

The domicile of Doctor Witherton stood aloof from the village, and shone amid the green trees surrounding it, of such snowy whiteness, as might have attracted to it smiles of an "eggshell," or a "house of cards," from the censors of the present day, who have conspired, as far as in them lies, to overcast the walls that hold us, with the smoke and time-created hues of those of older lands. Indeed, the most delicate fabric of Bristol-board, that ever graced a fancy fair, could scarcely have surpassed it in unspotted cleanness. But let the taste have been good or bad, no one then even found fault with its whiteness, which, as long as its owner occupied it, was never diminished a shade, for white-wash and white paint were as necessary to his comfort as white linen. And not only the mansion itself, but every thing pertaining to it, exhibited the same unvarying neatness. The green tops of the elaborate pailings never lost a tint of their greenness; the gilt mortar and pestle, displayed on the window-shutter, against a background of pounded blue glass, turned to every sun the same glittering front; and as to the garden, it was prim enough for the promenade of a mandarin. Never a honeysuckle turned up the pale side of its leaves for want of a trellis; never a cluster of carnations sighed their sweetness upon the ground, through lack of a stick to lean upon, and in no cabbage and onion department, could have been found shapes of greater rotundity and grace.

The interior was in excellent keeping. To say nothing of the office, or "shop," according to the parlance in which it was oftenest treated of, with its well-matched bottles and jars, "all in a row;" the little library, or study, in its rear—for the doctor was too much the man of taste, to use the aforesaid apartment for that purpose—was snugness sublimated. A peep through the windows—the only chance, indeed, which a visitor—at least, a female one, could have had of gratifying her curiosity; the clear, clean little windows, which, in the winter, gleamed with the reflection of the bright fire within, and, in the summer, mirrored their external curtainings of vines, would have served to take in the room with all its principal characteristics. The carpet, on which not even the cuttings of a pen were to be seen; the chairs, each at its proper angle; the table, with its ample cloth cover, and commodiously disposed writing materials, and the well-filled book-cases, displaying through glass doors, long ranks of their contents in untarnished bindings; all attested how methodical was the mind that presided over their arrangement while the

composed confidence of the sleek grama which, one half the year, kept possession of the rag, and the other half, of a broad wicker seat, as fully demonstrated its placidity. Four sybils drawn their predictions from the scene, there would have been less reason to wonder at their revelations. Regarding the doctor's surroundings as part of himself, and much would their uniformity have been destroyed by the boxes and baskets of female idleness! and how much their tranquillity, a rocking-chair, to encroach upon poor puss's tail, or a little urchin or two, to provoke their claws into action! It was the very room to think in. Its brightness and precision were reflected back upon the mind of its inmate, thence to the packets which now and then issued from it to our post-office, slowly to the fame of which its possessor was almost in entire ignorance.

As to this inmate himself, we shall be content to describe him in simple advertising style, one, which, if not the most graceful, certainly tends to save labour, both of writing and reading. He was a middle sized man, formed, with light complexion, regular features, and prepossessing countenance, and generally wore a handsome, carefully brushed suit of black. Altogether, he had such a favourable figure as most "ladies love to look upon," particularly when accompanied, as in the present instance, with agreeable manners, and the qualities of the head and heart.

Careful as our lover of quiet and order had been, to remove himself from the sighing sounds of the village, he was not long able to enjoy his seclusion uninterrupted. A sea-captain, Johnson, by name, took it into his head to purchase a piece of ground, adjoining, and commenced, almost under the shade of the doctor's trees, an edifice designed as as massy and imposing as the phœnix structures of his illustrious namesake, while, for aught of resemblance it bore to anything in the known orders of architecture, it had been modeled after a mermaid's palace or the chapel of Prester John. For two successive summers, the doctor's ears were filled with the noise of saws and trowels, and axes, with piles of boards, brick and mortar, when, the captain's funds giving him way to return to "the cotton trade and sugar," the monument of his ambition was left unfinished, to remain an eyesore to his neighbours, a wonder and jest to the whole country, and under the title of Johnson's Folly. And for several years, it stood, unused and un-