

so well, that we inquired how we might know his decision. He would communicate, he said, with Mr. Rawlinson; he was the proper person for the business part of the negotiation. It was evident, that, according to his notion, this was the right way of doing the thing. After having satisfied themselves with such re-inspection as they desired, they drove off, having never inquired after smoky chimneys, state of the roof, supply of water, dampness of walls, nor amount of taxes, rates, and such payments. From these omissions our deductions were, that this was the first house they had looked at; that the one they had lived in since their marriage had been taken for them by somebody else; that they had lived in lodgings, or perhaps had travelled; and, moreover, that he was a man who troubled not himself about small expenses; the rent was the great thing, rates and taxes went for nothing. And whether they would in the end take the place, hinged thus: if *he* had most influence, they would; if *she*, they would not.

While we were thus cogitating and talking them over—another ring at the gate! How! had other people been planning business for the Monday—or had somebody called? And there was the dishabille still. Again was presented Mr. Rawlinson's card, and, on the very heels of it, walked in, arm in arm, Mr. and Mrs. Snubbs!—no name, but Snubbs to all intents and purposes. The house again! We were sick of the house! And these Snubbses—we were half sorry that we had put it into Mr. Rawlinson's hands. Oh, the broad, brown, coarse face—the stiff, white cravat—the yellow waistcoat, and the brown coat! Where in the world, could this Mr. Snubbs have come from! And Mrs. Snubbs!—the great, fashionable pink bonnet—the fat, little, vulgar face, ill-tempered and yet smirking—the frilled pelerine—the grand chaly gown—the blaze of rings seen through the green-laced gloves—the red shawl over the arm, and the pea-green parasol in the hand—altogether, it was the perfection of rich vulgarity!

But the house must be shown. Should they be turned over to a servant, was the first thought; but, no, said a sense of propriety; go with them, and go through

it as quickly as possible. "Ha! the dining-room," said Mr. Snubbs, "very convenient." "Too narrow by half," said the lady. She had got on Mrs. Latham's cue, and we began to fear that every body would find it out. "The breakfast-room," said Mr. Snubbs; "well, and a very pretty room, too." "Too near the kitchen," said the sententious lady. "We have a double door, covered with baize," said I, "to obviate that objection." "Double doors are of no use," replied she; "you can't shut out the clatter of servants' tongues." We were silenced; Mr. Snubbs darted an angry glance at his spouse, and grew very polite to us. Mrs. Snubbs found out the kitchen-grate was of a very bad construction. Mr. Snubbs maintained that it was the best in the world. We knew she was right, but we held our peace. The cellars Mr. Snubbs demurred about, and then came the lady's turn to approve: "they were the most convenient cellars she had ever seen." We wondered how in the world they had ever got on together; two dogs in a string were the very emblem of them. Throughout the whole place it was the same; they agreed upon nothing. He admired coved ceilings; she declared they were intolerably hot in summer. He approved the marble chimney-pieces; she pronounced them all of a bad pattern. She thought the drawing-room paper handsome; he thought it, on the contrary, the only bad paper in the house. He liked an eastern aspect for a bedroom; she said it burnt one alive before one was dressed. If we were provoked in the first few instances with these dissentient opinions, they became at length irresistibly ludicrous. You had but to hear the remarks of the one to pronounce with certainty on the retort of the other. Out of doors it was just the same; she was amazed at its being possible for one cow in full milk to supply cream and butter sufficient for a moderately sized family; he said it was a thing that was as common as the day. He wondered that a dozen hens should lay eggs enough for the same sized family; she told him that he knew nothing about hens—that one hen would lay two hundred eggs in a year. This was quite beyond our experience, but Mrs. Snubbs was left to the full glory of her argument,