

patience got the better of me, and I sauntered up, as though by accident, whistling a bar of the music I had been listening to. I tapped at the door, but received no answer; louder, and still no answer; then I turned the handle, and entered.

At the further end of the room sat my friend, robed and bewigged, his elbow resting on the table, his face supported by his hand, and slightly turned. The violin had been carelessly put down on the bureau by his side, and spread out before him lay a mass of papers, together with the brief he had just received. He appeared to be intently perusing them, and did not even look up when I entered. With the object of surprising him, I crossed the room with a soft tread, and brought my hand suddenly down upon his shoulder. As I did so a thrill of horror was transmitted through my nerve-fibres, for the figure that

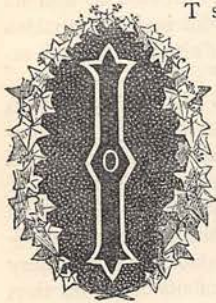
I touched was rigid and motionless. I bent forward and peered into the face. It bore the most radiant smile of contentment I had ever seen, but there was no mistaking its meaning; it was life's last indelible imprint.

Later, the papers which lay before the dead man were examined, and they proved to contain the evidence he had named to me of the identity of the child. Taken with the brief, the case was clear beyond the shadow of a doubt. She was the heiress my uncle was in search of; and so it was subsequently established.

It has always seemed to me to be well in keeping with the irony of fate that, at the very moment when his brief arrived, after he had waited for it through twenty years, Demosthenes Coke should have received a retainer for a higher tribunal.

A HAPPY HOME WELL ORDERED.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.—CHOOSING THE HOUSE.



T seems to me that the cultivation of the happiness of others is one of the great duties of our lives. We are told that true religion and cheerfulness go hand in hand; yet how much useless unhappiness there is brought about, not by heavy trials, losses, or the afflictions which come more or less to all, but by discontent, by evils and ills to be easily remedied, by bearing small miseries which there is no reason to bear, by making troubles about possible calamities which never come! It is not the heavy sorrows of life that would seem intolerable, but the small wearying, worrying cares, the annoyances and vexations which in nine cases out of ten originate at home; yet this is the very place where all happiness should begin. Husbands, sons, and daughters go out into the world far better able to fight its battle if they have a happy home in the background—a sure refuge.

But there is so much that must be brought to bear to produce real home happiness. The refined freshness and repose which comes with a well-ordered household demands constant care and forethought.

First and foremost, the house itself should be judiciously chosen. Its situation depends entirely on the circumstances and surroundings of its owner. It adds greatly to the comfort of its inmates if it is near the people with whom they are most likely to be thrown, and within easy distance of the profession or calling in which the men of the family are interested. It should contain as many rooms as are wanted, and no more; and in deciding what is absolutely necessary, due regard must be had to the number of servants that will be kept. Overworked domestics do not conduce to

comfort; nor is it well for them, on the other hand, not to be sufficiently employed. But above all things, the rent must be in proportion to the income, as all the expenses are regulated by the house-rent.

Let the situation be as airy as you can; remember that in all streets there is a choice of afternoon or morning sun.

Bear in mind that some situations are noisier, more dusty, consequently more destructive to furniture, than others; and all these points are to be considered, for prettiness and taste in decoration should be secondary to cleanliness.

Many modern houses are run up by speculative builders to look well and let, but not to last, and unfortunate tenants soon find how the green wood gapes, how the dust percolates through the flimsy brick-work, and how continual are the necessary repairs, which are generally only a miserable patch-up, requiring constant attention. It is cheaper in the end to pay a little more rent and have a dependable house. No one should buy a house till he has lived in it a year, nor hire one even till he has had a trustworthy surveyor to go carefully over it from roof to basement. I say "roof" advisedly: it is there one's house troubles so often begin. Modern-built houses show their defects when a heavy downpour of rain discovers leakages, which mostly drop on to a bed or a tidy carpet. Outside pipes not too carefully planned get choked up from the refuse of the roof-gutters, and in a violent rain the water pours over them, not in them, until a pool is formed on the roof, and descends through the ceilings. If possible, the staircase should neither be high nor steep, an ordinary fault in town houses: it adds so much to the labours of servants. All these are, however, minor considerations as compared to the sanitary conditions of the house. Pure water, good drainage and ventilation are essential to health. It is the duty of the householder to consider these first. "Natural health

is natural wealth," and there is little happiness without health.

The constant supply system, with water always flowing into the cisterns, is best. All outside cisterns should be cleaned once a month, those inside three or four times a year. Avoid lead cisterns; substitute slate; and if possible, have the water laid on to each floor: it saves so much labour, and is a great aid to cleanliness. For drinking, water should be transparent and colourless, with no smell; there should be filters attached to the cistern, and no water should be drunk without further filtration. Take every precaution that there can be no possible connection between the sewer and water-pipes, a fruitful source of illness. Drainage is a difficult question; defective pipes that do not properly connect with the main sewer, and leak, so that the basement is over a cess-pool, are the common evils to be warned against. Never neglect any unpleasant smell; bad drainage means disease and death, and there are thousands perish annually of preventible disease.

In every room have a ventilator. Too little oxygen and too much carbonic acid gas produce low spirits, inertia, and listlessness, especially in children. The foul air escapes at the top of the room, and windows should therefore be open at the top, and no registers in any fireplace be allowed to be shut. It requires an experienced housewife to keep rooms at a right temperature: warm in winter, cool in summer, and light; good air and plenty of light are as essential to our bodily welfare as good food. It is a great secret of success in summer to keep rooms cool by shutting out the light.

The houses that we live in are insensibly teaching us their lessons all our lives. D'Israeli said, "Happiness is atmosphere," and it is the surroundings of our daily lives that tell upon us from our earliest infancy; so home should not only be a haven of rest, peace, and sympathy, but should have its element of beauty in all its details, and it is this that tends to make people love their "ain fireside." The very outside should be bright and inviting in its aspect, the blinds uniform, the knocker, bell, and door-handle bright, and the steps clean.

While pleasing the eye, do not forget the nose: by which I mean, look after your dust-bins; neglect of them is dangerous. Burn all refuse you can, especially vegetable, and have the heap occasionally sprinkled with carbolic acid.

The question of furnishing is a very wide one. Avoid pretence and shams in decoration. Everything should seem what it really is, and have its use. Do not buy anything merely for show. Make your rooms look as if you lived in them, and all their contents as fitting as possible without extravagance. Show your love of art and beauty in your surroundings, and bring it to bear in the selection of the smallest household trifle. "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever."

I am now going to give you a few hints, the result of experience. Do not attempt to cover the whole floor of rooms with carpet: it is a waste of the material, and harbours dirt, for it is difficult to take up. Stain your

floors with a wide margin, or else all over; the fluid is quite inexpensive, and you can apply it yourself with a brush. All you will then want will be a centre square of carpet, or if the whole room is stained, Oriental rugs where required; you will have nothing that can give better touches of colour. If, however, you choose a velvet-pile carpet, bear in mind that if brushed against the grain it wears out quickly and looks poor. To clean carpets, rub them with a damp cloth, or sweep with tea-leaves, being careful to run them first under a tap, or they are apt to stain. Kidderminster requires more frequent attention. A crimson drugget, with rugs here and there, gives a warm look to a dull room.

Ceilings should be tinted; a white one is hard and cold. Varnish all the woodwork and all the paper you can; it is the best preventive of dirty finger-marks, and is more durable. Plate-glass windows give light; have them where you can. Hide unsightly vistas with leaded coloured glass, and introduce the same into the second or inner doors of the hall; it gives a pleasant glow. Make the halls and staircase warm, cosy, and soft to the feet, using wide bright druggetting sooner than narrow carpet; and hang pictures, photographs, prints, whatever you can muster, in every available corner, but avoid dust-traps, such as velvet-covered brackets, and the like. Don't hang your pictures on one nail; they look far better on two; use strong wire and then with the double nails it will be lost on the wall.

Let your papers be either a mere neutral background to your pictures and decorations, or an ornament in themselves, and keep them clean by dusting with a feather-brush, and once a year rub the walls from top to bottom in straight lines with stale bread.

Bed-rooms are meant for repose; there should be nothing to tire the eye in the pattern of paper or hangings—a fruitful source of weariness in illness—and no overcrowding of furniture. Iron bedstead, chairs, washing-stand, dressing-table, wardrobe, chest of drawers, sofa, and writing-table are enough; and where a hanging wardrobe cannot be had, I have seen a substitute placed in the corner of the room, in the form of a circular stand with several arms and hooks, all enclosed in chintz. Avoid flimsy furniture; buy what is good, even if second-hand. Do not have the woodwork grained in any part of the house; dark flat colours are best, and savour of no pretence in decoration.

Simplicity, appropriateness, harmony of colour—these produce the best results. "Dirt is only a thing in the wrong place," said Lord Palmerston, but its extermination is apt to bring about great domestic discomfort. Each day one room should be thoroughly cleaned out; and once, if not twice, in the year there should be a general house-cleaning, but it should be done judiciously, without discomfort throughout the household.

Good things are cheapest in the end, and it is economy to employ good dependable tradespeople.

Don't be carried away by the prevailing art-craze decoration, which oftens means lack of comfort with ugliness. To decide wisely in these matters entails more art-education than most of us have, so we follow

any leader, and in a few years, long before a young housekeeper's new stock of penates will be worn out, the downright positive ugliness of some of the present-day revivals will be apparent to her, and, alas! to every one else.

Stencilling is an easy art. You can buy the patterns almost anywhere, and can thereby improve painted mantel-pieces, door-panels, and dados. Algerian and Japanese art at little expense will help in colour, and good shapes, and look well throughout the house. Be sure you do not give yourself into the hands of an upholsterer. A room should be furnished by those who make it a part of their own individuality. One

who understood the subject well gave this golden rule, "Every article of furniture should at the first glance proclaim its real purpose." On this score abjure veneering and other shams, use wrought iron rather than cast, lay down mats only where they are wanted, don't overcrowd with knickknacks, let each room be habitable. Take advantage of all modern improvements which tend to the saving of work and trouble; the Americans teach us much on that score.

If women understood more of the science of living, happy homes would be common, where nothing is wasted, nothing wanted, and everything employed and enjoyed.

ARDERN HOLT.

UNDER THE CRUST: THE LANCASHIRE OPERATIVE.

BY A NORTH-COUNTRYMAN.



SINCE the days of the cotton famine the Lancashire operative has been somewhat overlooked. At that time he was "interviewed" by a hundred "own correspondents" and "special commissioners," who told us all about his

manner of life, his usual occupation, and the kind of place which he called his home. These "pictures with pen and pencil" were wonderfully graphic, and in the main correct. They gave the outside world glimpses of the home-life of a large section of the English working classes, and made the people of the sunny South much better acquainted than they would otherwise have become with the dwellers in Factory-land.

But Lancashire with its mills all silent, and its people being fed and clothed by "relief" committees, is a different place from Lancashire when cotton is plentiful and "hands" are fully employed. Those who saw the Lancashire operative twenty years ago would hardly recognise him now. Not that his general habits are much changed, or his style of living, or his speech. This last was always a peculiarity, and to strangers a difficulty; and such it seems likely to remain. But men and women who are living in enforced idleness, and are "welly clamm'd" (half-starved), have, of course, a very different look from that of people who have as much work as they care to do, and find many of the comforts of life quite within their reach. The working people of Lancashire have

long since recovered their wonted cheeriness of spirit. They never quite lost it, even when the "hard times" of which they used to sing were hardest and most trying to their patience. They looked very sober in the midst of all their privations and troubles, but they never looked sullen, or lost heart, for they well understood that when the war which had produced the cotton famine came to its "bitter end," brighter days would speedily dawn upon them. Many of them delight to recall the scenes which were witnessed in every part of the district when the first loads of American cotton were drawn from the railway stations to the mills; how the people went out in crowds to meet the waggons, and followed them singing—

"Hard times, come again no more,"

while some of the poor women positively rushed forward and kissed the cotton-bales as they lay in the trucks. The people were very eager to be at work; they knew how to enjoy a holiday as well as any body of operatives in the world, but three years of "play" had been enough to make them all long to get back to their looms again.

The homes of many of the operatives had been all but stripped during those dismal years. Many a household treasure had been sacrificed to avoid an appeal to the relief committee, or even the acceptance of help when it was offered and pressed upon them. With the return of good times the "house-place" quickly recovered its old look of comfort, and it was not very long before the "parlour" was once more bright with polished chairs and tables, and even its piano or harmonium.

All Lancashire people, we may here remark, are house-proud, and it is not the mill-owners and great "cotton lords" alone who vie with one another as to who shall have the most superbly-furnished dwelling. This rivalry is shown all through the community, and men and women who stand side by side at the loom all day are as ready to boast of some new article of furniture which they have just "get'n into th' house," as are their masters when they ride together