

tered Charles, as he pushed back his chair, and taking his hat, walked sullenly out of the room.

Mrs. Wharton sat musing for a few moments after his departure, and her eyes filled with tears as she recalled his angry words.—She felt that he had been unkind, for she thought he was angry at her tardiness, and she was conscious that she would willingly have relinquished the darling morning sleep, if she had known of his engagement. "Why did he not tell me of it?" said she, mentally; "how should I always know what he wishes me to do, unless he tells me? and yet he seems often dissatisfied at some neglect of which I am not conscious, until when too late to remedy it."

Poor Mrs. Wharton! with the best intentions, the kindest feelings, and the most devoted love for her husband, she was yet ignorant of some of those minor duties, without which, happiness cannot be attained. Educated at a fashionable boarding-school, she knew little of the actual mechanism of life.—She had gone through the regular routine of studies and accomplishments—had been brought out into society in due form, at the age of sixteen, and after two years spent in the excitement of the gay world, had given her hand to the most agreeable, rather than to the richest of her suitors preferring love in a cottage, with Charles Wharton, to indifference in a palace, with her wealthier lover. She was simply a warm-hearted, affectionate, cheerful tempered girl, whose reflective powers, if she had them, had never been much cultivated, and whose pliant character was yet to be moulded by future circumstances. Her husband had grown up in the midst of an old fashioned domestic circle. He had seen his mother devoted to her household duties, governing herself and others by a regular system, which made every care seem light, because each fell in its allotted place, and to its allotted person. He had observed his sisters acquiring all the elegant refinements of a finished education, while they gradually learned, from example, rather than precept, the womanly habits which are only to be gained in a well-ordered household. He had been so accustomed to neatness and order, that he scarcely noticed their presence, but if he was accidentally thrown into circumstances where they were wanting, their absence soon taught him how essential they were to his daily comfort. In short, he was the son of a sensible and good mother, and her influence had made him worthy of as good a wife.

Mary Lee's pretty face and frank simplicity of character, had attracted him, when she first entered society. Her unalterable good humor was an additional charm, and when he found her possessed of a fund of sound practical good sense, which needed only time to develop itself, he hesitated not to offer to her acceptance his heart and hand. During the first intoxication of youthful love, he could see no defects in her character, no spots in the sun which shed so much light upon his existence. Her cheerful smiles, her bright face, her bird-like voice, all acted upon him like enchantment, and with a degree of enthusiasm which usually ends in disappointment, he exalted her into an object of adoration. He was ten years her senior, and the light-hearted girl received his homage with an elation of spirit which tended to increase rather than subdue the levity of her disposition.

I wonder if it ever occurred to a discontented husband that much of the discomfort of his married life might be attributed to this over-estimation which is so general a characteristic of the days of courtship. To man, love is but the interlude between the acts of a busy life—the cares of business, or the severe studies of a profession are the *duties* of his existence, while the attentions which he bestows on the young and fair being whom he has chosen to share his future lot, are the actual pleasures of his life. He comes to her weary with the sordid anxieties or the oppressive intellectual labours in which he has been engaged, and he finds her ever the gentle minister to his happiness, while the atmosphere which surrounds her, is one of such purity and peace, that all his better nature is awakened by her presence. What marvel, then, that he should make her the idol of his dreams, and enthrone her on high in his imagination, as the good genius of his life?—Wilfully blind to every defect in her character, he views her through the medium of his own excited feelings, and thus, like one who should pretend to judge of the real landscape by beholding its reflection in a Claude Lorraine glass, he sees only the softened lineaments of the actual being. Then comes the hour of disenchantment. In the familiar intercourse of wedded life, he ceases to be the worshipper at an idol's shrine. The love still exists, perhaps even increases in its fervour, but the blind worship is at an end; she is now his fellow traveller through the rugged and dusty path of life, and she must bear with him the heat and burden of the day. But it often happens that the past has not been without its evil influence upon