

and on the other side, in a great black autograph, "No, 228—admit to view." It was evident the announcement had taken effect. Somebody had been laying out business for the Monday. People were come to see the house; and that moment the servant ushered in a lady and gentleman. "He believed," he said, "that the place was to let," and motioned towards the large card which lay on the table. "Yes, certainly;" and in a moment we were all seated. A glance, which occupies but a second of time, gives us a large idea of persons. It was so now. They had been introduced without a name, but they looked like a Mr. and Mrs. Latham. They were both young, and had an air of good breeding about them; they had kept good society, and he was some way connected with the East India Company. He had a half military air, without the slightest military costume; perhaps he had been abroad, for his complexion was slightly bronzed; he was altogether a prepossessing gentlemanly person—a sunny spirit—a cheerful fellow, and one who loved a good table. She was, in every sense of the word, *genteel*; slender, graceful, well dressed, and quiet; was a lady who affected *nonchalance*—never exhibited emotion; never laughed, but smiled in the prettiest aristocratic way in the world; had delicate health; did a deal of worsted work; was fond of music; read novels; and had one child. Even while the preliminary sentences were speaking, these observations were made; and we immediately proceeded to go the round of the place. Two discoveries were soon made: he looked on the light side of things, she on the dark; their countenances indicated it. The ceiling of the breakfast-room she thought indifferent, he thought it might be remedied directly; the dining-room she feared was too small, he thought with a little contrivance it would do charmingly. Her anxious scrutiny of the dining-room, the knowing way in which she spoke of it, the quickness with which she spied its weak points, convinced us that they were people who kept dinner company; they would exactly suit this neighbourhood, for all are diners-out. Giving dinners and dining out is the curse of its society. It would be a thousand pities that they should not come here. The inspection of the cellars proved the same thing.* In the beer cellar they examined the thralls for the ale barrels, and the binns for the bottled porter; and forty dozen of wine they discovered might be stocked with management in each binn of the wine cellar, and of these binns there were six;—it would do! Such a calculation laughed to scorn our humble stock! The cellars were pronounced unexceptionable. The same sentence was passed on the drawing-room. I could read by her quiet eyes and smile that in imagination she saw her instrument in it; her embroidery frame by the window; the tables, sofas, and ottomans, all arranged in an admired disorder, and company assembling. It was not to be objected to. The husband approved with a broad smile, and the wife with the most lady-like of assents. While she was making silent observation on chambers and their closets, he was inquiring after the out-buildings, the stables, and the land. The lady wished first to see the kitchens; she was thinking of the company and the cooking; he acquiesced. To be sure, he had forgotten the kitchens; it was evident, however much he might love a good dinner, he loved a good horse better. Accordingly, the stables succeeded to the kitchens. "Ha! they were excellent!—just what he wanted; and the coach-house!—all right and good!" And it was plain that he saw his fine horses tied up to the mangers, and his currie standing in the place of our pony-chaise. The satisfied expression of his countenance brought the objects before me. I could have told him the colour of his horses, the cut of their tails, and the style of his currie.

After the hen-house, too, he was inquisitive, and made profound observations on our poultry, which, however, happened to be a long way from the mark; but he was fond of poultry, that was clear, and fancied himself knowing on the subject.

The result of the whole inspection appeared highly satisfactory to him, and the lady threw in her objections every now and then with the sweetest grace imaginable. The return to the house convinced her that the dining-room would never do, and elicited again her husband's old answer of "with contrivance," &c. Upon the whole, he appeared to like the place