

ALL AROUND THE HOUSE.

THE TRUE HOUSEHOLD.

So much has been written on household and domestic affairs that it may seem to many a worn-out topic, about which nothing more of interest or importance can be written. But "the household," as we interpret it, is an inexhaustible theme. To become an expert even in the simplest forms of the manual labour connected with it, demands continual watchfulness and attention. Instructions must be repeated daily and, hardest of all, patiently. They must be modified or enlarged, under the changes that are a part of a housekeeper's burdens, so as to allow for and control the different individual characters that come under the mistress's care for counsel and direction. All this demands no small skill and labour.

Those who, after some practice, have learned to feel at home in all the departments connected with domestic affairs, naturally begin to venture on experiments, hoping that each trial may bring to light some new and better way of performing their accustomed labours. This reaching out after something better, if not easier, is not confined to housekeepers alone. The farmer aspires to perfection when experimenting with seedlings. He brings them forward with great care to a perfect growth and up to full bearing, knowing well that not one in a hundred, probably, of all that has been so tenderly nursed will prove of any value; but his courage does not desert him; for, if only one develops into a fruit or flower far surpassing the original, he is abundantly rewarded, and stimulated to few efforts.

So, while many experiments in the endless labours belonging to domestic affairs fall to the ground, yet a few now and then are developed, and, under the nursing of good, practical common-sense, are found trustworthy, and of such importance as to super-

cede long-established notions. Every year contribute something new and valuable, of undoubted advantage to young housekeepers, aside from "the line upon line and precept upon precept" which will ever be found indispensable by all experienced persons.

But the manual labour and the thorough knowledge of it that is necessary to good housekeeping are too often accepted as the sum and substance of all that comes under the head of "household duties." It is of great importance, undoubtedly, and justly demands honest advice, with clear and very definite instructions. Nevertheless, it forms but a small part of the duties which we think belong to a household, and which every good housekeeper should feel devolve upon her.

To knit and sew, to wash and iron, to make the sweetest and yellowest butter, the tenderest pastry, whitest and most delicious bread, to feel ambitious that every part of the house shall be spotlessly clean, or to be able to superintend and direct so as to secure the needful results, is no small thing. She who is capable of all this has begun well; but this is only rudimentary—of great importance certainly and truly indispensable, yet it is but laying a small portion of the foundation.

The true housekeeper cannot reach that perfection to which all should aspire, if, stopping here, she feels that it is enough to have proved herself capable of performing this part of her duties in an unexceptionable manner. A hireling may be found who, not for love but for a suitable compensation, will accomplish all this equally well. But there are higher duties belonging to this department, the performance of which no gold can secure.

After digging the cellar, there is a great deal more to be done in building a house. The stone or brick to wall it up securely must be provided, and the mortar to hold