

## Domestic Economy.

### HOW THEY DO IT.

"I don't understand how they do it," said Mrs. Warren, thoughtfully.

"You were talking about the Wentworths, as I came in," responded a friend; "was it with reference to them that you spoke as you did?"

"Yes," was the reply. "We don't personally know the Wentworths, but Mr. Wentworth has the same position in society which my husband has; gets the same salary; his children are no older, and they have one more daughter than we. Yet they dress better than we do. How they can do it, honestly, I can't see, for it costs us every penny that is made to live decently, and sometimes we go behindhand. It is a puzzle to me, I confess."

"I am very intimate with the Wentworths," remarked the new-comer, quietly. "As you say, they are no better off with regard to money than you are, but they are great managers."

"O, I hate managing people," said Mrs. Warren, shrugging her shoulders.

"You don't quite understand me, perhaps," said her friend, gently. "I happened to be staying at the house some three years ago, when Mary was fourteen. Mary is the oldest, and was always an ingenious girl. I remember they had a dressmaker there, and Mrs. Wentworth questioned her very closely about the trade—so closely that she glanced up at last in surprise, saying,—

"Why, Mrs. Wentworth, are you going to make a dressmaker of Mary?"

"I have serious thoughts of it," said Mrs. Wentworth. "Will you teach her by the shortest method for a certain sum?"

"Well, the bargain was made, to the good woman's astonishment, and Mary went for two or three hours a day, as one goes to take a music lesson. The consequence is, that for that outlay they have established in their family a dressmaker who never fails them, and who in her quiet, efficient way, aided by her sisters, fits and makes all the dresses worn by her mother, her sisters and herself. Consequently, as the making often costs half as much as the material, all that extra expense is saved, and they can afford to buy a better fabric,

one that lasts longer and looks richer. Another daughter was initiated in the art of bonnet-making, and for a bonnet for which you would give ten dollars at a good store they give less than half that sum, and can, consequently, if they wish, afford two bonnets to your one. Of course, all the other sewing is done at home, and special hours are set aside for this work. They sew together, chat together, compare notes, originate tasteful trimmings and fashions, and really outdress and outshine their wealthier neighbors (though I don't think they desire to do so), on a very much smaller sum. I tried one day to pattern some buttons which I very much admired, but failed, and finally went to them. 'Why, you couldn't purchase them,' said Mary, laughing, 'because we made them ourselves. We obtained some thin rings, covered them, as you see, with gray satin, worked the edge all round with thick silk, in buttonhole stitch, made a little bee in the centre with silver thread, and so we procured our stylish buttons, which everybody has admired, for less than half of what we could have bought a very inferior button for.'

"So that is the way they do it," said Mrs. Warren, thoughtfully. "I wonder I never guessed at it, for certainly my dressmaker's bills are terrible. I always dread to buy new dresses, because of the after expenses. But are they cultivated girls?"

"Thoroughly so. Mary sings. She did not wish to study music, so she was never encouraged. Alice, the second girl, is a fine performer on the piano; Nellie paints wonderfully; and the youngest has a great aptitude for making bread, I am told, and is a born cook. As I said before, their time is equally divided. There is no hurry or confusion there, for every thing seems to be done upon careful system at the right moment. They are all practical workers, and often earn something for themselves by turning their ingenuity to account for their friends. They live simply and frugally. Mrs. Wentworth is a good housekeeper, and every thing is turned to some useful purpose, even twine and paper; nothing is ever wasted at meals; whenever you meet them they are neat, and clean, and cheerful. Their re-unions at night are something