

pence a quart, and a pint a day would be three farthings well spent. Keep a drop back against your tea in the afternoon, and boil the rest for breakfast, to drink with the coffee or cocoa which I am recommending.'

'That would be nice, I am sure,' Alice agreed.

'Very nice. And then you, Alice, who have lived in a good family and know what such people eat, don't get into the bad ways of those round about you, and serve just common white baker's bread full of alum and bonedust for breakfast. You know our master always has porridge, either oatmeal or hominy boiled half-an-hour, stirring carefully in water. This can be eaten either with salt and butter, treacle, brown sugar, or a little hot milk. And after that he eats two good slices of whole meal bread, which he says are as nourishing as a mutton chop or a beef steak.'

'Do you think we could get whole meal bread in London?'

'Well, I hope so. London bakers ought to be ashamed of themselves if they don't sell it by now. Anyhow, you know how to make it, and if you bake your own bread you are quite sure what is put into it. You can always have it baked at the bake-house there, you know. Dear me, how I do run off from the money question. I was going to say when you have put aside all the necessary weekly expenses, and this should always include something towards clothing—else how can a man pay for a new pair of boots or a coat when he needs them?—you must consider what you can do with the rest of your money, making a little plan of the whole week.'

'You will want your best dinner Sundays, that is but reasonable. But I don't call it reasonable, quite the contrary, to eat all your dinners for the week on Sunday, and leave almost nothing for after, like some do. It is said an English working man's wife can't cook and won't work. You shall be what master calls a "bright exception," and see if you don't have a good husband,

and a happy home too, by taking a little pains and trouble.'

'I will take a good deal of pains and trouble if need be to do that,' Alice said. 'But how do you mean one oughtn't to be shorter one evening than another unless there was a good reason?'

'Because you ought to do like a dress-maker does when she has a piece of stuff given her to make a gown. She first cuts out the bodice and sleeves, then the skirt, and then if she has material to spare she uses it for trimmings. Suppose Miss Moore brought back your new Sunday gown and said she was very sorry to say there was no stuff left for sleeves, but she had trimmed the skirt very fashionable. What should you say?'

'That she was a goose, and I would never trust her with a dress again.'

'Very good. Then remember your week is like a dress. You must do your best for every day, and if you haven't left anything for the last two or three days you will be as great a goose as Miss Moore would be if she used up all your stuff without cutting out any sleeves.'

Alice laughed merrily, and promised to try and not be a goose, at any rate. She was not a bad hand at figures, and often amused herself after this talk with Mrs. Bent by making out imaginary lists of weekly expenses, guessing what various things would cost, how much she should want of each, what she would cook for different days, and so on. Thus when she was actually married she did not feel, as so many brides do, like a settler in an unknown country, with little or no idea how to make the best of her husband's wages, but set to work, as every sensible person would, with a very fair notion of what lay before her. And so we find her again, where we left her at the beginning of this chapter, standing alone in her little home—home though it consisted but of two rooms, and a home which Alice was resolved that no pains on her part should be lacking to make a bright and a happy one.

(To be continued.)