

ver—united, it was impossible to break the fragile threads, but if taken singly, each could be severed by the movement of a finger. One by one she contended against her former faults.—It required not only resolution, but the rarer virtue of perseverance, to carry all her good intentions into effect, for many a week and month elapsed, ere she could fully arrange the mechanism of her domestic concerns. In truth, it is no small task to regulate the microcosm of a household—to manage in such a manner as to bestow the greatest proportion of comfort upon each individual—to divide the duties of domestics, so as to secure the performance of business in its proper time, and the enjoyment of leisure when the tasks are over—to remember and provide for the wants of all—to study the peculiar tastes of each—to preserve order and neatness throughout the multifarious departments of domestic life—and to do all this without neglecting the claims of friendship and society—without relinquishing the cultivation of one's mind, and the study of one's own heart—without becoming a mere household drudge. It is no easy task, yet it may be done; the first steps in this, as in all other labours, are the most difficult: only employ the aid of system in the beginning, and all may be fully accomplished.

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It was a fine spring morning: a bright fire was burning in the polished grate, before which sat Mr. Wharton, deeply engaged in the study of the newspaper, while a neat servant was arranging the breakfast on a table-cloth as white as the eggs which she had just set upon it. A moment afterwards Mrs. Wharton entered, looking prettier than ever, and as she took her seat at the table, she drew down the wristbands of her well-fitting morning-gown, while a plate of hot biscuits, which just then made their appearance, told her recent employment. Charles threw aside his paper, and turned to the table with a cheerful look of perfect contentment. There was nothing picturesque in the group, but it was a scene of comfort and happiness, and to the believers in that 'Dietetic' philosophy, which holds that the enjoyment or misery, nay, even the morality or immorality of the day may be traced to the effects resulting from a good or bad breakfast, such a scene could not but augur well for the parties. At the moment when Charles was discussing the merits of his third biscuit, and sipping, at intervals his fragrant coffee, a stranger was announced, who wished to see him on business. Slowly and reluctantly he left the room, and

after the lapse of a few minutes, returned with a most whimsical expression of face.

"What do you suppose that man wanted, Mary?" he asked, as he again addressed himself to his breakfast.

"I am sure I cannot imagine, Charles."

"He wanted to know at what price I was willing to sell this house."

"Sell this house, Charles? surely you do not think of such a thing," exclaimed Mrs. Wharton, in undisguised alarm.

"He says I told him last summer, that I intended breaking up housekeeping, and should offer it for sale this spring."

"What answer did you give him?" asked Mrs. Wharton, growing a little pale.

"I told him I had changed my mind," was the quiet reply.

"Do you really wish to alter our mode of life, dear Charles?"

"No, indeed I do not, my little wife; I would not give the comforts of such a home as I possess, for all the splendors which money can purchase at a hotel. I like to be beneath my own roof-tree, and really believe that in any house but my own, I should exclaim with the poet Dante:

'Salt is the bread by others given, and hard  
Th' ascent of others' stairs.'

"I am glad to hear you say so, for really I should regret any change."

"But you would have much less trouble if we were at board."

"And much less enjoyment, too, dear Charles; 'life's cares' are certainly very like 'life's comforts,' in the domestic circle, whatever they may be elsewhere. I assure you that the gratification which a woman derives from the consciousness that she is essential to the happiness and even to the daily pleasures of those she loves, fully compensates her for all trouble."

"It is a pity all wives did not think so Mary."

"It is a pity all females were not taught this truth before marriage, Charles; I have not forgotten my own past errors, nor the kindness of your good mother, to whose wise counsels I owe my present happiness."

"Nor should you forget, sweet one, the energy and patience and self-denial of my own dear wife, who accomplished what few women would have been willing to do, when she persevered in conquering the evil effects of early indulgence."

"Call it early neglect, Charles; that mother sadly mistakes the nature of indulgence, who, to save her daughter from trifling discomforts