

The girl left the room, and I thought no more of Polly for an hour. Tea-time had come and passed, when one of my domestics, who was rather communicative in her habits, said to me:

"I don't think, ma'am, old Polly liked your not paying her this evening."

"She must be very unreasonable, then," said I, without reflection. "I sent her word that I had no change. How did she expect I could pay her?"

"Some people are queer, you know, Mrs. Graham," remarked the girl, who had made the communication more for the pleasure of telling it than anything else.

I kept thinking over what the girl had said, until other suggestions came into my mind.

"I wish I had sent and got change," said I, as the idea that Polly might be really in want of money intruded itself. "It would have been very little trouble."

This was the beginning of a new train of reflection, which did not make me very happy. To avoid a little trouble, I had sent the poor woman away, after a hard day's work, without her money. That she stood in need of it, was evident from the fact that she had asked for it.

"How very thoughtless in me," said I, as I dwelt longer and longer on the subject.

"What's the matter?" inquired my husband, seeing me look serious.

"Nothing to be very much troubled at," I replied.

"Yet you are troubled."

"I am, and cannot help it. You will perhaps smile at me, but small causes sometimes produce much pain. Old Polly has been at work all day, scrubbing and cleaning. When night came, she asked for her wages; and I, instead of taking the trouble to get the money for her, sent her word that I hadn't the change. I didn't reflect that a poor old woman who has to go out to daily work must need her money as soon as it is earned. I am very sorry."

My husband did not reply for some time. My words appeared to have made considerable impression on his mind.

"Do you know where Polly lives?" he replied at length.