

MISS WITTERLY'S CHINA.*



N the windy corner of one of the quietest streets of Montreal there stood, some few years back, an old stone house which had for many years been known as the family residence of the Witterlys. This mansion, though once a very desirable abode indeed, presented, at the time of which I write, an appearance of desertion and decay which told of fallen fortunes. The great drawing rooms were dismantled and deserted, their unshaded windows staring blankly at the street; weeds grew unrebuked on the gravel walk and through the crevices in the broad stone steps. The high chimneys had given forth no smoke for many a day, and the wide fireplaces yawned cold and empty. It was a house to sadden your face and lower your voice with dim forebodings, and make you vaguely speculate on the multitude of sealed histories laid up within its walls.

But the place was not quite so deserted as a casual glance would imply; a few rooms to the eastern side were still bright with life and occupation, and in these few rooms, the only habitable spots in the old house, the eldest Miss Witterly lived alone. She was always called "the eldest Miss Witterly" more by habit than necessity,

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