

and keep ready the resources that are needed for their sustenance and recovery in sickness and sorrow, is the same that holds the stars in their places, and patiently prepares the precious metals in the most secret chambers of the earth. The art of exercising a refined hospitality is a fine art, and the music thus produced only differs from that of the orchestra in this, that in the former case the overture or sonata cannot be played twice in the same manner. It requires that the hostess shall combine true self-respect and repose,

“The simple art of not *too much*,”

with refined perception of individual traits and moods in character, with variety and vivacity, an ease, grace and gentleness, that diffuse their sweetness insensibly through every nook of an assembly, and call out reciprocal sweetness wherever there is any to be found.

The only danger in all this is the same that besets us in every walk of life ; to wit, that of preferring the outward sign to the inward spirit whenever there is cause to hesitate between the two.

“I admire,” says Goethe, “the Chinese novels ; they express so happily ease, peace and a finish unknown to other nations in the interior arrangements of their homes.

“In one of them I came upon the line, ‘I heard the lovely maidens laughing, and found my way to the garden, where they were seated in their light cane-chairs. To me this brings an immediate animation, by the images it suggests of lightness, brightness and elegance.”

This is most true, but it is also most true that the garden house would not seem thus charming unless its light cane-chairs had lovely, laughing maidens seated in them. And the lady who values her porcelain, that most ex-