

had been devoted to each other ; now the real cares of life pressed upon us so as often really to absorb our energies. I was the first to feel the change. It seemed to me as if something were overshadowing us. Sometimes I would get sentimental, and think he did not love me as he once did. As I look back now, I am convinced that here was my first wrong step. Indulgence in these moods weakened my resolutions. It was an injustice to him of which I ought not to have been guilty. It left me, too, with a wounded feeling, as if I had been wronged, which began to affect my spirits.

"Once, I had for some time carried about this little sore spot in my heart. I kept the matter all to myself, for I was in part ashamed, and in part too proud to speak of it. Here was another wrong step. There is no security of happiness in married life but in the most perfect confidence.

"There came a season of damp, chilly weather. One morning I got up feeling very irritable. I had taken cold, my head ached, and my baby had been troublesome during the night. In my kitchen I had a cross, ignorant servant girl ; and on this particular morning she had done her very worst for breakfast. The beef-steak was burned to a cinder, the eggs were like bullets, the bread was half-baked, and the coffee, which was our main stay, was execrable. My husband was very patient with all this, until it came to the coffee ; and this upset him. He put his cup down, and said, in a half-vexed tone, 'I do wish that we could ever have any good coffee ! Annette, why cannot you have it made as my mother does ?'

"This was the drop too much for me, and I boiled over. 'You never think anything on our table fit to be eaten !' said I, and I almost started at the sound of my own voice. 'You had better live at home, if you are not satisfied, or else provide me with decent servants. I cannot do everything,—take care of my baby all night, and get me breakfast, too.'

"I did not know before that I was very unreasonable,' said he, in a tone of injured feeling. He sat for a few minutes, then rose, left his untasted breakfast, put on his hat, and went off.

"When I heard the door shut behind him, all my temper left me. I went into my room, locked myself in, sat down, and