me to subdue the idolatry of my affections, and give them a *spiritual* bias.

She spoke of Edward as a "being of *soul*, a candidate for immortality."—"He is too beautiful for the grave, Lucy," said I; "I can never, never let him die.—I can go myself, if God calls me, but I cannot spare him; that manly form, those high and generous feelings, that warm, warm heart,—oh, they are my *life*. Talk to me of any thing but the death of Edward!"

Still she gently recurred to high and spiritual topics, and led my thoughts at times beyond earthly affections. She marked passages in the Bible of the most attractive character for me to read to her, and, when her cough would allow, breathed out a hymn in sweet and happy strains, in which I soon loved to join. Time wore away, and she revived a little with reviving spring. She still had strength to carry her plants from window to window to catch the sunbeams, and could sit to watch the twilight in its dying glory.

But soon she failed again, and one night Edward and I were awaked to go to her. She could but whisper to us as we bent over her, "Do not love each other too well. Pray with and for each other. Forget not that Christ lived and died for you. I shall expect you *both, both*—in Heaven." And thus she died.

One favour only had she asked of us. It was that she might be buried in the country churchyard of her native town.

"I would have overcome that little prefer-

ence," she once said, "did I not know there is something soothing in complying with the wishes of the dying. How idle a fancy," she continued, smiling, "to wish that trees should wave and birds sing over this wasted form; but nature has been so lovely to me that I have a kind of gratitude to her, and it is sweet to think that I shall repose among those objects which God has given me sensibility to enjoy."

She was carried to her favourite resting-place. From that period a religious repose chastened the intense tenderness of our hearts, as we remembered Lucy's character and death; and when we occasionally left the city to breathe the country air, our souls were refreshed by a visit to her grave.

## CHAPTER VI.

### JEALOUSY.

Ever at early dawn, and close of day,
Oh! be Amanda's toil to thine allied—
Labour shall lead me smiling by thy side,
So but a smile of thine my toil repay.

WIELAND.

My next domestic trial was unconnected with household cares. My "help" was "the perfectest pattern of excelling" housekeepers, and my affairs went on like clockwork. Our meals "came like spirits." No half-cooked potatoes betrayed a cold and hard heart beneath a soft surface—no half-picked poultry came to the table as if reluctant to resign the feathery insignia. The amalgamation of sauces and gravies was like the intercourse of society, where the piquant is softened by the modest, and the feeble animated by the strong. My windows were clear as a good conscience, my

brasses bright as ready wit, and like Narcissus in the stream, I half fell in love with myself in the polished mahogany.

From whence then came the cloud to shade this happy picture? I was jealous. Not of women, for my husband not only professed to love me, but treated me with remarked attention in the society of others; and often when I saw married men display their gallantry to any *but* their wives, I felt proud of those *preferring* attentions, which Edward directly, but without display, tendered me. My jealousy, and I write it with half a blush, was of books.

Edward was becoming an ambitious lawyer. His singleness of character and clearness of intellect gained him unexpected friends, and the strongest efforts of his mind were directed to eminence in his profession. Gradually, book by book was brought from the office. Blackstone was on one window-seat, Coke upon Littleton on another, and Chitty's Pleadings lumbered the well-dusted mantelpiece. An in-

stinctive regard and respect for my feelings prevented his passing his evenings abroad; but he read and read, while I silently pursued my sewing, until at last the heavy *whitish* looking volumes were laid on the breakfast or tea-table, beside the cup of coffee, which was often allowed to cool before it was tasted. He no longer asked me for a song at evening; and when I found my voice unheard by him, I shut the harpsichord in disgust. Our sunset walk was often forgotten; and when I sometimes said, "Come, Edward, I am ready;" he answered, "Yes, dear, directly—just let me finish this paragraph." The paragraph might be finished, but I, sitting in silence, felt a languor steal over me; and when in a half hour he closed his book, and said briefly, "What—are you waiting? Let us go," the walk seemed heavy, and the twilight sad. Perhaps, had I rallied him, he might have perceived that he was trying a dangerous, though unintentional experiment with a devoted heart; or had I seriously opened my feelings, he would probably have understood

them; but I was ashamed, and tried to think that *I* was unreasonable, and he in the performance of his duty. I remembered that it was for my subsistence he toiled, and lingered through even the midnight hour.

But with a feeling of unconquerable diffidence in the expression of my thoughts, I grew reserved. My step was slow and careful, or quick and agitated, and I sometimes said cutting things in the impatience of my spirit. He was all truth and openness, and occasionally looked perplexed at my manner.

"I should think you were unhappy," said he one day to me, after he had been studying a horrid looking, parchment-covered book, at the breakfast-table, "if I did not see every thing around you appearing so cheerful and comfortable. There never was such a sweet home as ours."

My eyes filled with tears, but I hid them and was silent.

"Clarissa," said he, "you look thin, and now I think of it I am afraid your appetite is not

good. Those nice cakes, did you eat some this morning?"

"We had *toast* for breakfast," I replied; before I could say more, he was absorbed in his book.

I took my sewing, that I might be with him the half hour before he went out. Just at this period a little boy who lived opposite, and who was in the habit of visiting us frequently, came in, and began his customary prattle.

"Oh, Mr. Packard," said little John, running to him, "let me see that book."

"What for," said my husband, keeping his finger on a paragraph.

"Why, because," said the rogue, "aunt Clara (the name he always gave me), aunt Clara got angry with it yesterday."

"Angry, my boy; how so?" said he.

"Why, sir, after you had done sipping your coffee, with the big book by your plate, and took your hat and walked out like a judge, she went to gather the cups to wash, and when she came to the big white book by your cup she dashed

it down on a chair, and said, 'I hate you!' and looked as if she was going to cry."

Edward leaned his head a moment over the chair on which he sat, and mused. I sewed as if life hung on my needle.

"Clarissa," he said, at length, with a sweet earnest voice and look, taking my hands in his, "I know now what is the matter with you. I have been to blame, dearest, in not consulting more affectionately the feelings of my own wife. It was not enough, it *ought* not to be enough for me, to have given you comforts and luxuries; you require sympathy. You have been struggling with the wants of your heart. I wish I had understood them before. As for this book," said he, playfully, "I cannot 'hate it,' since it has given me such a revelation of my duty."

From that period his deportment at home had a perpetual view to my happiness and improvement. He brought books to read to me, calculated to interest while they elevated my literary taste. He referred to me for opinions,

and by sounding the depth and power of my intellect, found, that under his guidance there were occasions when even my advice might avail him. When a case occurred which obliged him to study at home, he detailed it in simple terms to me, told me the course he should pursue, and its probable results; while, satisfied and happy, I would sit by his side like Klopstock's Meta, "looking so still in his sweet face." Understanding his conduct and feelings, I began to be ambitious for him. Step by step he mounted the ladder of fame. I saw all eyes gazing on him with delight, heard every lip echoing applause; and those sights and sounds were doubly dear to me, for I knew every spring that moved his noble heart, and that his thoughts were mine before they were the world's.

## CHAPTER VII.

### GREASE.

Chattels which, yesterday, good housewifery
Had rang'd, in cleanly and delightful order,
Lay now disjointed, broken, rent.—GOETHE.

IN the subject I am about to introduce, I am confident of the sympathy of housekeepers.—The theme is *grease*, which, if I may be allowed a poor pun, has produced as many do mestic disturbances in modern, as it did political in ancient times. Who can tell the amount of temper that has been roused by this evil, from the single drop of lamp oil on the finger, to which the olfactory sense, though driven back, returns with painful tenacity, to the mass which, sinking in your white floor, looks fresher, like the stain on Blue Beard's key, for many a scouring?

I hope I may be excused here for a homely piece of advice, which is, that wives should not

only keep the lamps of their souls trimmed and burning, but attend to that department in their household economy. If they do not, their husbands may as well sit down to sup with the ladies of Queen Charlotte's Sound, whom Captain Cook describes as not only "drinking the oil from his lamps, but eating the cotton wick."

In return for the various attentions we had received, Edward and myself sent out invitations for an evening party. We had not the facilities for lighting our rooms which make it so little trouble now, by sending for a *professor* in the art, to produce a blaze that shall *cast no shadow;* but we treated ourselves to an astral lamp, they having been newly brought to this country. Being somewhat ambitious of intellectual display, and the time beginning to pass away when ladies did not feel themselves pinned to the same seat for three hours, we managed, by buying and borrowing, to collect some amusing novelties; among them was a magnifying glass, with splendid Italian views. These were arranged on the sofa table, illuminated

by our new lamp, which attracted universal admiration. The Italian views became the chief subject of attention, but alas! as our guests crowded around the table it was suddenly overthrown, and the lamp shattered to pieces. Satin slippers and gentlemen's pumps received the indiscriminate shower of oil, and the beautiful engravings coming in for a share, a young beau, who never lost a pun, even in calamity, whispered to me that they were "oil paintings."

A general shock was given to our before complacent group; first were circulated whispered complaints and commiseration, then in a louder tone followed details of similar misfortunes, and recipes for extracting them.

I contrived to affect great indifference, and Edward got up his best jokes, but after a struggle at general sociability the company retired, and left us, at an earlier period than we expected, gazing on the wreck.

It is easy to preserve a sweet smile in the presence of fifty people, but the test of good nature follows in a *tête-à-tête*.

"What an awkward wretch that Mason is," said Edward. "I wish people would not go into society until they are civilized!"

"I am surprised at your blaming Mr. Mason," said I. "It was Miss Otis who knocked over the table—that girl thinks she must be first in every thing."

"Mrs. Packard, I am confident that it was Mr. Mason," returned Edward.

"Mr. Packard," replied I, "I saw Miss Otis do it with my own eyes."

"Women are always obstinate," said he, turning away.

"And men are always domineering," I answered, in the same tone.

There ended our first party, and began our first quarrel; but it seemed so odd, that turning round, our eyes met, and we burst out into unaffected laughter.

I will not enter into a detail of similar misfortunes. Who has not, after long deliberation, purchased a set of expensive lamps, only to suffocate himself or his friends with smoke?—

Who has not heard his glass shades pop one after another, with a report as harassing as the small arms of an enemy? Who has not welcomed "the tall mould candle straight and round," while the costly lamp, that gave for five minutes a gleam of light, is

"Wisely kept for show."

But I have other themes of varied trouble to relate. One commencement day a large party assembled to dine with us, after the college exercises. Edward had presented me with a new silk dress. It was a rare and important addition to my wardrobe, and I made my toilet with many resolutions to be careful of it. As I sat at the table, with the consciousness of a well-ordered dinner and an appropriate dress, whose value to me was doubly enhanced by its being Edward's choice, one of the waiters, with a zeal worthy of a better cause, jostled by another, who was reaching above my shoulder to deposite a gravy-boat, and knocked it over. I felt the warm stream trickle through my lace

tippet, and saw it pour into my lap. *Selon la règle*, I was obliged either not to notice or make a jest of it. I had the resolution not to *look* at the servant (how often have I seen looks speak more than words!) and turning quietly to my left-hand neighbour, I said, "Pray, sir, excuse my being helped first."

A short period only elapsed before Edward was called upon to sympathize with me in a similar experience. Being invited to a ceremonious party, he mounted a new coat. I could perceive considerable complacency in his manner of pulling down the waist and turning out the collar. He was in excellent spirits through the evening, and on his return said, laughing,

"Either I or my new coat was a great favourite this evening, for my friends certainly regarded me with uncommon interest."

"And well they might!" I exclaimed, in alarm, on looking at him, "for you have half of one of Mrs. Winthrop's candles streaming down from your collar to your elbow."

Poor Edward was thrown all aback. "Hang

it," said he, quite off his guard, "I can interpret their looks now. They could not quite resolve to tell me what a figure I cut, and I thought they were admiring my genteel person, while I was strutting about with the sign of a tallow-chandler on my shoulder."

Speaking of a new coat reminds me of an anecdote of Mr. Shaw, a literary friend of ours. In the pride of his heart *he* too put on a coat fresh from the tailor's, to attend a party, and while bowing to the ladies, an acquaintance tapping him on the shoulder said, "Shaw, your coat was very reasonable," pointing at the same time to the tailor's mark, which was pinned conspicuously on the skirt.

When albums were first in vogue, a choice one was sent us for our contributions. I have always loved albums, much as they have been ridiculed. They seem to me the leading-strings of literature, and it interests me to see the ardour of a young lady, when, opening the gilt leaves, she finds there sentiments dedicated to her alone. Wo to him who shall dare to trace

impure characters on those unsullied leaves! Indeed, so sacred are they, that though folly often intrudes upon them, vice rarely profanes them.

The album sent us was elegantly bound, and enriched by contributions from native poets. Edward and I communicated our mite immediately. It is a good rule. The next day I looked at the book to review what I had written, but what was my dismay at finding its beautiful pages discoloured with lamp oil. Down it had streamed over a sentimental effusion of Wilde; Percival's wing was clogged, and even Bryant's purity was marred by the contact.

"I did not think to shed a tear"

over my silk frock or Edward's coat, but this was really alarming. An album I could purchase, but how restore the handwriting of those poets on which I knew the enthusiastic owner loved to dwell with natural pride? I summoned Becky Rand, "*my woman in the kitchen*," (the New-England circumlocution for cook).

She confessed that after I had retired she thought it would do no harm to read a little,

and being "dozy," she let the kitchen lamp fall on the book and "il'd" it.

I suspected as much from Becky's literary taste. I had often observed a volume of "Zimmerman on Solitude," covered with blue homespun, lying on the dresser, and once, being in want of a skewer, detected one put for a mark at the following anecdote.

"The celebrated Armelle, who died in the convent of Vannes, was placed by her parents, who were villagers, as a menial servant in the house of a neighbouring gentleman, with whom she lived five-and-thirty years (just Becky's age). During this time his groom, finding the kitchen-door fastened, had the curiosity to peep through the keyhole, where he discovered the pious maid in a paroxysm of divine ecstasy, spitting a fowl. The youth was so much affected by this religious fervour, that he devoted himself to a convent."

Becky was very sentimental, and usually had an interjectional remark whenever I entered the kitchen.

"Oh, ma'am," said she to me one day, pointing to a bean she had trained over her kitchen window, "how can the human natur's heart help for to see how miraculous beans is!"

I did not ridicule Becky's sentimentalities, but found pleasure in moralizing over the progress of her bean vine, and even kept my countenance when, the morning after a frost, she assumed a pensive attitude, and said, "ah, *Miss* Packard, so frail is the human natur's life of a bean!"

I heard, however, a conversation between herself and Polly, as we were preparing for a guest at dinner, that completely excited my risibility.

"Who is coming here to day?" said Polly.

"A tutor from Cambridge," answered Becky.

"What *is* a tutor?" asked Polly

"Mercy! child, don't you know?" said Becky, "why, a person that tutes!"

Becky's sentimentalism was not confined to her bean vine. She rarely took up the gridiron without a sigh over the remains of the beef and

poultry, and one would think from her looks she was about to bear the martyrdom of St. Lawrence on its well scraped parallels.

But the place where her mind was most under my inspection was the ironing-table, where, as Mr. Packard's shirts and cravats were my first care, I felt a feminine pride in smoothing their snowy texture.

Many were the experiences detailed by Becky as we gave the sheets a finishing *snap* in folding, or wielded our irons with the skill of artists.

And when on Tuesday evening every article was translated to its appropriate drawer, and Becky sat by the kitchen fire, at her pine table, with her *mending*, I have often heard her say,

"Polly, child, always regulate your concerns in the day, and then when you come to set by your taper (looking at the small tallow candle), you can have time to meditate on the human natur's heart."

Alas, for romance! Becky married my butcher, and became Mrs. Ichabod Whittemore!

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE FIRST-BORN.

> As mine own shadow was this child to me,
> A second self, far dearer, and more fair.
>
> SHELLEY.

THERE can be but few domestic trials, comparatively speaking, without children. In their absence, that combination of articles expressively designated *clutter*, seldom alarms the eagle-eyed housewife. From day to day, from week to week, from year to year, may she descend to the breakfast-table with her smooth morning dress, her well combed hair, and her face unwrinkled by nursing vigils.

Such was my happy predicament until Master Frederick Packard entered on the before tranquil scene, when forthwith appeared an accompanying train of vials, fennel-seed, and pap. He was blessed from the moment of his

birth with a pair of lungs that needed no Demosthenean pebbles to bring them into play. Two-thirds of the time his face was in lines as thick as the rivers on a well-drawn map, and his roaring brought kind inquiries from the neighbours "if any thing was the matter with the baby?" His father flattered himself that he was destined to make a noise in the world, and descanted long and loud (for we were obliged to speak at "the top of our voices") on the kindness of Providence in permitting infants to scream, since it was necessary to the healthy action of the lungs; he added, moreover, that all *sensible* children were cross, and that his mother had often said *he* was the most fretful child in the world.

Polly, now thirteen years of age, succeeded the regular nurse in assisting me to attend my little boy, and if ever any one, with the kindest intentions, had a knack at making a child scream, it was she, notwithstanding *my woman in the kitchen* would occasionally put her head into the parlour door and call out, "Polly, Polly, why

don't you *shue** the child?" but alas! Polly's sole ability lay in trotting and walking, walking and trotting, with all the energy of human muscles; her last resource, and it was often effectual, was to sit on a particularly hard chair, and rock backward and forward on an uncarpeted floor. At each jolt Master Frederick's voice grew fainter and fainter, until at length, overpowered by superior physical strength, he dropped asleep, and looked as if no storm had ever hung over his placid brow.

How beautiful is the sleep of infancy, with its breathing like the uplifting of lily leaves on a summer wave! It would be sculpture-like, did not the motion of the lips betray a sweet remembrance of its natural wants,

> "As the shifting visions sweep,
> Amid its innocent rest."

Edward often stole from his office at the hour of our infant's slumber, and we knelt together by his cradle, our thoughts leaping from baby-

* Probably meaning *kush*.

hood to manhood, living long, long years in that lingering gaze. He always blessed us by awaking with a smile. An unutterable sweetness played over his lips, and his hands were outstretched in gentle joy.

"His hair is growing darker. He *will* look like you, Clarissa."

"No, Edward, his cradle shades it. See now, as I turn it to the light, your own sunny brown, and Polly thinks his eyes are blue."

To this day the point is not settled. Frederick, who is now a successor in his father's office, has dark eyes when shaded by fatigue or sorrow, but in health and joy they light up with his father's hue.

Notwithstanding Mr. Packard's arguments about expanding the chest, and though he was as brave as a lion, and, in the old uniform of "The Ancient and Honourable Artillery," white broadcloth, faced with red, with a gold-laced *chapeau bras*, he looked as though

"his eye
Could create soldiers, and make women fight,"

yet was he a mere coward when Frederick opened his infantile battery of screams; and from this weakness arose the uncomfortable habit of walking with him at night. Even after my husband became Judge Packard, you might have seen his honour at the dead of night, with a half naked baby in his arms, whose whims increased in proportion to their indulgence. For myself, I scarcely knew whether to laugh or weep one night, when, as peeping from my comfortable pillow, I saw the judge dividing the remains of a cold turkey between little Martha, my eldest daughter, and her brother. Fred was then four years old.

When Frederick ceased to be fretful, he became mischievous. By a well-timed slap, I cured him of some daydawn experiments on me; but his favourite plaything at that hour, so delightful for repose after a disturbed night, was his father's nose; and when with a groan or remonstrance he turned away, the boy's scream became so tremendous that the nasal toy was restored.

Nothing is more helpless than a kind-hearted man with a passionate child. Its very weakness is its strength, and though one finger of his masculine hand could terminate its existence, yet the infant's feeblest touch can conquer both body and mind.

It is not my intention to theorize on the subject of managing children; I am simply practical. When Frederick was a week old, his father brought home the treatises of Hamilton, West, Edgeworth, &c. on education. I had previously seen him poring over Rousseau and Xenophon. He read them faithfully, and discussed them eloquently, yet not one of these writers could induce him to deny Fred his nose; therefore, finding them insufficient to establish his authority, and not having much taste for reading, I did not look into these celebrated works, and yet my boy obeyed my words, and even my looks. I found great virtue in a rational, well managed rod. Scolding is every way injurious. It is pouring water into a sieve;

your child becomes accustomed to threats, and the passions of both rise with the voice.

"How did you contrive to be so cool," said a gentleman to a Quaker, "when that rascally porter cheated you?" His reply is a lesson to parents and housewives. "Friend, I long ago obliged myself not to *speak loud*, and therefore I never lose my temper."

I have seen so many well-regulated families brought up under Solomon's discipline, and sometimes controlled by the mere sight of a switch hung over the mantelpiece, that I am tempted to think he is getting too much out of fashion, and modern theories, with their feather rods, "seem to me like the crackling of thorns under the pot."

My first sally from my bedroom was to ride; a common custom in New-England. My babe protested with all his lungs, and well he might, against the preparations of his cumbrous toilet. He instinctively raised his trembling hands to his frilled cap, and when a smart blue satin hat

was perched on the top of that, making him by contrast look the colour of a mummy, his indignation was beyond all bounds; and the flannel blanket, enveloping the whole, scarcely smothered his screams. The motion of the chaise fortunately soon lulled him to sleep, and I was enabled to enjoy the repose of nature.

Every object was as fresh as though it had just sprung into being before my eyes. The beautiful sloping hills of Brooklyn, the sparkling fulness of Charles river emptying into the bay, the apple orchards filling the senses with gentle colours and odours, the sweet-brier throwing out its perfume at the very feet of passengers, the barberry bushes, with their delicate yellow blossoms, preludes to the scarlet fruit of autumn, and even the palace-like buildings, placed at almost regular distances along the road from Cambridge to Sweet Auburn, seemed all made for me. I pressed my boy close to my heart, with a gush of gratitude to Him who had thus blessed me. The cares of life had not taken rough hold of Edward or myself, nor

were we satiated with its pleasures. There was ever a fount of gayety in our hearts, that threw its sprinklings over the deeper shades of parental consciousness, and gave that relish to the ludicrous which is almost always discernible in delicate minds.

But rides, like all things else, must end. Fred awoke, and began to grow restive beneath the "bonnet of blue." I "*shued*" him as well as my strength would allow, but his clamour increased. Every father and mother, who have ridden through a populous city with a screaming child, will know how the perspiration stood on our faces at this awful publicity, and how we imagined that every eye was fixed on us, and every individual condemning the breeding of Master Packard.

I gave my hopeful baby into Polly's arms on our return, and reconnoitred my establishment below. A good-tempered woman was governing all its various departments. Mrs. Philipson was one of those who seemed to think the old allowance of a "peck of dirt" to a man was

too small, for her practical allowance was a bushel.

In vain did I seek for my own reflection in the dim looking-glass; a kitchen towel was thrown on the sofa; Edward, forgetful of all my hints and hopes, "that every thing was in order down stairs," had suffered his slippers, coat, books, &c. to accumulate with utter unconsciousness of the effect; no dusting-cloth had passed, like the wing of a good angel, over the furniture, and a waggish friend had written in plain characters on one of the tables, with his finger, "Mr. B——'s compliments."

# CHAPTER IX.

## INTELLIGENCE OFFICE.

Voyons donc, je vous prie ;
Mettons l'original auprès de la copie.
Par ma foi, c'est vous-même ;—
Jamais peintre ne fit portrait si ressemblant.

REGNAUD.

What charm can sooth her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away ?

*Vicar of Wakefield.*

MRS. PHILIPSON, the votary of the Penates mentioned in the preceding chapter, had been obtained for me by my mother at the intelligence-office. It often startles me when I reflect what unprincipled wretches may be brought into the very heart of our domestic circles, and how the pure minds of our children may be blighted in their very unfolding, by these necessary but vicious instruments.

Mrs. Philipson was a chubby woman of forty,

with a scarlet face and scarlet throat laid in fat folds. Her eyes were prominent and whitish. Her round elbows rested upon her hips, from whence her short arms projected, and her hands hung from her wrists with an imbecile air. She spoke softly, and was liberal in promises. Polly, whom my readers may recollect as the *little girl* of our establishment, was necessarily greatly under the influence of the cook, particularly as she occupied the same room. She was an orphan from the Female Asylum, bound to me until the age of eighteen. She was so docile and innocent, that could I always have sheltered her under my own wing, she would have been pure as a bird, and might have plumed her flight from me to Heaven; but after the birth of Frederick, new affections came to me and new cares to her. I could no longer confine her to the parlour, in her half-sized chair, with her calico frock and apron, and her hair simply parted. One morning I discerned a row of ambitious paper-curls on her head; soon, a soiled muslin frill was pinned round

her neck; and on the following Sabbath, when I was conjecturing what stranger was passing the window stealthily, a second look revealed to me Polly, with a bunch of faded flowers surmounting the simple green riband on her hat, and an old silk dress, which, hanging like a bag about her trim figure, betrayed at once the ungainly circumference of Mrs. Philipson. I called to her to come back. She blushed, and said "the last bell was tolling."

"Come in, immediately," said I.

She walked slowly and sulkily back, and I asked her why she wore borrowed clothes?

For the first time in her life she looked pertly as she answered, "I don't see why I can't dress as well as other folks."

I reasoned with her, and used affectionate persuasions, but finding her obstinate, ordered her to take off finery so unsuited to her age and situation. My anger was new to her, and she obeyed. For several days she was sulky and silent; every action seemed forced, and she looked at me as if I were a tyrant. This ex-

pression wore off, and I hoped for better things. I would willingly have discharged Mrs. Philipson, but how could I, with an infant in my arms, my husband's comfort to study, and the fang-like chains of custom clinging to me?

Two weeks elapsed in apparent acquiescence to my wishes. My whole soul was absorbed in Frederick, or perhaps I should have noticed the under-current that was hurrying Polly to destruction. To see his intelligent smile awakening like young creation, to kiss his rounded limbs as they came flushed like the heart of a white rose from the morning bath, to feel his dimpled hand on my cheek, or press the little velvet luxury in my own, to dress him with maternal pride in robes wrought by the hand of friendship, to sing him lullabies conjured up from the breathings of love, and to whisper to my own heart a thousand and thousand times, "he is an angel"—was not this occupation enough for a young mother?

I was surprised one morning not to hear the usual movements in the house below, and on

descending, found the shutters unopened, no fire in the kitchen, and the outer door unlocked. I repaired in some trepidation to the kitchen chamber. It was untenanted. Astonished and agitated, I ran to acquaint Edward, and we proceeded to examine the premises. Polly's reasons for departing were told in language as strong as words, by a bundle of her plain clothes directed to me.

With what a crash comes the first breach of confidence on the affections, as the circle of agitation is more violent when a stone is thrown on a smooth lake, than on the wilder ocean! I had loved Polly like a younger sister. She came to me when my cup of happiness was full, and I was glad to see her taste her daily draught with me. She had looked at me with a trustingness that seemed to say, "you are my oracle!" She had confided to me her childish sorrows, and was a willing hearer when I talked of Edward. I had administered to *her* in sickness, and when *my* head ached, if every other step was heavy, hers was light and careful.

I looked round her chamber. There was the little glass hung against the wall, before which she had so often combed her parted hair, and which had recently reflected the first awakened glance of vanity. She had forgotten her Bible, Edward's gift. It was lying on the pine dressing-table, with her pocket-handkerchief folded over it, as if it had been her intention to take it, *but it was forgotten!* I glanced at Edward, and sinking on her bed, burst into violent and bitter tears. Edward comforted me with a husband's better love, but though a neighbour sent us breakfast and assistance, and we were at length seated at table, I could not speak; my voice was choked, and large drops fell from my eyes on Fred's silky hair, as he lay sleeping on my lap.

My dear mother hastened to me as soon as Edward sent her intelligence of my misfortune. She insisted on my returning with her, and passing the remainder of the season; and as Edward was deeply engaged in business, he urged it too. In making the necessary ar-

rangements for my removal, I perceived that several articles of my dress were missing, together with some silver, and my miniature. The sorrowful conviction burst upon me, that Polly, instigated by that human fiend, had robbed me.

Several months elapsed, and all inquiries for the poor child were unavailing. How gladly would I have taken her back to my protection, and showed her the "better part," for she was young in sin.

On entering the court-house one day, Edward understood that the suit in which he was engaged would not be brought up immediately, and having some pressing business, he commenced writing. Quite absorbed, he knew not what was occupying the bar, until he heard a lawyer before him exclaim,

"By heavens! it looks like Packard's wife."

Edward started, and saw a miniature passing from hand to hand among the gentlemen. He rose to join them, and it came to him in turn. It was my likeness. I may write, for the sake

of my narrative, what Edward said in his enthusiasm, for my age of vanity, if I ever possessed any, has departed. A brilliant eye, a rose-tinged cheek, and an airy form, speak only to me now of the Great Architect who made them, and who has beauty for us in reversion that will be as the fine gold to dross.

"Clarissa," said my husband, "think what must have been my sensations at that moment, when the low jests of some of my brethren, and the unsubdued admiration of others, ignorant of my connexion with the picture, fell on my ear. I gave one long glance at their lineaments to assure me of their identity. There were your dark flashing eyes looking a sweet defiance on that heartless crowd; there were your ruby lips softening those eyes with smiles; there were these very curls, nature's handiwork, falling over the polished brow; there was this white hand, pledged to me in truth and innocence, and those slight fingers, with their one golden circlet, holding back the clustering locks, and glancing among their

darkness like breaks of the galaxy between parting clouds. I thrust the miniature next my heart, and held my hands crushed over it as a miser holds a rescued treasure. I was recalled to my recollection by an astonished smile from those around me. A few words to the counsel convinced them of my claim on the picture, and my interest in the disclosures to be made."

But Edward soon forgot even me, for stationed at the bar were two female figures familiar to his memory. It was impossible to mistake the vulgar air and face of Mrs. Philipson. As the various testimony was given in, her eyes rolled in uneasy impudence from side to side, her red hands were clenched in anger, or she gave an hysterical sob, half affectation, half alarm, and raised the corner of her shawl to wipe pretended tears. But a deeper feeling absorbed him when he scrutinized the timid looking figure by her side. Her bonnet, a mixture of sorry finery, scarcely hid her face, but it was closely covered with both her hands.

She looked like one who would gladly have called on the rocks to cover her, and a feeling of shame could be seen in the very bend of her figure as it crouched by the side of the bolder criminal.

Mrs. Philipson had committed a series of thefts on the individual at whose charge she was summoned, and it was proved but too clearly that her young companion was her accomplice. When Polly was requested to uncover her face, she only pressed her hands upon it more closely. The necessity was explained to her, and she complied. It was pale as death, and care-worn as though age had trampled over it. She gave one frightened glance around, but that glance took in the face of Edward, who was leaning forward with harrowing interest. It was too much for poor Polly. A scream of joy and horror burst from her, and extending her arms towards him, she fell senseless. He came forward, and stating his relation to her, begged to be allowed a few moments' conversation with her in presence of counsel. The poor child

soon recovered, and shrinking from the baleful touch of her seducer, met Edward's compassionate eye, who spake soothingly to her, and she gathered courage.

"It was first flattery, then fear, that ruined me," she said, in a low voice; "but I have never loved wickedness. I would have come back to you if I could, but that wicked woman frightened me, and gave me vile drinks, and then I did her bidding. I never stole for myself. She *gave* me these clothes," continued she, earnestly, "they are all I own in the wide world. If it hadn't been for the picture, sir," and she shuddered as she spoke, "I might have been worse. I hid it where *she* could not find it, and I knelt down and looked at it when I was afraid to pray to God, and it seemed to strengthen me, and make me bolder in the right. They took it from me, or I would give it to you, sir." Here her voice was very mournful, but looking again terrified, she said, "Do you think they can hang me for this? I am sure I shall grow good again."

The trial closed, and Mrs. Philipson was

sentenced to the heaviest penalty of the law. Polly's youth and inexperience were mitigating circumstances, and her punishment was almost nominal.

About twilight on the evening of that day, Edward came home, as I thought, with a stranger. In a moment, Polly was at my feet, asking pardon through gushing tears. Her story was soon told, and I comforted the young penitent with Christian promises.

The next morning she came down with her calico frock and apron, her hair parted again with girlish simplicity, and hid her bashfulness in caresses of my Frederick.

She has been my tried and faithful friend, through joy and sorrow, for many years; and is now sitting in her low chair, with a plain, respectable looking cap over her hair, which is just revealing the first tread of time, while my grand-daughter Clarissa is roguishly trying on her new spectacles.

## CHAPTER X.

### KITCHEN COURTSHIP.

—— his aspect breathed repose,
And in sweet torpor he was plunged deep,
Ne could himself from ceaseless yawning keep.
CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

IT was winter when I returned to housekeeping, and installed Lydia, commonly pronounced Lyddy Pierce, as president of the dishcloth. She was of the demure sort, as silent and regular as the stars, past the heyday of youth, and had reached an age which the eagle-eyed housekeeper loves. I had restored Polly to full confidence. The sooner you trust in a generous mind after error, the more hold you possess over its returning rectitude, and the more it feels the practicability of virtue.

One of our visiters was Mr. Stockton, a gentleman of broken mercantile fortunes, about thirty-five years of age. He had reserved from

his creditors just sufficient for his own support; but not having much energy of character, stood still at that point, and kept himself alive by calling about once a week to pass an evening with his friends. His ideas were all in a circle, and to us it was a mental tread-mill. We soon learned to distinguish his knock at the door, and what a death-peal was it to our imaginations when, after having put Frederick to bed, I sat sewing and Edward reading, in the luxury of winter evening repose. We could have tolerated his visits with cheerful politeness had they been of moderate length; or had he possessed any conversational powers, we would have listened patiently; but Mr. Stockton seemed to have nothing on earth to say. Why he came to see us, and why he tarried so long, I have never learned to this day. I once heard a father say to a son who was going to college, "Samuel, however intimate you may be, never make *long* visits." This good advice Mr. Stockton either never heard, or disregarded.

He had been sitting with us one evening five

hours, having come to sociable tea. A pause in the conversation being unusually long, I looked up from my sewing, and saw Edward asleep. I felt a little fidgety, and took the tongs to mend the fire. Edward stretched forward his legs and called out, "May it please your honour, the plaintiff—" I contrived to pass near him, and trod upon his foot. He started and recovered, somewhat refreshed, while Mr. Stockton, brightening up with the incident, thought proper to sit an hour longer.

Another evening (it was the Sabbath), when Edward had taken two or three nods I went into the kitchen, and with a preliminary yawn told Polly that I could keep awake no longer, and bade her come in and collect the silver to carry to my bedroom, and close the parlour shutters. "There is some hope," said I, "that Mr. Stockton may observe what you are doing and depart." It was then ten o'clock. Polly bustled about and closed the shutters, and as she passed me I whispered, "Make as much noise as possible."

"An excellent plan that," said Mr. Stockton, "to close the shutters; it keeps in the warm air;" and he buttoned up his coat, drew his chair nearer the fire, and put his feet on the fender.

Edward almost groaned, and we sat cogitating until eleven o'clock before Mr. Stockton said, with a hem and a little hitch of his chair, that he "believed it was getting late." Edward and I were silent.

"The evenings are growing long," said he.

"Very," rejoined Edward and I, in a breath.

"These are fine nights for sleep, Mr. Packard," said our imperturbable visiter.

"Very," answered Edward, and I echoed "Very."

"The fire treads snow,"* said Mr. Stockton, "I think we shall have falling weather."

Edward rose, unbolted a window, and looking out, said, "Yes, falling weather;" and bolting the window-shutter again, sat down.

"I believe I must *think* of going," said Mr.

* A phrase for a crackling sound in ignited wood.

Stockton. A dead pause.—At length, for all late sittings, whether in Congress or parlours, will have an end, our guest departed.

I usually visited the kitchen before retiring, to observe whether all were safe. For several evenings I found the ashes raked up in a symmetrical mound, the hearth swept clean, the boiler filled and placed upon the trammels, and the dough in its white trough, with its whiter towel, set at a safe distance to rise.

After Mr. Stockton's departure I went as usual to inspect the premises, leaving the parlour-door open to light the passage. Every thing was quiet, but I fancied that the settle, the back of which was towards me, was too near the fire. In the act of removing it I caught hold of a head of well-greased hair, and heard, though too late, a warning hem!

I screamed, and Edward ran with a light. Lyddy and a young man who sat beside her rose in some confusion, but the maiden soon recovered, and said with great composure,

"I forgot to tell you, ma'am, that I had a

*spark.*—This is Nathan Osgood, Mr. Hill the tailor's 'prentice, a very reputable person."

I apologized in my turn, and left Mr. Osgood to "smooth his raven darkness."

There is a tacit agreement in New-England, allowing this midnight intercourse in the best regulated families; families who would raise their hands and eyes at every breach of decorum; I therefore retired, and left Nathan and Lyddy in undisturbed possession of the settle.

It so chanced, that Lyddy having as little to say in the kitchen as Mr. Stockton in the parlour, the happy couple fell asleep. In the mean time the elements, which pay regard neither to Leanders nor Nathans, were brewing a quiet but potent snow-storm. They formed a regular and sure barricade of snow-flakes through the silent hours of night; a drifting wind bore them against our doors and windows, and settling into a biting northeaster cemented them there; and when Nathan, stiff from his sitting posture and chilled with cold, awoke at the mechanic's early

hour, he found himself imprisoned by these Alpine banks.

He awoke Lyddy, and called a council of love. The snow-banks reached to the second story over the kitchen. He might have gone out at the front door, but was he a man to leave his Lyddy struggling with the powers of frost? Not he. With shovel in hand he commenced operations, and in an hour she was able to follow him with a broom, sweeping away the lighter particles, under an arch of snow, to the wood-house; and in half an hour more he cleared his way to the street, claimed a lover's reward, went home, mounted his week-day clothes, and for six days was as faithful a tailor as he had been lover on the seventh.

I arose at eight, and found snow-patches in every crevice of my windows, a tracery of frost-work on the panes of glass, and the water in the ewer a mass of ice. With chattering teeth and purple fingers I descended to the parlour. It was in perfect order; a cheerful fire blazed on the hearth, and Edward's boots, polished to

the highest, were warming by the fender. The scene in the kitchen was equally auspicious. Lyddy, with as grave a look as though she had never felt *la belle passion*, stood at the wash-tub (in which she had made far advances), watching the baking cakes. Polly had Fred between her knees, wrapped up in a flannel gown, his scorched face looking like a full moon. She was dexterously keeping her sewing from his mischievous grasp, and persevering in spite of him in her industry. What could rival the comfort of such a home, when, to complete the luxury, Polly with her smiling face brought to the breakfast-table the hot coffee, which, as the poet sings of something else, was

> ——"deep, yet clear,
> Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full."

And all this with the thermometer below zero!

I have not yet mentioned that Lyddy was excessively deaf. Polly used to say "she was as deaf as a haddock." I have sometimes speculated about this New-England phrase, but have

not been able to trace its origin, and I do not find that naturalists refer to any peculiar organization of the species which authorizes it.

It was not the fault of my lungs if our neighbours did not know the items of our daily food. I often forgot that others were not deaf, and caught Edward smiling at my trumpet-tongued style. One day in particular, when a stranger was dining with us, I had been unusually occupied in preparing for dinner in the kitchen, and had pitched my voice very high. Quite unconsciously I turned to our guest, and his politeness could scarcely prevent his starting when I screamed, "Allow me to give you a piece of ham, sir."

"Clarissa," said Mr. Packard, greatly amused, "Mr. Stevens is not deaf."

I was sadly disconcerted, and it was some time before our courteous visiter could bow and smile me into self-possession.

One of the accidents which Lyddy's infirmity caused was particularly provoking, and occurred in the following manner at a fruit-party,

given by us to some New-Yorkers, who brought us letters. I made unusual efforts to procure fresh cream, and had succeeded so well, that dishes with ladles stood at the head, foot, and centre of the table; enough indeed for a housekeeper's measure, which is, to make every one help freely, without looking round to see how far a thing will go. My sensitiveness was perfectly satisfied with the display, as I saw the thick white volumes poured over the rich red raspberries and strawberries, but as quickly I detected a change in my guests; here a half look of disgust, there a glance of concern, in one quarter unusual eloquence, in another unusual taciturnity. Every one knows that the lady of the house is the last person to taste at table of her own delicacies, and so confident was I in the perfection of the cream, that I would have volunteered to stand in Hebe's place with it, as cupbearer to the gods. Edward's turn came before mine. "Bless my soul, my dear," said he, with a wry face, "what is the matter with the cream?"

I dipped my spoon in the compound which has furnished the poet with so exquisite an illustration of beauty,

"Her lips looked like strawberries smothered in cream."

and

"When fondly thinking to allay
My appetite with gust, instead of fruit
Chewed bitter ashes, which th' offended taste
With spattering noise rejected."—

Or, to be less Miltonian, I tasted, and would willingly have thrown from my mouth a nauseous mixture of salted cream.

Lyddy, who, as is not unfrequently the case, had doffed her cook's habit and acted as waiting-woman, perceived, in helpless ignorance of wrong, the consternation that prevailed. I had tact enough to know that to question her would be worse than useless; but Edward, forgetting her deafness, asked her, as she stood near him, "what was the matter with the cream?"

"Very sweet and fresh, sir," said she, in the

guttural tone peculiar to very deaf people; "kept down the cellar all the forenoon."

This *malapropos* answer came in very well, and turned mortification to mirth, which was increased when Edward said, in a louder tone,

"But, Lyddy, what have you done to the cream?" and she answered,

"Yes, sir, very fresh; Miss Hatch was spoke to aforehand for the best, and I thought I would salt it to *presarve* it, as *Miss* Packard tell'd me."

This grave answer let loose the flood-gates of wit and laughter, and we finished our dessert with attic salt, as a substitute for poor Lyddy's mistaken mixture.

But while I thus detail circumstances which, if taken by the housekeeper in a right spirit, produce at worst but a passing shade over the brightness of her régime, let me stop a moment to pay a tribute to Lydia's unpretending virtues. Happy shall we be if, like her, we only *mistake* our duty. Through her long days of toil, her onward course was calm and steady, unruffled by passion, studious to please, contemplative

and prayerful. Her study was to serve God and her fellow-creatures. Peace to thy memory, my humble friend! When the lords of this world are summoned to the test of a high tribunal, will they not envy thee?

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE HELPLESS BRIDE.

For the maist thrifty man could never get
A well-stored room, unless his wife wad let.

*Gentle Shepherd.*

In short, 'twas his fate, sir,
To eat mutton cold.

*Goldsmith's Retaliation.*

A LETTER which I have recently received seems so appropriate to my recollections, that I hope I shall be excused for presenting it in these details. Its writer, Emily Lawrence, seemed never made for a coarser implement than a No. 12 needle. Before her marriage she breathed the very atmosphere of indulgence, the acquisition of various accomplishments being the only discipline she was called to endure. Her hands were white and soft as infancy, her step untroubled and elastic, her spirits joyous and gentle, her smile delicate as moonlight; she was

a sweet creature. and her friends loved to lift her along the road of life without her touching the earth. Her experiences after her marriage will be best illustrated by her letter.

"QUINCY, Mass. Aug. 9th, 18—.

"*My Dear Friend,*

"I have been for some time intending to write to you, as I promised at parting, to give you a description of our establishment, and the beautiful scenery about this delightful region. I have but little excuse for my delay, and will make amends by a long letter.

"You recollect that when I left my dear maternal home, my mother provided me with excellent domestics, and every thing useful and elegant suited to our large fortune. Indeed there seemed no deficiency throughout the whole establishment, and she departed for England, happy in the belief that the care and expense bestowed on my education had been attended with complete success; that I was fitted to adorn the fortune I inherited, and to pre-

side over a family with grace and dignity. Alas! she had only seen me in my drawing-room, surrounded with taste and elegance, beautifully dressed, with an admiring husband who studied every wish. But, my dear friend, I soon found myself involved in perplexities. Oh how I wished you were here to enlighten me by your experience!

"The domestics I brought with me from Boston soon began to grow dissatisfied with the monotony of a country life, and to feel the want of those social pleasures to which all human beings aspire. My cook, an excellent woman, pined for her own *minister*. She had been a very respectable member of the Congregational church in her native town, and feeling the want of those respectful attentions to which she had been accustomed on the Sabbath, it was always a melancholy day to her. In vain I took her in our comfortable coach to the Episcopal church, which was under the especial patronage of my husband, and seated her

in a respectable pew; she said "she did not like to hear prayers *read*, she wished to hear the minister pray from his heart, as she had been accustomed to hear."

"My chamber-maid Amanda, who was something of a coquette, and very fond of dress, complained that she "might as well be shut up in a prison; to be sure the house was well enough, and her wages were high, and she hadn't much to do, and got presents from the visiters, but what did all that signify if she was to be *moped* up in a great castle of a place, with nobody to speak to? Besides, she didn't like the *prospect* from the kitchen *winders*, and Mr. Lawrence had not given her a rocking-chair—she had always been used to a rocking-chair in kitchens."

"My own little waiting-maid, who knew nothing but how to dress me, and whose whole happiness consisted in making me look beautiful, was, except the coachman, the only contented one in the establishment; her happiness was

complete when my dear Henry came into my dressing-room, admired my charms, and the taste with which Jane had adorned them.

"Complaints daily increased, although Mr. Lawrence cut down a fine tree to open the view from the kitchen, and provided a rocking-chair for Amanda; and she soon left me, because, when a smart young gardener in our employ wished to *stay* with her, I would not allow them a separate room from the kitchen to *court* in.

"My footman was equally discontented; he was tired of a subordinate situation, and having accumulated a considerable amount in the Savings Bank, decided to go back to the city and set up in trade; and this decision seemed accelerated by Mr. Lawrence offering him a second-hand hat, upon which he took up his own and departed.

"Our cook, who was a woman of principle, gave us formal notice of her intention to go away, and really seemed to feel for my situation; but she said her *conscience* wouldn't let

her stay. She remained, however, until we were accommodated with such domestics as the country afforded.

"The mistakes which occurred the first few days after her departure we ascribed to accident, and, as we were without company, they rather amused us. The waiting-man John, or his first *début*, placed the dinner service on the table, putting a small dish of vegetables at the head, a piece of roast beef at one corner, and deliberately moving the pickles in front of my carver. I followed him, and gave him directions, to which he paid very respectful attention. As we seated ourselves, he took up a newspaper and sat down by the window to read. Mr. Lawrence was exceedingly annoyed, because he could not instantly decide whether he was impudent as well as ignorant. After some embarrassment he said,

"'Young man, it is not customary for a person employed to wait at table to sit down.'

"John started up with great alacrity, and said, 'Oh, isn't it? Well, I'd as lief stand, I ain't

the least grain tired. You havn't a power of work for a hired man to do.'

"We felt some comfort in the idea that we had only ignorance to contend with, though that was bad enough, considering our inexperience. Henry very good-naturedly instructed him in his business, and although it seemed very strange to him that two persons should require a third to stand and watch them while they were eating, yet finding the work easy and profitable, he soon acquitted himself to our satisfaction.

"As we lived at some distance from town, I was frequently without the common necessaries for cooking, from my total ignorance of what ought to be furnished beforehand. My new cook, though perfectly obliging, knew nothing of her business, and it was deplorable to see her serve up a dinner. It happened, perhaps unfortunately, that we had no company for several weeks, and Henry and myself were too much engrossed with each other to observe the gradual decline of good order which had taken

place since the departure of our city help; but we were at length aroused by a letter from Henry's uncle and former guardian, announcing that as we had been at housekeeping long enough to have every thing in fine order, he would pay us a visit. We were delighted at the prospect of seeing him, and it did not occur to us immediately that he was very particular, and our domestics very ignorant.

"When he arrived I felt some anxiety that he should have a comfortable dinner, and went into the kitchen for the first time to consult with the cook. I confess, with all my inexperience, I felt shocked and alarmed at the dirt with which I was surrounded, and at the singular appropriations of the various articles of kitchen furniture. One of the best tin pans was on the hearth, full of ashes; a fine damask towel had been used to wipe the dishes; the oil-can and rags stood in a chair; and a pair of Henry's good boots were thrust under the sink with some iron pots, in which were the accumulated *skimmings* of weeks.

"I found that the butcher had left a leg of veal, and nothing else; but recollecting that my uncle was very fond of stuffed veal, I told the cook to stuff and roast it. She asked if I had any sweet herbs. I told her that I believed the herbs in the kitchen were used, but that my mother had put me up several paper bags of sage, catnip, &c., which I supposed would do as well, and ordered her to put in a plenty, as my uncle liked his food high-seasoned.

"My husband invited two neighbouring gentlemen to take a family dinner. When the veal was carved and tasted, I leave it to your imagination to conceive of my distress and Henry's mortification, on finding that our only dish was ruined. A half-picked ham-bone was summoned from the store-room, on which our guests satisfied the cravings of appetite.

"The following day we made more elaborate preparations, and Mr. Lawrence asked me, in the most gentle manner, just to look into the kitchen and see that every thing was going on right. Being sincerely desirous to please my

dear husband and discharge my duty, I determined to spend the morning in the kitchen. But there I was in everybody's way, and only worried by trying to hurry my unskilful domestics; indeed, I was wholly incompetent even to advise them.

"I began to feel some trepidation as the dinner-hour approached; and when I saw the heterogeneous mass on the table, in a style so different from our former elegant dinners, I had scarcely courage to take my seat. My uncle sat next to me, and offered to carve a pair of roasted chickens. When he cut off the wing, out dropped from the crop (as I have since heard it is called) corn, and beans, and grass, just as they had been eaten by the fowl. I perceived by his countenance that something was wrong, but he adroitly concealed the unsightly objects from our visiters, and refrained from making any remark.

"When our guests departed, he took me aside, and said,

"'My dear child, you had materials enough

on your table for twenty persons, but your cookery is deplorably deficient. Your mother neglected a very important part of your education. You will spend your fortune to very little purpose if, amid the abundance with which you are surrounded, you cannot procure a well-cooked dinner.'

"I felt at that moment as if I would have given up all my French, German, and every accomplishment, in exchange for the knowledge which would make me a good housekeeper. Every young married woman who is ignorant of her duties will meet mortifications at every step; an elegant establishment, an ample fortune, and even a devoted husband, will not secure her happiness.

"You may suppose that my nerves became considerably excited; indeed, I could not always control my feelings during my uncle's visit. The day before his departure Henry again had company, and had been at some pains to procure a brace of partridges for dinner. They looked very well, for I studied a cook-

book that morning, but when my husband cut them, they were nearly raw; he gave a glance at me, I burst into tears, and was so much agitated that I was obliged to quit the table. He followed, and said every thing he could to console me, but utterly unable to command myself, I begged him to carry my apology to his guests, and I sobbed away the afternoon.

"My uncle has promised to look out for an experienced housekeeper for me, and I have engaged to take lessons of her, so that when he comes again I can show him my own cookery. I told him I should be more proud of serving up a well-dressed turkey for him, with all the accompaniments in good order, than in performing the most difficult piece of music. Both he and Henry smiled encouragingly on me, and said that with such a disposition to do right I could not fail of succeeding. But how much better would it have been to have been taught these things under the eye of a mother! My husband is very social in his disposition, and frequently brings home

guests unexpectedly, and I often see his brow clouded and his temper disturbed by the total ignorance of his wife. Not that he complains, for he knows how desirous I am to please him ever to say a word to wound my feelings, but I can perceive that he is anxious, and instead of feeling light-hearted with his guests, is dreading blunders which will make me ridiculous.

"And now, my dear and respected friend, let me ask you to come, and counsel and teach me. I find that wealth cannot produce order and comfort, and I long for your example and advice in the absence of my mother.

"Affectionately yours,

"EMILY LAWRENCE."

## CHAPTER XII.

### A STRUGGLE FOR POWER.

" *He* reprimands, by glancing with his eye—
And *she* inflicts her soft reproach—a sigh.
That's all—and that's enough for man and wife;
Did you expect an Iliad of strife?
Why need invective to make error smart,
When looks and signs as deeply touch the heart?"

THREE years passed quietly away before Lyddy gave her hand in marriage to Nathan Osgood. Notwithstanding her attention to the duties of my family, Lyddy made two quilts of marvellous beauty. One was in hexagon pieces, each the size of a dollar. The other displayed in the centre a tree, on which were birds larger than the limbs thereof, while each corner contained what I was glad to be informed was a shepherd with his flock. To accomplish these *chefs d'œuvre* I had seen several yards of good chints destroyed; but, as the gentlemen say, *de gustibus non est disputandum.*

Lyddy's successor, Hannah Sanders' first request on becoming my *help* was, that she might attend night-meetings. I readily agreed to this thinking that she was attached to some church, and would be more conscientious from her religious profession; but she proved to be the mere child of excitement. She attended every denomination,—was out every evening. The tolling of a bell unhinged all her faculties. When I said to her, "Hannah, I should like to have you reflect one evening on what you have heard the evening before," she answered, "Oh, *Miss* Packard, you don't know any thing about it. When I am at meeting I feel like a gill cup running over."

But I must not omit to introduce at this period a department of my establishment which, though humble in itself, wrought important effects on my after happiness.

I carried with me from my mother's house a cat, which was so beautiful that I named her Fairy, in honour of the damsel who was changed to Grimalkin in the old romance. If I had a

prejudice, it was in favour of cats and against dogs; this was unfortunate, for soon after my marriage I was introduced to a mastiff of Edward's nearly as large as myself. I had often heard him speak of this dog, and praise the faithfulness with which he guarded the office. I was too busy in other interests to think much of Growler for some time. I only observed, that on his occasional visits (for the office was his head-quarters), Fairy's back rose indignantly, and I felt mine disposed to mount too. At length, Growler finding the house so comfortable, came home at night with his master, and daringly laid his unwieldy form on the centre of the hearth-rug, while Fairy, routed from her luxurious station, stood upon her dignity, hissing and sputtering in one corner.

For a long period a single look from me would make Edward banish Growler from the room; but a present of a new office-dog from a friend completely established him at home, and my husband became accustomed to my *look* and Growler's presence. When he grew in-

different, my ire was roused. I affirmed, that of all created things dogs were the dirtiest,—that the house was filled with fleas,—that my visiters never could approach the fire,—that Growler ate us out of house and home,—and if he was to be indulged in tracking the Wilton carpet and painted floors, we had better live in a wigwam.

Edward sometimes gently excused his dog, sometimes defended him, and always turned him out of doors. The animal, knowing he had an enemy in the cabinet, would sneak in with a coward look, his tail between his legs, but invariably succeeded in ensconcing himself on Fairy's rightful domain.

At length I became quite nervous about him. It seemed to me that he haunted me like a ghost. I was even jealous of Edward's caresses to him, and looked and spoke as no good wife should look or speak to her husband.

It is from permitting such trifles to gain the ascendency over the mind that most connubial discord proceeds. We dwell on some little

peculiarity in manner or taste opposed to our own, and jar the rich harp of domestic happiness until, one by one, every string is broken. I might have gone on in this foolish ingenuity in unhappiness, and perhaps have been among those whose matrimonial bands are chains, not garlands, had I not, when reading one Sabbath morning the fifth chapter of Ephesians, been struck with a sudden sense of my duty, as I met the words "and the wife see that she *reverence* her husband."

Oh, young and lovely bride, watch well the first moments when your will conflicts with his to whom God and society have given the control. Reverence his *wishes* even when you do not his *opinions*. Opportunities enough will arise for the expression of your independence, to which he will gladly accede, without a contest for trifles. The beautiful independence that soars over and conquers an irritable temper is higher than any other. So surely as you believe faults of temper are beneath prayer and self-examination, you are on dangerous ground; a

fountain will spring up on your household hearth, of bitter and troubled waters.

When this conviction came over me I threw myself on my knees, and prayed to God for a gentle, submissive temper. After long and earnest inquiry into my own heart, I left my chamber calm and happy. Edward was reading, and Growler stood beside him. I approached them softly, and patting the dog's head, said, "So, Growler, helping your master to read?" Edward looked at me inquiringly. I am sure my whole expression of face was changed; he drew me to him in silence, and gave me a token of regard he never bestowed on Growler. From that moment, though I might wince a little at his inroads on my neat housekeeping, I never gave the dog an angry word, and I taught Fairy to regard him as one of the lords of the creation.

Growler's intelligence was remarkable, although it did not equal that of Sir Walter Scott's bull-dog terrier, Camp, who could perceive the meaning of words, and who under-

stood an allusion to an offence he had committed against the baker, for which he had been punished. In whatever voice and tone it was mentioned, he would get up and retire into the darkest part of the room with an air of distress. But if you said, "The baker was not hurt after all," Camp came forth from his hiding-place, capered, barked, and rejoiced. Growler, however, had many of those properties of observation which raise the canine race so high in the affections of man.

When Edward made his forenoon *sortie* from the office to look at his sleeping boy, Growler always accompanied him, and rested his fore-paws on the head of the cradle. As the babe grew older, he loved to try experiments upon the dog's sagacity and the child's courage.

Sometimes Fred was put into a basket, and Growler drew him carefully about the room with a string between his teeth; as the boy advanced in strength, he was seated on the dog's back with a whip in his hand. When my attachment to Growler increased, new experi-

ments were made, particularly after the birth of Martha. She was an exquisite little infant, and it seemed to us that the dog was more gentle and tender in his movements with her than with Frederick. When two months old, Edward sometimes arranged a shawl carefully about her, tied it strongly, and putting the knot between the dog's teeth, sent her across the room to me.—No mother ever carried a child more skilfully. Of course all these associations attached him to the infant, and after a while he deserted the rug, where Fairy again established herself, and laid himself down to sleep by the infant's cradle.

There is nothing more picturesque than the image of an infant and a large dog. Every one has felt it. The little plump hand looks smaller and whiter in his rough hair, and the round dimpled cheek rests on his shaggy coat —like a flower on a rock.

Edward and I and Frederick rode one afternoon to Roxbury to take tea with a friend. Our *woman in the kitchen* wished to pass the

night with a sick person after the evening lecture, and I felt no hesitation in leaving Martha to Polly's care. We were prevented, by an accidental delay, from returning until ten o'clock. The ride over the *neck*, although it was fine sleighing, appeared uncommonly long, for I had never been so far and so long from my infant. The wind was sharp and frosty, but my attention was beguiled by sheltering Frederick with my furs, who soon fell asleep, singing his own little lullaby. As we entered the *Square* we perceived that the neighbouring houses were closed for the night, and no light visible, but a universal brilliancy through the crevices of our parlour-shutters. Our hearts misgave us. I uttered an involuntary cry, and Edward said, that "a common fire-light could not produce such an effect." He urged his horse,—we reached the house,—I sprang from the sleigh to the door. It was fastened. We knocked with violence. There was no answer. We looked through a small aperture, and both screamed in agony "fire!" In vain Edward attempted to

wrench the bolt or burst the door, that horrible light still gleaming on us. We flew to the side-door, and I then recollected that a window was usually left open in that quarter, in a room which communicated with the parlour, for the smoke to escape when the wind prevailed in the quarter it had done this day. The window was open, and as Edward threw down logs that we might reach it, we heard a stifled howl. We mounted the logs, and could just raise our heads to the window. Oh, heavens! what were our emotions, as we saw Growler with his fore-paws stationed on the window, holding Martha safely with her night-dress between his teeth, ready to spring at the last extremity, and suspending the little cherub so carefully that she thought it but one of his customary gambols! With a little effort Edward reached the child, and Growler, springing to the ground, fawned and grovelled at our feet.

Edward alarmed the neighbourhood and entered the window. Poor Polly had fainted in the entry from the close atmosphere and ex-

cess of terror. She could give no account of the origin of the fire, unless she had dropped a spark on the window-curtain. The moment a blaze appeared she endeavoured to extinguish it; "but," said she, "the flames ran like wild-fire; and when I found I could do nothing, I snatched Martha from the cradle, and ran into the entry to go out by the back door; after that I recollect nothing."

With prodigious efforts the house was saved, though with a great loss of furniture. But what were pecuniary losses that night to us? We were sheltered by a hospitable neighbour; our little cherub was clasped in our arms, amid smiles and tears; and Growler, our good Growler, with a whimpering dream, lay sleeping at our feet.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### FACTS AND REFLECTIONS.

Mistress of herself, though china fall.

POPE.

But see, the well-plum'd hearse comes nodding on.

BLAIR'S GRAVE.

EVERY housekeeper has experienced what is called a "breaking season," when the centre of gravitation seems shaken, as far as crockery is concerned. Such an era followed the departure of Hannah Sanders, who left me to reside with a minister's lady.

I will offer no excuse for this subject, since it forms the point of discussion for half my sex in their select circles, and constitutes, in some measure, the conversational boundary line between men and women. True to my character of housekeeper, let me proceed.

Compassion and interest induced me to offer the situation of cook to a Mrs. Sliter, whose hus-

band had recently died in the neighbourhood. She was one of those persons who may look decently in new crape, but who generally, with a great display of pins on their waist and sleeves, put them nowhere else; or who apply them as if totally ignorant of the "fitness" of dress, as well as of things. I took her as a forlorn hope —one of those experiments that New-England ladies are so constantly obliged to make of the morals and dispositions of strangers. Edward was detained late at court the day on which she came, and I ordered some hashed lamb and roasted potatoes for his supper. Mrs. Sliter, with the hash in one hand and the hot potatoes in the other, issued from the kitchen, but unfortunately turned towards the cellar instead of the parlour passage. We were startled by a sudden noise, and hastened to the kitchen; but neither cook nor viands were there, and we heard a stifled voice from the cellar, crying, "Marcy me, marcy me!" Following the sound, and descending the stairs, we found Mrs. Sliter lying at the foot, who with her meat and potatoes had rolled down

into the ash-heap, and, in attempting to rise, pulled over a barrel of soft soap.

It is difficult to describe her appearance as she arose from this alkaline immersion. The soap trickled from the deep frill of her widow's cap in streams over her cheeks, and commingling with the ashes, left scarcely a trace of the "human face divine;" and what added to the grotesqueness of the scene was her holding up the mutton dish unharmed. How this was accomplished in her necessary gyrations down a deep flight of stairs, we never could comprehend. Her complaints were eloquent enough, mingled with some irritability at our ill-restrained laughter.

In arranging the bed-rooms the following morning she broke a toilet-glass, and was in still deeper consternation.

"Oh, *Miss* Packard," she cried, "there will *sartainly* be a death in the family. It was only two months ago, poor Mr. Sliter that's dead and gone broke his shaving-glass, and you see what's come on't. I'm left, as it were, a poor lone

*vider*, without a partner; and it was but a year ago that my neighbour, Miss Stone, that keeps the *wittle* (victual) house, broke her parlour-glass, and that same day, as she was *chawing* some fish, a bone choked her, and she was as good as dead for an hour."

To verify Mrs. Sliter's prediction, Polly, a month from the date of the broken toilet-glass, heard of the death of a great-uncle whom she had never seen, and Mrs. Sliter went about the house with a self-congratulatory cackle at the birth of the disaster. To me, however, the prediction of trouble, if not of death, seemed realized. Piece after piece of my dinner set (a rare and beautiful style at the time, white ground with a rose-coloured vine on the edge), came tinkling on my ears with a sound that a housewife can detect from afar.

I early obliged myself not to stir on such occasions. If one can sit still a few moments, quietly lay down a book, or fold up one's work, or knit to the middle of one's needle, there is a favourable prospect of keeping the temper

smooth; but as surely as you start up with "there, now," your feminine dignity is gone. I had a friend who once conquered an irritable temper by obliging herself to count twenty when under sudden excitement.

Mrs. Sliter's next feat was to lose the balance of the breakfast tray, and deposite the whole apparatus on the floor. Every housekeeper will give me their sympathy when I describe to them my sugar-bowl without a cover, my cream-pot without a handle, my coffee-pot indented at the side, and an unmatching slop-bowl called in from the kitchen to complete the muster-roll.

An honest, open breakage, one can bear with a tolerable grace, but it is hard to be the subject of duplicity as well as carelessness. Mrs. Sliter's favourite practice was to conceal the results of her organ of destructiveness, until they were discovered in some nook or corner, in the form of irregular triangles of glass or china. Frederick, who was as great a collector of old china, in his way, as Monkbarns, discovered, in Mrs. Sliter's short but emphatic reign, treasure upon

treasure; and his broken dishes, as he called the pieces of crockery, were gathered up from the cellar, the ash-heap, the wood-house, and every other spot where his busy little feet resorted for what is miscalled mischief. At length, one day, he brought in a sample to his grandmother, who was visiting us. The moment she saw it she detected the cup, the very teacup from which Dr. Franklin had once drunk. It had been a family boast, and she had given it to me at my earnest solicitation. My mother was really affected; she took Frederick in her arms, and told him the story of the cup; how Benjamin Franklin sat and talked with her parents as he sipped his tea; how her mother whispered to her that he was a *great man*; how she took the cup from his hand, and said, "No one shall use *this* again."

We were all silent as she sat polishing the fragment with her pocket-handkerchief, and even the boy laid it aside carefully:

To heighten my troubles at this period, I found the contents of my decanters sensibly

lowered, and perceived that Mrs. Sliter was frequently intoxicated. When accused of purloining the liquor she denied, until the proof became too glaring, and when no longer able to evade, said to me, "*Miss* Packard, you're the *unfeelingest* person I ever *see*, to speak so *onkind* to a lone *vider* that ain't got no consolation, and *vishes* to raise her *sperits*. I ain't a going to stay with a person that begrudges every mouthful that's ate and drank, and you need'nt expect me to give you a character, for I shan't recommend your house to nobody."

She decamped in violent wrath, and we were thrown for several weeks on our own resources.

There could scarcely be a more striking illustration of the lamentable dependance of housekeepers on servants, than in the obligation I felt myself under when deserted by Hannah, to take under my roof this woman, with whose character and disposition I was so little acquainted. Mrs. Sliter was the wife of a wood-sawyer, and sent for me in haste, as a neighbour, to see

her after her husband's decease. I went with as much promptitude as possible. Mr. Sliter had died in a fit of drunkenness, and his bloated body was laid out in all the state that extreme poverty could assume, in the small apartment, the common bedroom and parlour of the miserable pair. In an old chair, from which hung the broken rushes, sat his wife, rocking in the restlessness of unoccupied grief.

I took her hand, and was about offering her consolation; but her sorrow was not of that sort that breaks the heart in silence, and I was interrupted by her dolorous voice, preceded by a long drawn sigh.

"Death is a dreadful thing, ma'am. Mr. Sliter, poor man, that's dead and gone, and I have lived nigh twenty year together. It's hard to be left a lone *voman*, as it *vere*. He was nobody's enemy but his own. I shall be a lone body indeed,"—and she put her handkerchief to the corners of both eyes.

I commenced once more the usual commonplace attempts at consolation, when looking up,

she said briskly, "*Miss* Packard, do *viders vear weils* now ?"

This miserable attempt at the semblance of mourning first led me to speculate on the propriety of black apparel for the bereaved. If our friends are virtuous, and our belief in Christianity sincere, why assume a mourning robe, when they are clothed in the white garments of immortality ? Why shroud our heads, when theirs are crowned with amaranthine wreaths ? Why utter sighs of wo, when they are hymning to celestial harps, amid celestial choirs ? And when a case occurs where those who should have loved us have rent our hearts by sin, or broken them by harshness, and the weary spirit, shrinking from observation, turns on itself to commune in silence, why assume the ostentation of regret before an unsympathizing world ?

Yet let me not treat lightly or harshly a prejudice founded on the delicate impulses of nature. Perhaps the hand that writes these strictures might be the first to mould those sombre monuments which affection raises to departed

friends, and would be the last to lay aside the time-honoured associations that cluster in the day of earthly separation.

However this may be, Mrs. Sliter, with a veil of proper dimensions, followed *him* to the grave who had thrice kicked her out of doors; actually, if not nominally, caused the death of her only infant by brutality; left her whom God and society demanded him to support, a miserable pauper, and gone down to the tomb, a bloated carcass, to meet the changes, for weal or wo, of an endless immortality.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### A TEMPERANCE LECTURE TO MY COUSIN WILLIAM.

She could go near the precipice, nor dread
A failing caution, or a giddy head;
She'd fix her eyes upon the roaring flood,
And dance upon the brink where danger stood.
*The Borough.*

It seems to me a dream, that I once cleansed and replenished a gin and brandy decanter every Saturday morning. My "swords are turned into ploughshares, and my spears into pruning hooks;" for there they stand, the pictures of innocence, converted into water-crafts and molasses bottles.

Let every housekeeper seriously look back through her past experience, and ask herself how many individuals (unintentionally of course) she has led into temptation with these polished seducers: and if she has herself escaped a pit where so many of the bright and

good have fallen, offer up a prayer of thankfulness.

I know not how others may have felt, but my soul has often been wrung with anguish at the utter hopelessness of preventing any individual, who has betrayed a tendency to intemperance, from plunging daily further and further into sin, when the means were spread out before him, leaving unchecked his vitiated taste.

Edward, like others, provided liquors for his sideboard, but only drank them as the compliment which society demanded with his guests. William Ingols, my cousin, an interesting young man, entered his office as a student, and resided with us. He was confiding and communicative, and I soon began to love him as a member of our household. At his first dinner, Edward joined him in a glass of brandy and water; on succeeding days he took it unsolicited; in a short time he drank at the sideboard before dinner; and, in a few weeks, repeated the draught at bedtime.

I asked Edward's advice on what was to be

done. He answered with a smile, "You are a woman, and can manage these things better than I. Talk with Ingols on the subject. You know my detestation of this genteel tippling, but I have no authority over him."

A fair opportunity offered, in Edward's necessary absence at a circuit court for a week, to speak on the subject without implicating my husband.

As Ingols was visiting the sideboard as usual, and (what seems to me an alarming symptom) covering the lower part of the tumbler with his hand, I asked him, with a little hesitation, if he drank brandy for his health.

"I cannot say that I do," said he, smiling. "Will you take a little for yours, cousin?"

"No, I thank you," said I; "I am afraid of it."

"Afraid of it, cousin? It will not hurt you. You would be all the better for a little tonic."

"A little tonic might not hurt me, cousin William, but I fear being tempted. I distrust my own strength of character."

"Pshaw! you are not serious! I have been drinking a *little* several years."

"Why do you drink it?" I asked. "Your mind is naturally active, your conversation agreeable, you have no mental or bodily suffering, and you have a thousand rational modes of enjoyment. If you will only look into your own feelings, you will find a cormorant settling over them, whose guilty cry is 'give, give!"

"You are a sweet monitor, cousin Clara; I believe I must take a little brandy, if it is only to hear you scold so prettily."

"Oh, Ingols," I answered, "do not, in mercy to yourself, treat this subject so lightly. Why society tolerates its abuse, I know not. I see already a look directed to that bottle when you are about to pour out its libations to your incipient sensual desires, which speaks an awkward consciousness. You are already screening the quantity you take. If you love my schooling, hear it plainly. Your manly and graceful form will soon begin to lose its firm-

ness, your brilliant eyes shine with a drunkard's glassy inexpressiveness, and your mind.

> ——— "where God has set his seal
> To give the world assurance of a man,"

reduced to childishness, worse than childishness, since its weakness will have no redeeming innocence."

"But, Mrs. Packard," said Ingols, "you forget how many indulge in ardent spirits without injury."

"I do not forget that, William, but I remember more vividly how many have been destroyed, soul and body, while these moderate drinkers, favoured perhaps by constitutional resistance, have been unscathed by the burning trial. But they will not escape, cousin William; they cannot escape His eyes who watches motives rather than deeds. They may be strong enough to carry until death the unrighteous banner of the drunkard without reeling, while others are falling on the right hand and on the left, but they lead the way to the destruction of others, and they must answer for it."

"My dear cousin," said Ingols, "you take this matter too seriously. You make a bug-bear of a trifle."

"A trifle!" I exclaimed; "call not that a trifle which rifles the mind and body of their best gifts. If I were permitted, I would go (not in the wildness of quixotism, but in the spirit of him who drove the profaners from God's temple) and destroy every implement like *that* before you, which attracts you and others from the simplicity of nature. They disgrace our homes, they deform the purity of domestic scenes, and often convert them into bacchanalian orgies. I had a friend once, William, young and lovely; such a one as your warm heart would have loved, and your discriminating mind appreciated. She received a shock from the early disappointment of her affections, pined, sickened, and drooped like a withering flower. Would to God she had died in the unstained paleness of her beauty! Tonics were recommended, and as medicine they were right. Her health was restored, and all would have

been well, had they not been spread out among the wants and luxuries of life. Her sensual appetite increased. I sicken as I remember the miserable subterfuges that marred her fair character, first chilling the confidence of friends, and then by open exposures disgracing them. The enemy wrought surely, baffled but not subdued by reproaches, by sarcasms, by entreaties, by the shunning eye of retreating friendship, by the agonizing appeals of a dying conscience. She died a drunkard. Her mother wept bitterer tears than should ever fall over a daughter's grave; her sister's cheek paled with a sorrow sadder than grief; and her father, I tremble while I say it, cursed his first-born child."

Ingols had not tasted his draught while I was speaking, but held it in his hand, and when I ceased, quietly placed it on the table and said, "Cousin. I have not the heart to drink this now, and will give it up if only to please you."

"You are not angry, then," I said, eagerly.

"Angry? no," he replied. "How can I be angry with a true friend, and a lady too?" with a low bow.

"Thank you," said I, "and now that I have gone thus far, may I proceed?"

"Yes, cousin, I give you *carte blanche*."

"I shall do it by actions, not words," I said, with solemnity; "and I warn you to be prepared, for I have solemnly pledged myself in prayer to God that I will never again aid the cause of the destroying angel. But promise me (not that I claim any right over you but that of interest in your welfare) that you will abstain from ardent spirits, now in the sunshine of your youth, 'before the evil days come.'"

Ingols hesitated, reflected, and promised half earnestly, half jestingly.

On the following day no decanter was to be seen on my sideboard or table, and I carried the keys up stairs. Ingols was very amiable, and our week passed happily away. Edward returned, and took no notice of the withdrawal of the decanters.

I had retired to my bedroom early one evening, when I heard Ingols enter, and ask Polly for the keys. She came up stairs, and I gave them to her in silence. I heard her transfer them to him, and held my breath. He opened the door. I trembled so much that I could not stand. *I had emptied every decanter.* I heard the rattling of the keys as the door closed, and a faintness came over me at my own daring. A half hour passed away, and Polly came back with a slip of paper, on which was written, "You have conquered, cousin. I thank you, and thank God."

I burst into tears, and sobbed as if my heart would break; nor was I relieved until Edward returned and said he loved me better for my moral courage.

## CHAPTER XV.

### CONCLUSION.

Frae morn to e'en its naught but toiling,
At baking, roasting, frying, boiling.
*The Twa Dogs.*

THE successor of Mrs. Sliter was Sukey Hopkins, an untamed damsel from Nantucket; and as Edward required some attendance at the office, he engaged a friend of hers, Aaron Wheeler, who had *driv her down*, to remain with us. I passed every forenoon for a month in the kitchen, to initiate her in cookery; and even after that period was obliged to be with her whenever I had guests, of course at the period when I ought to have been most unincumbered with care. I was obliged to watch the last turn of the spit, and the last bubble of the boiling gravy, and even lay the meats in their right position; for know, inexperienced reader, that a

lady may as excusably stand on her own head at her table, as have her turkey or goose in an unauthorized posture. One bleak autumnal day we had company to dine; but I became so much heated with my business and anxiety as not to dream of the necessity of a fire. Just five minutes before dinner was carried in, I ran up stairs, changed my dress, and seizing a fan, descended to the drawing-room. My zeal in fanning was proportioned to the kitchen thermometer; and it was not until I detected a shiver in a lady who sat within the influence of my Æolus, as Edward prettily called a fan, that I perceived my *faux pas*.

The day after Aaron's induction into his duties, I went to Cornhill, shopping; and Edward left word with him that if a certain gentleman called, he must ask him in to sit until he came. When Edward opened the door, what should he behold but Aaron, sitting with his feet on the fender, entertaining Mr. —— with the last Nantucket news!

A few evenings succeeding I invited com-

pany to tea. I was the whole morning drilling Sukey and Aaron, and as I went to make my toilet, I said, "be very careful, Aaron, that the ladies and gentlemen are all supplied with sugar and cream in their coffee." When the company had assembled, and the very last visiter, according to the old and formidable rule, had arrived and was seated, Aaron entered with his tea tray, followed by Sukey with the cream and sugar. He walked round as carefully as if he were treading on eggs. When the circuit was over, and he had reached the door, his mind seemed to misgive him; and with an anxious look, standing on tiptoe, he said, "I say, how are ye on't for sugar and cream in that corner?"

On that memorable evening a lady spilled some quince syrup on the carpet, when, to my utter dismay, Sukey set the waiter on the floor, rushed out, and brought in the mop to wipe it up.

I have inserted these lingering reminiscences in this chapter, to show that the most skilful

housewifery cannot counteract the mortification and embarrassment of our present system. I took infinite pains to make my daughter useful. She was a sweet, docile girl, and at the age of eleven often made our tea, arranged the table, and assisted in handing it when we had company; but notwithstanding this early discipline, the awkward blending of lady and housewife led to countless anxieties; indeed, it requires an omnipresent eye to meet one's guests with the personal welcome they demand, while providing for their grosser wants. How many girls like Sukey have I passed months in drilling, when, just as I began to realize the effects of my care, they have taken a sudden whim and departed! How many were there whom I never *could* teach, whose inattention or wilfulness rendered me miserable! How much hard labour have I performed while paying high prices for that of others! What then can be done to remedy this evil? It is the opinion of Adam Smith, and an humble housekeeper agrees with

him, that the perfection of society consists in the division of labour.

Is it not monstrous that educated, intelligent women, should be obliged to give over their children to the care of servants, and pass their days in the most menial occupation? And must our lovely daughters be called from intellectual or graceful accomplishments, to associate with the vulgar inmates of the kitchen?

We have a partial system, which it appears to me might easily be carried through the whole order of social life. We have our chimney-sweeps, our wood-sawyers, our bakeries; why not have our grand cooking establishments, our scourers, our window-cleaners, &c.? I will give one example, a direct one however, of the helplessness of a housekeeper on the present plan of life. She perceives, and none but those who have witnessed it can tell how irritating is the feeling, that about five hundred panes of glass in her house require washing. How can they be cleansed? It is properly a

man's business, but she must put an inexperienced female to the work who is required for a hundred other things; one, too, who perhaps never wiped a glass before. A particular set of cloths is required, step-ladder, hammer, and a *knack* at *cleaning* glass. By the time she has accomplished her task, which is probably imperfectly done, broken a few panes, and left the sashes loose and clattering, dust and flies have been equally active, and the *gude man* begins to say, "my dear, our windows require a little cleaning." What a cheering sound would it be to a lady so circumstanced, if she could hear in the street "any windows to clean to-day?" or, what is better, know where to send to an establishment for a person devoted to that object.

What a desideratum is a cooking establishment, where families can be provided with prepared food, and a still greater to have our meals brought to us, now that the improvements in steam can give them hotter than from our own hearths. They could probably be

furnished cheaper than on the present plan. Our husbands would no longer be seen haggling with butchers at their stalls, or balancing raw meat in the open streets; nor should we see decent women, in utter uncertainty of their dinners, throwing up their window-sashes to the passing countrymen, with "Mister, what's you got to-day?" A friend could *drop in* without disconcerting a family, and the lady of the house sit without a thorn. How many more smiles would kindle up around the domestic board, could the wife be assured of her husband's comfort. She has enough to do in the agitating responsibility of her maternal cares; her little ones may be sickly, her own health feeble. Many a woman breaks and sinks beneath the wear and tear of the frame and the affections. She rallies before the world, and "her children rise up and call her blessed," and she is blessed in the conscious attempt to discharge her duty; but cares eat away at her heart; the day presses on her with new toils, the night comes, and they are unfulfilled; she lies down in weari

ness, and rises with uncertainty; her smiles become languid and few, and her husband wonders at the gloominess of his home.

How great a duty is it, then, to study modes of comfort, and preserve the song of cheerfulness in the routine of domestic industry. It is not below the task of legislation, if legislation is a study of the order and happiness of a community, or if legislators would have neat houses, good dinners, and smiling wives.

THE END.

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