

HOW MOLLY MADE BOTH ENDS MEET.

BY PHILLIS BROWNE.

CHAPTER I.—THE WELCOME LETTER.



It is a cold winter's evening. Two old ladies, sisters, are sitting, one on each side of the fire, waiting for the daylight to die. One of them is knitting, and it is evident that she is accustomed to the work, for though her eyes are anywhere but upon it, and she looks as though her thoughts are far away, she keeps on knitting briskly and almost mechanically, while the steel needles glitter in the uncertain light and click, as if they were announcing to the world at large that though some

people might yield to laziness, their owner never will.

The other lady is evidently not in the least affected by this exhibition of industry. She is lying back in her easy-chair, her hands crossed upon her lap. The flickering blaze every now and then throws an uncertain light across the room, and casts long shadows over the walls, giving fitful glimpses of the portrait of a young girl which hangs over the mantelpiece. The face represented here is a simple and pretty one; the girl is dressed in white, with blue ribbons; she has smiling happy eyes and rosy lips, yet she looks in her youthful freshness and sweetness so like an early edition of the lazier of the sisters, that we at once pronounce the two mother and daughter.

Into this peaceful dreamy atmosphere I enter.

"Well, good folks, are you going to sleep?"

"No, we are only resting for awhile," says mother.

"We are like the old ladies in Cranford," says the knitter—Aunt Susan. "We think it is extravagant to have the lamps lighted too early, so we sit in the twilight."

"I am tired, and glad of an interval of rest," said mother.

"Have you heard from Molly?"

"Oh, yes! we have had two or three letters. She has thoroughly enjoyed her honeymoon trip. I have been thinking about her as I have been sitting here."

"When are you not thinking of her?" said Aunt Susan.

"It is a loss, truly, for a mother when her girl goes away," said the visitor—Mrs. Browne. "But you believe that the change is for her happiness, you know."

The postman's knock interrupts the conversation.

"Perhaps that is a letter from Molly," says mother; and in a moment the maid brings the welcome packet into the room, and hands it to her mistress.

"Yes, it is a thick packet. Now we shall hear all

about Molly and her husband. Light the lamps and close the shutters, Jane; then I will read what the dear child says."

"Am I to be favoured by hearing the letter?" says Mrs. Browne.

"Indeed you are, for let me tell you what I have arranged to do. You know as well as I that Molly used to do a little housekeeping when she was at home, and that she was fairly domesticated."

"Certainly," said Mrs. Browne, who thought to herself that little Molly would find it very different living where there was abundance, and trying to make both ends of a not very ample income meet.

"Still I expect she will not find it quite easy work to manage a household." "So I told her that, if she would send an exact account of her experiences, Mrs. Browne, Aunt Susan, and I would lay our heads together, and give her the very best advice we could. You will not object to do this, Mrs. Browne?"

"Not in the least. Molly is a sensible lassie, and I have no doubt that, in a little while, she will be able to teach us instead of our teaching her."

"Nonsense," said Aunt Susan. "Young people are very clever nowadays, but they cannot get the experience of five-and-twenty or thirty years in a few months."

"Of course they cannot," said mother, "and that is why I think Molly will be glad to have a few hints from us. But now listen to the letter.

"MY NEW HOME,

Friday Afternoon.

"DEAR PEOPLE IN MY OLD HOME,

"This is my housekeeping letter, which I am going to write according to agreement. I wish some of the clever scientific people who have invented telephones, and other wonderful things, would invent a machine which would enable us to peep at each other just now. I think I know what you are doing when you receive this. You are sitting in the dining-room, waiting for Jane to bring in the tea. Mother is resting and looking every now and then at that flattering portrait of me which hangs over the mantelpiece; and auntie is knitting as if she were compelled to supply all the parish with socks. (I hope you will knit Charlie a set, auntie; his new socks are in holes already.) In a little while you will send across for Mrs. Browne, and then you will all three discuss this letter.

"The worst of it is, that though I can picture you, you cannot imagine me, so I think before I go any further I must make a pen-and-ink sketch of myself, my feelings, and my surroundings. First of all I must tell you that my marriage is a most happy one."

"Now, I do hope we are not going to be favoured with this sort of thing," interrupted Aunt Susan. "To me it seems ridiculous that a girl who has been married barely six weeks should dare to declare her

marriage happy. No marriage can be said to be happy until it is, at the very least, seven years old."

"Well, listen to the letter," said mother.

"I know at this point auntie is indignant; but never mind. Our house is very small (of course, it had to be, for we could not afford a large house), but it is very pretty. I am glad now that I did not see it before I came to it as its mistress, for it has been such a delight to be astonished with all its excellencies. Jennie, Charlie's sister, met us at the station. She it is who has helped Charlie with the house, and I really think she has done her work very cleverly. I told her so, and she seemed pleased. When Jennie came up to the wedding I thought her quite plain-looking; now I think her almost pretty; she is so bright and unselfish that, when you get to know her, her face borrows beauty from her character. I looked rather anxiously at our one maid as she opened the door. I was pleased with her, I think, but I am not quite sure about it. However, I am not going to make up my mind about her all at once. I asked Jennie whether she liked her, but something prevented her answering me, and I forgot to mention it again. Jennie did not engage her, you know; Charlie's old landlady recommended her, and Charlie said he supposed she was all right. She was very neat and smart, and the house was very clean and in good order."

"How could it help being so when everything was new?" interrupted Mrs. Browne, but mother took no notice of the remark, and continued—

"So I determined not to be suspicious. I know it is not an easy thing to get a good servant."

"I hope she won't allow herself to be imposed upon," said Aunt Susan, preparing to look indignant.

"Molly will have to learn by experience like the rest of us," said mother, and went on reading.

"After we had looked all round the house, and I had duly admired it, we had tea, then Jennie said good night and went away, and Charlie and I were left, he the master and I the mistress of this pretty nest, with everything new and bright around us, and life all before us, and somehow I felt quite solemn about it. He did not. He kissed me, then sat down in his own arm-chair, by his own fireside, with his own wife opposite him, as he expressed it, and looked, and evidently felt, like a king. My eyes, however, filled with tears.

"Why, Molly, little wife, what is it?"

"I'm wondering what we shall make of it, Charlie?"

"Make of what, my dear?"

"Of life, and all this. I wonder if we shall go on to grow happier, and love each other more and more, as father and mother did before father died, or whether we shall get tired of each other, and get into difficulties with money."

"Charlie looked grave. 'Do you know, Molly,' he said, 'it seems a hard thing to say, but I believe that the growing happier and happier as the years roll on depends, not by any means altogether, but to a very great extent upon our making both ends meet.'

"Mother says it does," said I.

"And now, mother, I have something to tell you, specially. After I had said, 'Mother says so,' I suddenly remembered that in story-books it says that husbands do not like their wives to be constantly quoting their mothers, and have a great objection to mothers-in-law, and I determined to know if Charlie had any idea of that kind; so I said, 'Charlie, you don't mind my mentioning mother, and telling her things, do you?' He said, 'Not at all, dear; banish the thought from your mind. I love your mother dearly. Next to the feeling of joy and pride in having you for my wife, is the satisfaction I have in being certain that I shall never have any difficulties of that kind.'

"Now, mother, was not that good of Charlie? I thought I loved him with all my heart before, but he became positively priceless all in a minute when he spoke so nicely about you."

Of course, Aunt Susan and Mrs. Browne agreed with Molly that it was very "good" of Charlie to speak so kindly of mother. Mother herself was, however, entirely overcome by this remark; she wiped her eyes and tried to read on, and wiped her eyes again, and at length was obliged to stop and have the cry out.

Aunt Susan's eyes were red also, but, as usual, she felt it incumbent upon her to put down the company.

"You won't keep your girl, don't think it," she said. "That is what it is to be a parent; you love your daughter from infancy to womanhood, toil and are anxious for her all day, are glad when she rejoices and sorrow when she sorrows through long years, and then just when she is growing old enough to understand what it all means, she leaves you for a stranger."

By this time mother had recovered her composure, and continued to read the letter.

"Then Charlie and I had a long talk, and we made one another a promise that, no matter what people thought of us, no matter how difficult it was, no matter how little we spent on dress and food, we would live within our income, and save at least a little every year. He read to me something out of a very favourite book of his, 'Emerson's Essays,' in which the writer says that 'the secret of success lies never in the amount of money, but in the relation of income to outgoing,' and also that 'there must be system in the economies.' We resolved that we would both think the matter well over, and that I should draw up a list of our expenses, and Charlie should plan out a system, and then together we would work it out. We felt quite strong as we remembered that it would be working together. Now, dear people, I must conclude. I have written a long letter, but I wanted you quite to understand our position. I have drawn out my list, and when Charlie comes home from business we are going to decide upon the system. I will tell you what it is, and perhaps you can make some suggestions.

"Your loving

"MOLLY."

"I hope they won't try to save by living poorly. That would be false economy," said Mrs. Browne.

"And I hope they won't grow careless about dress," said Aunt Susan. "They cannot afford it."

Professor Blackie, entitled "The Gael in a Foreign Land."

"Dear land of my fathers, my home in the Highlands,
'Tis oft that I think on thy bonnie green glens,
Thy far-gleaming lochs, and thy sheer-sided corries,
Thy dark frowning cliffs, and thy glory of Bens!

Thy close-sweeping torrents, with bound and with bicker
That toss their white manes down the steep rocky brae,
Thy burnies that, babbling o'er beds of the granite,
Through thick copse of hazel are wimpling their way.

Thy close-clinging ivy, with fresh shining leafage,
That blooms through the winter and smiles at the storm,
And spreads its green arms o'er the hoary old castle,
To bind its grey ruin and keep its heart warm.

The sweet-sounding splash of thy light rippling billows,
As they beat on the sand where the white pebbles lie,
And their thundering war when, with whirling commotion,
They lift their white crests in grim face of the sky.

The land I was born in, the land I was bred in,
Where soft-sounding Gaelic falls sweet on the ear ;

Dear Gaelic, whose accents take sharpness from sorrow,
And fill me, despairing, with words of good cheer.

'Twas oft I looked backward, and wishfully turned me,
When my travelled-worn foot to the Lowlands was near,
Like a glimpse of the sun through the dark cloud out-peeping
Was the land of my love which I left with a tear.

What though from the hills, when we first know the Lowlands,
The Lowlander greets us with sneer and with jest?
Oftimes when the bark is the roughest and hardest,
The pith is the soundest, the wood is the best !"

John Campbell's poems, however, are not to be judged by a vagrant sample such as the necessities of space have compelled us to detach. This fragmentary selection is but a "tasting order" to a store-house which, we hope, will soon be enlarged by Professor Blackie rescuing from the Gaelic many inspirations of Ian's muse that in their native form cannot reach the heart of the Sassanach.

EDWARD BRADBURY.

HOW MOLLY MADE BOTH ENDS MEET.

BY PHILLIS BROWNE, AUTHOR OF "WHAT GIRLS CAN DO," ETC.

CHAPTER II.—LAYING DOWN A PLAN.



MRS. BROWNE looked astonished when Aunt Susan said that Molly could not afford to dress poorly.

"You mean that she cannot afford to dress expensively, do you not?" she said.

"Not at all," said Aunt Susan. "People who are rich can afford to dress as they like. If they look shabby, their friends and neigh-

bours say that they are eccentric, or that they have simple tastes, and care for something better than dress ; but if people of limited income look shabby, their neighbours say that they are in difficulties, and the tailor sends in his bill."

"Better not let the tailor have a bill against them," said Mrs. Browne, "then they can be independent."

"Molly will make a great mistake if she thinks she can dress regardless of the opinions of her neighbours," persisted Aunt Susan. "I expect she will discover that people treat her respectfully or otherwise according to the appearance she makes. You, Mrs. Browne, know quite well that if a shabbily-dressed woman were to go into a shop and say that the last pound of butter she bought was rancid and high-priced, there are some buttermen who would be rude to her. They would think, 'This poor creature will never buy much of me ; I need not try to please her.' But if the same woman made the same remark when handsomely dressed, the buttermen would immediately

say, 'Here is a good customer, I must not offend her,' and he would apologise, and bring out his 'best fresh.'"

"Susan does not think much of the high moral feeling of buttermen," said mother.

"I said *some* buttermen," replied Aunt Susan, "and only as an illustration ; of course they are, as a class, as honest and polite as other people."

"For my part," said Mrs. Browne, "I do not think the shabby dress would make much difference if the customer knew what good butter was, and what it ought to cost. If she had no knowledge of this kind, the handsome dress would make our high-principled friend the buttermen think that she had plenty of money, and could be imposed upon."

"I quite agree with Susan so far as a man's dress is concerned," said mother. "A business man who is not well dressed is at a disadvantage, and a shabby coat may cause him to lose both in position and influence ; but with a woman it is different. I always think that one of the delights of being married is that a wife does not in her dress need to study the taste of any one but her husband."

"I should have thought that you would have advised Molly to dress well because of the effect upon her own feeling," said Mrs. Browne. "I fancy sometimes that women respect themselves ever so much more when they are conscious of suitable and becoming apparel."

"Of course they do," said mother. "Don't you remember our energetic friend, Mrs. Brayton? She said that whenever she had a sick headache she put on her best black silk, because then she did not want to lie down on the sofa and give way to it."

"When do you expect to have a housekeeping letter from Molly again?" said Mrs. Browne.

"I scarcely know," said mother. "The child may find herself too busy to write for awhile. But I must write and tell her what Aunt Susan says."

The next letter from Molly arrived before many days had elapsed. It was to the following effect:—

"DEAR MOTHER AND FRIENDS,

"In my last letter I told you that I was going to draw up a list of our expenses, and that Charlie was going to plan a method for expenditure. I did draw up what I thought was a most exhaustive list. I put down rent, rates and taxes, dress, yearly holiday, travelling expenses, charity (I did not forget that, mother), amusements, repairs, renewals (that means replacing breakages. I find that Hannah has broken two plates already. I told Jennie, and she said she knew a lady who had been married fourteen years, and had had fifteen dinner-services), laundress, wages, and living expenses. I thought it all over, and believed that I had put down every item. But when Charlie read it he laughed, took out his pencil, and added insurance, coal, gas, doctors' bills, and savings; I had missed all those things. Could you have imagined I should have been so forgetful?

"I am very glad Charlie is so determined to insure his life," said mother. "It is a cruel thing for a young married man not to begin at once to make provision for what may be."

Mother looked sad for a moment after saying this, then went on reading.

"After this, I asked Charlie if he had devised a method of expenditure. He said he had come to the conclusion that the best thing to do would be to draw up a list of what our regular expenses would amount to, with the exception of food and dress; what was left was to be devoted to those two items. For Charlie thought with me, that there was no way in which we could save excepting out of food and dress."

"These young people are trying to make their income meet their ideas of expenditure, instead of making their ideas of expenditure depend upon their income," said mother.

"I dare say they will soon find that out," said Mrs. Browne, and mother went on reading.

"We soon found, however, that this plan would not answer, for when we had made what we thought was a reasonable estimate of all our expenses, a most inadequate sum was left for living expenses and for dress.

"Of course, this would not do, and we both felt that we were in a difficulty. While we were talking about it, however, Jennie came in, and she helped us directly. Mother, I like Jennie more and more. She is always ready with a suggestion when you don't know what to do. If I had to describe her in one word, I should say she was helpful. The other day I was praising her to a lady who called, and she smiled, and said, 'You are enthusiastic about your sister-in-law, Mrs. Fraser.' 'Am I?' thought I. 'Yes, I will be so.' Charlie is going to take his mother-in-law into

his heart, and in return I will take my sister-in-law into mine. I wish his mother were living, that I might take her too. Why should people be jealous of each other because they both love the same person?

"The suggestion which Jennie made on this occasion was not her own idea; she told us she had read it in a book, but she thought it so good that she had taken a note of it. It was that the income should be portioned out, and that each item of expense should be provided for beforehand, and allowed its due proportion, and no more. According to this, housekeeping expenses, including food, coals, gas, servants' wages, travelling expenses, holidays, renewals, and amusements, were to be paid for out of one-half of the income. Rent, rates, taxes, the cost of going to and from business for Charlie, doctors' bills, if there were any, and margin were allowed a quarter of the income. Clothing had one-eighth, and insurance and saving had also one-eighth.

"Perhaps you wonder what 'margin' meant. I did till Jennie explained it."

"I do not wonder at all," said Mrs. Browne and mother simultaneously.

"She said that no one could *exactly* provide for everything beforehand; the unforeseen always happens—no matter what wise plan you might form, there was sure to be something different to your expectation, and that this difference was almost invariably an excess rather than a deficiency. Therefore, you should prepare for it by leaving a wide margin or extra amount, out of which this unforeseen could be met.

"After this, you may imagine we had ever so much calculation to go through. We found that our rent, rates, and taxes were rather higher than they ought to be, but Charlie said that he would try to get into the way of walking to business, and so save out of the railway journey, and keep himself in good health as well. The 'margin' he is determined shall be a large one, for he says we ought to add to our savings out of it. If ever we save at all it should be now.

"Charlie said also that he was desirous that we should lay these plans and 'systematise' our outlay, because he wants us to throw off the thought of expense. I did not think we ever could do that with our small income, but Jennie and Charlie both believe it to be quite possible. Charlie said he hoped we should escape from the power of sixpences; that, important as it was to make both ends meet, it was narrowing and degrading to make that the business of life, and that there was something more to live for than paying the butcher's bill.

"Jennie broke in here, and became quite eloquent in the same strain. She said that no man could make the most of his opportunities, and devote himself to study or the advancement of the world, who was straining every nerve to provide for daily expenditure, and that the only way to get quite free from this slavery was to subordinate appearances, and make economy a habit, so that it never need be an effort.

"Jennie was getting very enthusiastic on this subject, and was talking away as I never expected she

could talk—for she is a very quiet girl generally—when a knock was heard at the door, and Mr. Malcolm, a friend of Charlie's, whom he had invited to come in for an hour (though he had forgotten to say anything to us about it), was ushered into the room. Mr. Malcolm was very pleasant, and I liked him very much.

“The worst of it was that as soon as he appeared Jennie gave up talking. She is very shy and retiring, and though we tried to draw her out of her shell again, it was no use: she retired into it most obstinately. I fear Mr. Malcolm went away with the opinion that Charlie's sister had very little to say for herself.

“So now, my dears, you know the plan by which we are going to regulate our expenses. We shall have to think it well out before we find what sum belongs exactly to each department. You will see, too, that I, under the heading of housekeeping expenses, shall have half our income under my control. I am going to try and make it go a long way. This is how I intend to do. Charlie will pay me my share (exclusive of my portion for dress, which I shall receive sepa-

ately) every Monday morning. I shall immediately deduct from it what is required for servants' wages, gas, coal, and laundry expenses, and put the money away, then I can use what is left for housekeeping. Charlie is going to look after the other part. I believe we shall manage.

“Now I must conclude. Be sure you tell me what you think of our plans, and whether, in your opinion, we can work them out. I will write again shortly.

“MOLLY FRASER.”

“Well, what do you think of the plan?” said mother, as she laid down the paper.

“I think it is excellent,” said Mrs. Browne. “I wish all newly-married people had as clear an idea of what was wanted as Mr. and Mrs. Charles Fraser have.”

“I don't believe in old heads on young shoulders,” said auntie. “These young people think themselves very clever, but they will make mistakes, like the rest of folks, I have no doubt. They will have to learn from experience, with all their planning.”

“Well, they *mean* to do what is right,” said mother.

LENTIL-FLOUR, AND WHAT MAY BE DONE WITH IT.



In a previous paper I sang the praises of lentils. Let me now say a few words about the flour obtained from them after they are freed from the outer husk.

Now, lentils contain 33 per cent. of nitrogenous matter (flesh formers), 48 per cent. of carbonaceous (heat producers), 3 per cent. of mineral (bone and nerve producers), a large proportion of oil, and from 8 to 10 per cent. of water. On the score of nutrition, then, the lentil-flour recommends itself, especially in cold weather; and its price, about 4d. per pound (of any good corn-dealer or grocer), places it within the reach of all; and though but little known in its simple form, it enters largely into the composition of many foods sold under various names; and I strongly recommend it as an excellent food for children and invalids, as a basis for puddings, &c., and for many other purposes which I will endeavour to point out. In fact, an ingenious cook may make a great variety of dishes from lentil-flour.

I will commence with invalid specialities, as everybody knows the difficulty (especially when means are limited) of providing suitable food during the period of convalescence, when the patient is constantly craving for “something fresh,” and would gladly welcome any change (when upon “slop diet”) from the round of gruel, arrowroot, and beef-tea, so often relied on as all that is needful.

Lentil Gruel.—One table-spoonful of lentil-flour to be mixed with sufficient cold water into a paste, add a pint of boiling water, or milk if it agrees, stir well,

and boil for fifteen minutes; sweeten to taste, flavour if liked, and add a pinch of salt; an egg is an improvement.

Invalid's Pudding.—One ounce of lentil-flour and half a pint of milk. Proceed as above, but boil two minutes only; when cool add sugar to taste, and one egg; steam it in a basin for an hour, or it may be baked for a change.

Beef or mutton tea, broth, and soup of all kinds may be thickened with the flour in all cases where thickening is admissible; care, however, must be taken that the preparation really boils after the flour is added, or it will taste raw.

Porridge for children's supper or breakfast should be made in the same manner as the invalid's lentil gruel, but the proportion of flour should be doubled or nearly so, according to taste, and milk always used; but for children fed from the bottle, water and milk in equal parts, one pint to a dessert-spoonful of flour; and here let me say that if unfortunately you have a delicate child in the family, you can't do better than give a meal daily of this food, and in a very short time a marked improvement will be the result.

Now for what I may term a few “family” hints.

Family Pudding.—Four ounces of lentil-flour to be mixed with cold milk, add the rest boiling—use a quart in all—boil the whole for a minute; when cool add one egg, sugar to taste, and grated nutmeg or lemon-rind; pour into a pie-dish well greased, and bake one hour in a moderate oven, or it may be steamed for two hours, if six ounces of flour instead of four, and an extra egg, are used.

This last is good as *Yorkshire Pudding* if salt and

and Greene, and the site of the "Castle of Rensselaersteën," from whose walls, in the days when New York was New Amsterdam, as we read in "Knickerbocker's History of New York," Nicholas Koorn, the agent of the patroon Van Rensselaer, used to compel passing vessels to dip their colours and pay tribute to the old Dutch freebooter, reminding one of ancient baronial doings on the banks of the "beautiful Rhine."

Beyond Albany, although the river flows for 180 miles north of that city, it is not navigable for steamers or large craft, being broken by numerous falls and rapids.

Although I have tried to give those who may never go "up the Hudson" an idea of its beauty, I am aware that to those who have seen it the description may seem feeble; so difficult is it to describe the charm of that winding river, now a lake and now a strait, or by saying the banks bear such a name at such a part, and are so many feet high, to convey an idea also of the exquisite beauty of their formation, the shadows they cast one on the other and on the waters at their feet; and if one could do all that, the brilliant atmosphere through which it is all seen would be wanting.

HOW MOLLY MADE BOTH ENDS MEET.

BY PHILLIS BROWNE.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

"The best-laid schemes of mice and men gang aft agley."



"NOW I MUST MAKE UP MY ACCOUNTS."

MOLLY'S next letter came rather earlier than we expected it would. I am very much afraid that at this stage of her career Mrs. Browne was in great danger of becoming a gossip. She was constantly running in to see her old friends, Mother and Aunt Susan, to inquire if there were news of young Mrs. Fra-

ser; and on these occasions she was sure to be drawn into discussions about the ways and means to be adopted by young housekeepers. Fortunately, however, for her peace of mind, Molly's relatives were very effusive in their acknowledgments of the amiability of old ladies who were interested in young ones, and so they made it easy for Mrs. Browne to excuse herself to herself with complacency.

Poor little Molly was rather downhearted when she wrote. "I have been in a difficulty," she said. "Yet, though I have been greatly troubled, my trouble was so ordinary and commonplace, that I scarcely like to tell you about it. However, I will begin where I left off, and tell you all I have gone through."

"You will remember that, under the heading 'House-keeping,' which was to include food, coal, gas, servant's wages, cost of travelling, holidays, renewals, and amusements, we decided that I was to have the control of one-half of our income. On talking the matter over later, however, Charlie and I thought it would be better to put aside the money for the last four items

as soon as we received it, and to hand over to me the amount required for the first four items only. The rest Charlie was to portion out every time he received his salary. He said he would get a number of little boxes, one for each detail of expense. After dividing the money, he intended to place each portion in its allotted box, and to write outside in legible characters the object for which the sum was intended. Thus, the rent was to be put into a box marked 'Rent;' the taxes into a box marked 'Taxes;' while the sum we hoped to save, together with the sum which was to serve for 'margin,' was to be put right away into the savings-bank. In this way we hoped to be able to abide by the system we had laid down. At any rate, we should know at once if we were tempted to depart from it."

"Dear me! I hope they won't get any thieves into the place," interrupted Aunt Susan. "It is very unsafe to keep money in the house in that way."

"You forget how small is the amount to be kept," said Mother, "and how immediately it will be required. They are only keeping the money which will be needed at once. They are quite right to do that. But let us hear what Molly says;" and she went on reading the letter.

"Of course I was resolved to work wonders with my share of the money, and for three or four days I went about thinking of little but how I could make money go a long way. Oh, what a number of plans I laid down! Do you remember, mother darling, the old lady whom you and I met a little while before I left you? She told us she had kept house for thirty years, and she could conscientiously say that during the whole of that time she had never spent even a penny except on actual necessities, but that she had never kept accounts, because accounts were of use to those only who were inclined to extravagance. Then we discovered that the husband of this paragon was accustomed to spend freely when out because he had no comforts at home, and was never able to take a friend there. I have thought of that woman many a time, and I have resolved that I will not follow her example.



"I WENT OVER THE DETAILS AGAIN AND AGAIN."

light there if I can compass it. A fortune would be bought too dear if to procure it we had to sacrifice the comfort and joy of home."

"Molly is treading on dangerous ground there," said Mrs. Browne.

"We need not fear that she will go wrong, if she constantly and systematically checks her expenditure," said Mother, and went on reading.

"I said all this to Charlie, and he laughed, and said I was becoming quite philosophical, and that he should look forward to enjoyable times. He added that I made him think of an old uncle of his who used to say that the worth and power of money varied according to the character of the man or woman who had it; and that as a man's outlook grows wider money becomes more valuable to him. Some get nothing but envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness out of it; to others it brings love, trust, hope, joy, refining influences, and inspiring thoughts.

"This is a solemn way of looking at expenditure, is it not? While Charlie was talking I felt it would be quite a responsibility to lay out even my small income. But I resolved once more that I would do my best, and especially that I would keep a strict

account of everything. After all, when we have done our best, we have to leave results.

"During the first week I bought nothing that I could do without. When I went out I took very little money in my purse; and if, when shopping, I saw anything I liked, I determinedly admired the

scenery. I did my own marketing, and sternly declined to have anything to do with people who came round for orders. (I shall keep this up, for I am sure it is the best way.) I paid for goods at once, and looked carefully after the odds and ends. Every time I came in from shopping, I said to myself, 'Now I must make up my accounts,' and carefully jotted down every item. I got on very well until the last day of the week; then I prepared to balance all off properly before I showed my book to Charlie, and I determined to ask him to examine and sign it every week, just to show that it was right and a sort of joint-stock affair.

"At this point I found, to my horror, that I was one pound short. Just fancy, one pound! 'Dear me!' I thought, 'there must be some mistake here,' and I went over the details again and again, but to no purpose. I could not find out where I was wrong.

"Of course I did not like to show a failure like this to Charlie. While I was thinking what I should do, Jennie came in.

"'Well, Molly,' she said, 'are you busy making up your accounts? Of course you have several shillings over.'

"'Indeed, no, Jennie; I am a whole pound short. I must have forgotten some big thing. I thought everything was down.'

"'Don't trouble,' said Jennie; 'you will soon find it out.'

"'But then, you see, I have carefully balanced my accounts every day, and tried to be very exact,' I said despairingly. 'Besides, just fancy: one pound!'

"'Have you lost it?'

"'There was a new horror. But I could not have lost it; and I proved most elaborately that this could not be. So we both reckoned up the items once more.

"'Was the money in silver or gold?'

"'Silver, with the exception of a postal order for one pound.'



"THERE WAS A NEW HORROR."



"I COULD NOT HAVE LOST IT!"



"PLEASE, MA'AM, IS THIS ANYTHING?"

“‘Have you changed the order?’

“‘No. I brought it down intending to change it the day before yesterday; and then I spent some change instead. I remember I took it into the kitchen as I was going out.’ Here I looked quickly at Jennie, and then I whispered—

“‘I have not liked Hannah very much; and she listened at the door. Do you think——?’

“‘Perhaps she did not listen, and you were mistaken,’ said Jennie. Then she rose from her seat, came towards me, and speaking very earnestly, said—

“‘Molly dear, it would be better to lose many a pound than to be unjust. The chances are always a hundred to one that what is lost has gone naturally. We have no right to harbour suspicion until we have exhausted every other possibility. My darling little sister, do not let us allow ourselves to get into the way of *suspecting* those about us. Undue suspicion is so base. It is far worse than the guilt suspected.’

“‘I don’t want to suspect,’ I said. ‘But where’s my money?’

“‘At this identical moment there was a knock at the door, and poor Hannah entered.

“‘Please, ma’am, is this anything?’ she asked. It was my postal order.

“‘Thank you, Hannah; it is just what I was looking for;’ and off Hannah went. Jennie and I breathed a sigh of relief.

“‘This shall indeed be a lesson to me,’ I said. ‘I will not suspect hastily. Yet I should have been so sorry if the very first time Charlie examined my accounts there had been such a gross mistake.’

“‘But I am not going to examine your accounts,’ said Charlie, who at that moment entered the room.

“‘That is right, Charlie,’ said Jennie.

“‘I only want you to see if the accounts are correct, and if I have done my best.’

“‘My Molly *always* does not only the best, but better than any one else could do for me.’

“‘Quite right, Charlie, quite right,’ said Jennie enthusiastically.

“‘But, Charlie——’

“‘But, Molly! Listen, dear, to what I think of it. You and I will have to be thrifty for many a year. Now all is fresh and new, and our work is comparatively easy; but in a little while it will be wearisome, and we may become disheartened. The old proverb says that when “Poverty comes in at the door, Love flies out of the window.” We do not want Love to fly away, so we will make him secure with bands of trust. I trust you, darling, fully and entirely. If I can help you in your accounts, tell me, and I will do it. Otherwise, I never want to see them. Household expenditure is your business; I will have nothing to do with it.’

“So this is how the matter rests. When you write, be sure you tell me what you think of it.

“Your loving

“MOLLY.”

“That Charlie is altogether too much for me,” said Aunt Susan. “The wings must be there; how was it I missed seeing them?”

“Wings or no wings, he is perfectly right,” said Mrs. Browne. “A man has no right to marry a woman whom he cannot trust; and having married her, he wrongs her if he does not trust her ‘all in all.’”

“I quite agree with you,” said Mother.

WRITING IN THE DARK.



“YOU must not read or write.” That is the sentence lately pronounced upon me by a doctor; and it has revealed some of the marvellous unconsciousness with which the eye is ever exercising itself. It is because of what I hope is a mere passing affection of that instrument that I have had this command laid upon me; and the doctor means, I suppose, that I must not try to use my eyes in discerning minute objects, in the discernment of which reading and writing occupy a conspicuous place. Indeed, he said, “You had better sit in a darkened room.” This leaves the eye necessarily idle, and I am now obeying his directions, and at the same time trying to fix my sense of the curiously exceptional act of writing in the dark. I am of course using a pencil, though I cannot see the letters which it forms.

One of the first things which strikes me is the dependence placed on the eye rather than the memory to construct connected sentences. When that which has just been written is visible at a glance, the eye unconsciously sees the last preceding sentences or

paragraphs, and thus helps the thought to be continuous. Now, I have continually to pause in order to realise the last lines and connect them with that which is passing through my mind. It is curiously perplexing to do so. Having to write much, I fancied that I had the power of setting down what I wanted to say *currente calamo*; now, unexpected hesitation and questionings arise. I am checked by a suspicion that the lead of my pencil may be worn down, and that the scratching which I hear may be produced by a pointed stick. And when I take up my pencil to feel its point, I find myself thrown out by the unthought-of difficulty about putting it down again where I had taken it off. It is thus technically and mentally difficult to connect, at least in the first endeavour to write in the dark, the threads of utterance. I had no idea that the writer was so dependent upon the eye, not so much to form individual letters—for that is easy enough—as to realise what is being written. The mind runs on faster than the hand, and in thinking of what has next to be written, discovers that it has depended on the unconscious glance in order to

clowns, but they fiddled on all through, sometimes each on his own, sometimes on his fellow-fool's fiddle. Indeed, throughout their gambols each had an occasional stroke on his companion's instrument, slyly, or with conspicuous openness; this interchange of attention sometimes passing into a vehement mixture and confusion of fiddlesticks and fiddles. This went on till the "musical clowns" suddenly stopped and bowed themselves out in a downpour of applause which would have satisfied Paganini.

This is such amusement as is really popular. The mob, not of roughs, but of smooths, like something exceptional. It may be exceptionally good, but peculiarity rivals worth.

"Every dog has his day," though his own enjoyment of it be marred through his having a kettle tied to his tail. Then for a little while he is distinguished, and draws current criticism. And any man who will present himself in lively paradox wins a cheer or a jeer. The worst of it is that this popular appetite for the incongruous checks the perception of real art, and leads to a misuse of the receptive soul.

The desire for the exceptional seems to be stronger than the recognition of legitimate excellence in science and art. And it seems to me that this desire

is often not only exceptional, but unpleasantly so. We have, *e.g.*, our walls placarded with pictures of giants and dwarfs. We have, indeed, set before us not merely freaks of nature, but, in all gravity, the most sensational sauce to religious invitations that has been presented in our generation. There is, however, to be said for this last, that the sheer sensation is intended to lead to the perception of important truths. This cannot be advanced for the offer of the histrionic or exhibitional shows, which simply addresses itself to the curious palate, and promises no solid food to follow. The excitement of the appetite which is moved by monstrosities is like the exhilaration of the chloroform without the saving operation afterwards. And even the present good is often sacrificed to the exigences of the passing performance. Clowns could certainly tumble better if they had no fiddles; and if they could fiddle at all, they could fiddle better if they abstained from tumbling at the same time. But a fiddling clown is delightful to a crowd which looks unmoved at simple contortions, and has no deep respect for the soul of music. In one shape or another, indeed, under various names, and at all times, the fiddling clown, the giant, and the dwarf are the standing popular heroes of the day.

HOW MOLLY MADE BOTH ENDS MEET.

BY PHILLIS BROWNE, AUTHOR OF "WHAT GIRLS CAN DO."

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.
THE SERVANT DIFFICULTY.



LIKE one or two other old-fashioned people, Mrs. Browne held some rather unpopular views upon the relations which exist at the present day between mistresses and servants. Consequently she was curious to hear how her young friend Molly (aided by the suggestions of that very sage young person, Miss Jenny) would get on with her servant. There had been in Molly's letters indications of approaching trouble in that direction, and as Mrs. Browne knew quite well that numberless young housekeepers

would make both ends meet with ease if only their servants would allow them to do so, she waited with a little impatience for the history of Molly's experiences with the honest but inquisitive Hannah.

It was not long before this curiosity was satisfied. In her very next letter Molly was as completely occupied with the servant question in general, and the achievements and shortcomings of her own handmaiden in particular, as any old lady housekeeper,

enjoying a cup of tea with a sympathising friend, could be. She wrote as follows:—

"DEAR FRIENDS,—

"I have never more earnestly wished that you lived where I could consult you at a moment's notice than during the last few days. However, as that is impossible, I will tell you my troubles by means of my pen, and I hope you will give me the full benefit of your opinion concerning them.

"From the first day of my arrival here I have not been quite satisfied with Hannah. In the beginning she did her work pretty well, but not thoroughly well. Soon she began to be careless about her work, and she came down late in the morning, and there was danger that Charlie would have to go without having time to take the morning meal in comfort. However, I remembered what you have so often said, that 'servants and mistresses alike have faults, and should bear and forbear;' that 'perfection is not to be hired for so much a year;' that 'angels very rarely seek for situations as general servants,' &c. &c.; and I resolved to have patience, and to make the best of the material at my command. I was confirmed in this resolve by the approval of Jenny, who said that Hannah was honest, willing and quick, and that, with these qualities, a girl might be made into a good servant, no matter what her present character was.

"I should tell you Jenny quite believed Hannah's

statement that she had no thought of listening at the door when Charlie and I were talking that evening, but had come up to ask if we wanted anything more before she went to bed, and my sudden appearance startled her. (If you remember, I told you about that in my first letter.) We resolved, therefore, to forget that unpleasant little occurrence, and to try to feel as though it had never happened.

"However, all our resolves were thrown away, for last Monday Hannah had the toothache very badly, her face swelled, and she was evidently very unwell. We gave her something to alleviate the pain, but it did no good. She cried nearly all day, and went to bed quite early, and in the morning told us she felt so ill that she knew she would not be good for anything, and had much better go home right away. The result was that she packed up her things and departed about two o'clock, leaving me alone in my new home with the beds unmade, the rooms undusted, and the dinner uncooked, and the consciousness that Charlie was bringing Mr. Malcolm home at six o'clock to high tea, with the prospect of a musical evening.

"You will scarcely believe it, but the first thing I did after Hannah departed was to laugh. I knew of no one who could come in to me, and I was so utterly left in the lurch. 'If only I could get to Jenny!' I thought; but I had no one to send for her, and I must help myself. I therefore donned a large white apron, and prepared to set to work. At that identical moment there was a double knock at the door. A caller of course! There was nothing else for it—I must answer the knock. I took off my apron and prepared to explain and excuse myself. But to my great delight it was Jenny herself. 'Well, Molly,' she said, 'how are you getting on? and how is Hannah? I came round thinking you might be in difficulties.' 'How good you are, Jenny! I am in terrible trouble! Hannah has gone; everything is to do in the house, and Mr. Malcolm is coming to tea.' 'Poor Mr. Malcolm! He is fated to share your domestic difficulties,' said Jenny. 'But don't call this a trouble, Molly. You will dispose of it a great deal more quickly if you speak of it and think of it as it is, and do not unduly magnify it.' 'What shall I call it then?' 'An annoyance, to be dealt with cheerfully and set right speedily. It would be a *trouble* if the house were to be burnt down, or Charlie were to break his leg, or you were to take scarlet fever; but to be left without a servant for a couple of days is merely an *annoyance*, and will soon be forgotten. And now let us set to work together, and we will soon make things "another aspect wear."

"So we did. We worked together, and chatted and laughed as we worked, and, more quickly than I could have believed possible, the house was in order, the cooking was accomplished, the table was laid, and everything was ready for Charlie and his friend. The business was done so well, too; the table looked so pretty, far prettier than it would have done if it had been left to Hannah and me. Jenny has so much taste; she garnished the dishes and arranged the flowers most artistically. She is an excellent cook, and has promised to teach me all she knows."

"Really, Miss Jenny appears to be as great a paragon in her way as her brother is in his," said Aunt Susan scornfully; but Mother would not stop to discuss the matter, and went on reading:—

"When Charlie and Mr. Malcolm arrived and heard of our trouble (I beg your pardon—I mean our annoyance) they were most sympathising. I gave a full account of the help Jenny had been to me, and Mr. Malcolm was much impressed. He looked at Jenny as if he could not sufficiently express his admiration for a young lady who could work such wonders. Nor was this all. When tea was over Jenny and I had once more to take Hannah's place, and Charlie and Mr. Malcolm insisted upon helping us. Mr. Malcolm especially tried to make himself most useful, and succeeded in getting in everybody's way, and in the fun which arose out of our united efforts he came to know us more intimately, and became more really friendly with us than any amount of songs and musical performances would have made him. When we once more came to settle down we had a long chat, and what do you think was the subject?"

"Servants I should think," said Mrs. Browne.

"Servants," said Mother, continuing to read. "Charlie said that, taking everything into consideration, he was very thankful Providence had not ordained that he should be a female servant. Jenny said the same, and declared that for the most part servants in the houses of middle-class people were greatly to be pitied. It was a continual astonishment to her to find that really kind generous people, the kind of individuals who would help a neighbour in distress, and behave generously to friends and acquaintance, had no idea how to conduct themselves to servants. They would portion out the food, allowance the tea and sugar, lock up all the eatables, and keep a watchful eye upon the food in the most aggravating way.

"I have some very dear friends now," said Jenny, 'kind good folks as ever lived. The family consists of four daughters and the father and mother. All these daughters assist the mother in suppressing the one unfortunate servant. If there is any jam about it is carefully locked from her, sweetmeats and pastry are not allowed in the kitchen; and the shortcomings of this unlucky individual are freely commented upon. I have often thought that if I were that servant I should feel myself at liberty to get all I could out of my employers, seeing that they got all they could out of me, and gave me as little as possible in return.' 'I should not blame her if she did,' said Charlie. Jenny then said that if ever she had a house of her own, she would first of all be very particular indeed, far more particular than people are usually, about the character of the person she took into her house. But having secured an honest servant she would trust her entirely, lock nothing up, but tell her that it was necessary and right to be economical, arrange with her what quantities should be used each week, and ask for her help and co-operation in economy. Jenny talked so earnestly about it, that she has persuaded me to try

the plan. I have to begin anew with servants, so I may as well do so. I sincerely hope it will answer. I wonder what you think of it. Be sure you tell me soon.

“Your loving
“MOLLY.

“P.S.—I must not forget to tell you that when Mr. Malcolm was bidding us adieu, he said very earnestly to Jenny, ‘I hope that you will be able to carry your

though every store in the establishment were kept under lock and key. No mistress can watch her servant at every point and prevent waste in every detail. Think of the little pieces of fat which are not melted down, the soap which may be left to dissolve in the water, the brushes which may be allowed to rot there, the matches which may be struck unnecessarily, the trifling treasures which may be burnt or thrown into the dust-bin, the cinders which may be thrown away



“CHARLIE AND MR. MALCOLM INSISTED UPON HELPING US” (p. 476).

theories about the treatment of servants into practice, Miss Jenny, and that I may be so fortunate as to know the result.’ Touching! was it not?”

“Jennie and Mrs. Browne would agree about the treatment of servants,” said Mother.

“Indeed they would,” said Mrs. Browne. “At any rate, the young lady has discovered one of the secrets of economical housekeeping. In large establishments where there are several servants, special arrangements may be made. I am not speaking against that. But in small houses where there are only one or two servants, things are different. If a servant is inclined to extravagance she can be so, even

unsifted, the coal-dust which is lost through carelessness, the gas which is wasted, the scraps of bread which may be left to become hard or mouldy, the potatoes which may be pared so thickly that a large portion of the root is lost, the little drops of beer, milk, vinegar, and sauce which are poured away, the scrapings of butter which are allowed to get dirty and then washed off, the cheese which is never pared, the injury done to furniture, ornaments, plate, table and bed linen for want of intelligent care, the loss sustained in consequence of putting cloths and towels to their wrong uses, to say nothing of the disease which may be brought into the house through uncleanly and ignorant methods. When we remember

these things we must see that it is absurd to suppose we can make both ends meet simply by locking up a few groceries and doling them out as required."

"But surely you would keep a check?"

"I would keep the strictest check, *by means of the bills*, and by comparing the quantities used each week. But chiefly I would try to let the spirit of economy rule the whole household, not the one servant alone."

"What would you have people do then?" said Mother.

"I would have them recognise the fact that they 'must look for seed of the same kind as they sow,' and give up hoping to buy one kind with another kind. If they wish to be dealt with truly and fairly they must behave generously; if they make unreasonable demands they must expect to have the performance shirked. That is all. Get an honest servant, deal liberally and openly with her—in short, trust her—and

she will respond, and practise economies you would never dream of."

"Molly had better try your way and see how she gets on," said Aunt Susan.

"Whether 'my way,' as you call it, succeeds or not, the other way fails often enough," said Mrs. Browne. "The people who adopt it are always in difficulties. They change their servants continually, and devote a goodly portion of their income to registry offices and advertising agencies. The mistress who 'trusts,' keeps her servant, and though wages are paid by the one and received by the other, the tie which unites the two is not mercenary. We hear complaints on all sides, but there are still in the world good servants and good mistresses, and it generally depends upon the mistress what sort of service comes from the maid."

"Take care you tell Molly all this," said Mother.

"So I will," said Mrs. Browne.

FREE EDUCATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

SECOND PAPER.



THE school of the Stationers' Company is in Bell Court, Fleet Street, and the sons of the Liverymen and Freemen are entitled to priority of admission in rotation, as well as to foundation benefits. The scholarships are six in number, and comprise free education in the school and the sum of £20

from the head master; and an entrance examination, graduated according to age, is held every Wednesday morning at 9.30 a.m. Ten per cent. of the scholars may, as the reward of merit, be exempted from the £8 per annum tuition fees, provided they are not the holders of Haberdashers' Exhibitions, which are worth £40 a year each and tenable, not only at the Hatcham Schools, but at any others approved by the managers and governors. The Hoxton Schools accommodate 400 boys, and the tuition fees are extremely low, only 17s. 6d. per quarter. Forty entrance exhibitions are given yearly, entitling to free education, as well as books and stationery—half of them tenable for two years, and the other half for one. Two-thirds of them are assignable to children educated at public elementary schools for at least three years, who have passed the government inspector's examination in a standard suitable to their age, and the remainder are open to candidates from any school between ten and fourteen years of age, who, at the end of the first year, may compete for any other exhibitions annually assigned to pupils in the schools. £600 a year is set apart for Leaving Exhibitions to places of higher education, or to enable deserving scholars to start in some profession or skilled trade.

a year for four years, either at any University in Great Britain, or with liberty, if the holder do not choose a University career on leaving school, to apply that sum of money in any calling he may select, conditional to his producing a certificate of good conduct from his employer, tutor, or guardian, on each annual payment.

The Aske Schools, at Hatcham and Hoxton, are governed by the Haberdashers' Company, and the exhibitions belonging to it are mainly intended for the maintenance and education of children and grandchildren of Freemen of that company, and offered, in the first instance, for competition among them. At Hatcham there are 300 boys who are admissible at eight, and may remain till seventeen years of age. Application must be made on the printed form, obtainable

The Mercers' School is situated in College Hill, E.C. The Mercers' Company are the governors; and every one of the 150 boys must be nominated by a member of the Court of Assistants of that body. The entrance examinations are very simple, and held by the head master, and graduated according to the age of the candidates, who are divided into those between eight and eleven, between eleven and twelve, and above the latter age. The annual capitation fee is £5 for each child, and twenty-five, being Foundation scholars, are entirely exempt from it, the places, as they become

HOW MOLLY MADE BOTH ENDS MEET.

BY PHILLIS BROWNE, AUTHOR OF "WHAT GIRLS CAN DO."

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.
ANOTHER PERPLEXITY.

MS. BROWNE wrote to Molly, as she had said that she would do; but the servant difficulty did not immediately arrange itself, although Molly tried to act according to the most approved principles. The fact was that for a little while the young mistress confounded "trust" with "licence;" and, while endeavouring to induce her maid to co-operate with her, fell into the danger of leading the girl to think that she was to do just as she liked, and that no rule of conduct would be enforced. This was going as much too far in one direction as she had previously gone in its opposite, and new regulations had to be made, and a line drawn between what was to be and what was not to be permitted.

Then, too, Molly had a good deal of anxiety about money matters, gaining experience chiefly in discovering what she was compelled to do without. The experience was not a very agreeable one. Economy *must* be practised in thousands of homes where it is not by any means enjoyed. Making both ends meet is, after all, a very prosaic sort of business. Many have begun to attempt it full of hope, determined to achieve impossibilities, and to make money go further than ever was done before, who, after a time, have broken down, utterly weary of the dull monotony of the thing. In most of the struggles in which men and women engage, there are, every now and then, agreeable variations; opportunities occur for daring sallies or brilliant little spurts, which accomplish wonders with comparative ease; but no pleasant episodes of this kind must be looked for by those who are simply trying to make those two ends of income—which, if left to their natural course, would remain ever so far apart—come together over a solid block of necessary expenditure. It is imperative that the would-be economisers should realise that economy is not produced by stupendous efforts or mighty exertions, but by *continual carefulness over small things*.

Mrs. Browne's mind was much occupied with thoughts of this sort as she walked towards the house of her friends one day when Molly's letter was expected as usual. In her last letter the little woman had been quite low-spirited, and had talked quite pathetically about her "failure," as if she had never made any headway at all. She had also grown almost out of patience with the plans she and her young husband had laid down for their mutual assistance. "Never recommend any one to portion out their income, and to keep each portion in its allotted box," she wrote. "The only result of such an arrangement is that you are continually reminded of your own

poverty. The characteristic of the *nice* boxes—those which are intended for the money we can enjoy ourselves with, and devote to travelling, amusements, and extras—is that they are always empty, and the whole of our cash in hand seems to be swallowed up by the disagreeable boxes marked 'Rent,' 'Taxes,' &c. I shall be quite glad when quarter-day comes, so that 'Rent' may be emptied, and give up tempting us to spend what we know we cannot afford."

"Foolish little Molly! The fact that 'Rent' is there, all ready for quarter-day, proves the excellence of the scheme. I hope the child is not losing heart," said Mother.

"Not at all," said Mrs. Browne. "We all have our moods, and perhaps she is not quite well."

"Still, I think it is quite possible to do too much at this economising," said Aunt Susan. "Industry and economy alone will not secure success in life, and I should be sorry if the result of poor little Molly's niggling at small things was that her husband did not exert himself to increase the income."

"What does secure success if industry and economy do not?" said Mother, more, it seemed, because she wanted to divert Aunt Susan from remarking on Charlie than because she wished to hear her opinion.

"Success is the result of being in the right spot at the right time, and of being quick enough to see your opportunity when it comes and take advantage of it," said Aunt Susan. "Do you think Charlie can do that? If he cannot—'poor Molly!' that is all I say. She will be tired of economy before she has done with it."

"I feel quite sure Charlie will do his part well," said Mother. "Meantime, I am anxious that, when the opportunity does arrive, he should not be held back from taking advantage of it by his wife. If through her industry and method he is free from debt and anxiety, he is much more likely to be able to take the current when it serves which leads on to fortune."

"Of course he is," said Mrs. Browne.

"So," continued Mother, "I am not at all inclined to say 'poor Molly.' If only Molly knew it, she has an opportunity now of gaining such a firm hold of her husband's love as few women enjoy. The happiest marriages are those in which husband and wife fight together, share the toil, as they hope afterwards to share the ease. For the sake of my daughter's happiness, I would rather that she struggled up the hill of difficulty *with* her husband than that she joined him when he had reached the top in order to share with him the success she had done nothing to secure."

"Quite right, mother," said Mrs. Browne. "What is it that Shakespeare makes our favourite Beatrice say when Don Pedro asks her to marry him?—'Not unless I might have another husband for working days, my lord. Your grace is too costly to wear every day.' Married folks have to be together on working

days as well as fête days. Pity the individual who is tied to a companion unsuited to either."

At this moment Molly's letter arrived. It ran as follows:—

"DEAR FRIENDS,—I write now from both Charlie and myself to ask Aunt Susan and Mrs. Browne to make mother come and pay us a visit. Now, mother dear, you must come. Charlie says I am to say from him that he insists upon your coming straight away, and that the day after to-morrow he shall meet the half-past four o'clock train, and hopes you will come by it. I feel so delighted since I have allowed myself to think that I shall see you so soon, dear mother. Do you know that we have been married a year to-morrow? I can scarcely believe it, for I feel quite like an old married woman. We have fixed the day after that for turning out the boxes and seeing how we stand in money matters. Somehow it seems like profanation to employ our wedding-day in casting accounts. So, mother dear, when you come you shall have the privilege of counting up our money with us. I am afraid we shall be ever so much behind; they say people always are.

"There is something else I want to consult you about, too. I know that both mother and Mrs. Browne are very strongly opposed to match-making. I am not so sure about Aunt Susan; she is such an advocate for the marriage state—"

"There is an extraordinary statement!" said Aunt Susan indignantly. "Have I not always maintained that people marry in haste and repent at leisure, and does—"

"Molly is teasing you, dear," said Mother, and continued reading.

"I have an objection to match-making, too, but I am very much afraid that, unwittingly, Charlie and I have been doing the very thing we deprecate. You know that I have mentioned a friend of Charlie's (Mr. Malcolm) in my letters. Well, you cannot think how intimate he and Jenny have lately become. They always seem to understand one another; they like the same books, enjoy the same music, hold the same opinions, and, during conversation, their eyes keep

meeting sympathetically in the most aggravating way. The wonder of it is, to me, that all this has come upon us very suddenly. When I was a girl I was a very long time in getting to like Charlie. Don't you remember that I thought he cared for Mary Sergeant (that cross-looking girl who lived over the way), until all at once I found he liked me, and then I began to think about him? But there has been no hesitation about Jenny, and she seems to have got on so very rapidly. So I want you to advise me, dear mother. Mr. Malcolm is very nice; only, when one thinks what a serious business marriage is, and how two people may become united who are altogether unsuited to each other, it makes one tremble. Since I have seen what was coming upon us, I have felt it my duty to keep a strict watch over Jenny. I make a point of going into the room with my work when they look as if they wanted to talk together. I am afraid that I have only succeeded in making myself eminently disagreeable to everybody all round. So, mother dear, come directly to your blundering little MOLLY.

"P.S.—I ought to tell you that Charlie thinks I am quite mistaken in thinking Jenny and Mr. Malcolm care for each other. He says that his sister is not the sort of girl to fall in love; she is made for an old maid, because she is so good. (Compliment to me!) Also that she promised long ago to live with him and keep his house, only I interfered with the arrangement. But you will know, mother."

As Mother finished the letter she smiled, and, on looking up, she saw an answering smile on the faces of her two friends.

"Well," she said, "am I to go?"

"Of course you are," said Mrs. Browne. "You must prepare at once for your journey."

"Since you are going, you might as well take with you the socks I have knitted for Charlie," said Aunt Susan. "Molly asked for them, and so I thought I might as well make them."

A look of great satisfaction stole over Mother's face. "She never knits socks for any but her favourites," she whispered to Mrs. Browne, and the two old ladies smiled again.

TWO FAMOUS YORKSHIRE TOWNS.

I.—HARRÔGATE.



HO does not know the famous old mineral springs of Harrogate, by name at least?

They were the very first known in England, though not discovered till A.D. 1596, by Sir William Slingsby, one of that great Cavalier Yorkshire family, the Slingsbys of Scriven, who did such good service in the royal cause, in the struggles between Cavaliers and Roundheads—even unto death, for the brave Sir Henry Slingsby was beheaded in 1658 for his devotion to the royal cause.

Harrogate itself is of much more ancient date than that: deriving its Saxon name from *Here-gat*—i.e., military road—probably because in the vicinity of the great military road of the Romans to the North of England. It stands on the highest table-land in England, and consists of High and Low Harrogate, the land sloping off into undulations, on which the latter stands in picturesque fashion. Its mediæval character is now wellnigh passed away, for Harrogate has increased immensely of late years, and the modern buildings for the requirements of visitors,

HOW MOLLY MADE BOTH ENDS MEET.

BY PHILLIS BROWNE, AUTHOR OF "WHAT GIRLS CAN DO."

CHAPTER THE SIXTH, AND LAST.

THE UNEXPECTED LETTER.



THE next letter was from Mother. It was as follows:—

"MOLLY'S HOME.

"DEAR SISTER AND FRIEND,—I knew you would be anxious to hear tidings of me, so I sent you a card telling of my safe arrival here. Now I know you will

want to hear of my experiences, and I have stolen away from the others and am sitting down to write you a full, true, and particular account of all that has happened to me.

"First, I must tell you that my heart is filled with gratitude as I acknowledge that my dear little Molly seems to have found her right place, and that she is very happy indeed. Susan must not be indignant with me if I say that I continue to like Charlie very much. He is sensible, honest, straightforward, and, more than all, he is most devotedly attached to his wife. As we have often said to one another, marriage is like a great lottery. When one thinks of all the chances there are in connection with it, what numberless blanks are drawn and how few prizes, also when one realises what a difference marriage makes in life, what blessing it brings if it is a success, and what utter misery and dark hopelessness if it is a failure, one wonders that any girl *dares* to stand before the altar and take the solemn vow. I am almost afraid to write the words, yet to you I will speak honestly. I believe that my little daughter is one of the few who have drawn a prize. She has found what is the most glorious place that can be for a true woman—the shelter of a good man's love. While she and her husband live, she will have the blessed companionship and perfect sympathy which is found in marriage alone, and in no other earthly condition. Even when one of the two is taken away there will be the hope of a happy re-union somewhere else. While I have been with these young people, I have felt how natural it was that marriage should have begun in Paradise."

"Oh, dear! oh, dear!" interrupted Aunt Susan, "how very sentimental that sister of mine is!" but as she took off her spectacles to rub them bright, Mrs. Browne noticed that her eyes were dim with tears.

"Molly's mother has been reminded of her own young days, and of the time when Molly's father was living," said Mrs. Browne, and the two old ladies returned to the letter.

"Of course we have had a good deal of talk about the experiment in making both ends meet which the

young people have been making, and as they have now been occupied in trying to accomplish the feat for a whole year, it was resolved that on the night after my arrival there should be a grand overhauling of accounts, and a thorough investigation as to the financial position of the family. Molly's books and Charlie's too were to be brought, the ready money of 'the firm,' as they call themselves, was to be counted, and a plain statement was to be made out. Both Charlie and Molly seemed to think they would be behindhand. Molly said she did not think they would be very far on the wrong side, because they had planned things out so carefully, and kept within the line so scrupulously; still, she felt sure there would be *something* unpaid for. When I asked her why she expected this, she said that it always was so; she had never heard or read of any one who had managed to keep right, straight away. People always got behindhand at first, and then they had to retrace their steps by slow and painful methods, and found how difficult it was to make up for the past.

"I was quite amused with the profound character of my little girl's reflections on this subject, and I can assure you that between us we did a good deal of moralising on my first day. Molly said that she had learnt one lesson from the year's experience—it was that you must have a good margin. 'It seems to me,' said the philosophical little woman, 'that to leave a good margin in all things is one of the secrets of life. If, in our expectations, our promises, and our judgments, our hopes and our fears, we can only allow a wide margin, we escape so much disappointment.' Then she confessed to me that so thoroughly had she felt the importance of this, that in her private share of the expenditure she had provided for a margin outside the original margin, so that in this matter she had at any rate done her best.

"The fun of it was, however, that when the accounts were at last brought out and examined, it was discovered that Charlie had done just the same—he also had left an extra margin. Thus it came about that, after all expenses had been paid, these two self-inflicted margins were left untouched. And so the problem was solved, the victory was won. By facing bravely what had to be done in the first instance, by making provision for everything that could be foreseen, and by allowing abundance of margin, my son and daughter had made both ends meet.

"I never saw two people more delighted than these two were. Molly clapped her hands like a child, and kissed both Charlie and me in a most exuberant fashion. Then something very strange happened. While we were all rejoicing together, a rat-tat was heard at the door, and a letter was handed to Charlie. He looked at it, and became grave, then he said, 'This is Uncle William's writing; I wonder what he has to say.' Molly looked grave too. We have heard

of this Uncle William. He was a very eccentric brother of Charlie's father. It was supposed that he was wealthy, and as he had no children of his own, some people had thought that when Charlie married on a small salary, Uncle William would have helped the young folks out. But he had never made a sign, and as Charlie himself had never expected anything or looked for help from the old gentleman, he and Molly had not been disappointed. Now, however, Uncle William had written, and this was what he said:—

“‘NEPHEW CHARLES,—You have been married a year. I suppose by this time you have found out how difficult it is to make both ends meet. I gave you no wedding-present when you married, and I have never offered you help. I acted thus advisedly because I believe that it is a good thing for every man and woman to find out for himself and herself what is both the use and the uselessness of money, for it is a fact that money is worth a great deal up to a point, and beyond that point it is worth nothing at all. Half the world, it seems to me, makes a mistake on one of these points, the other half on the other. Yet I doubt not that you are a good deal wiser on these matters than you were twelve months ago. I therefore write to tell you that I intend to make you my heir. You will have my property at my death, and so long as I live I shall allow you a fixed sum per annum, the amount of which I will discuss with you when I see you. Meantime, I send you the enclosed cheque.

“‘Your eccentric Uncle,

“‘WILLIAM.’

“We all looked at one another. ‘This is becoming ridiculous,’ said Molly; but I told her that it was quite natural and usual. Was I not right? It is always thus. Those who have, get a little more; and those who are in difficulties get further into the mire. If the young folks had been behindhand in their

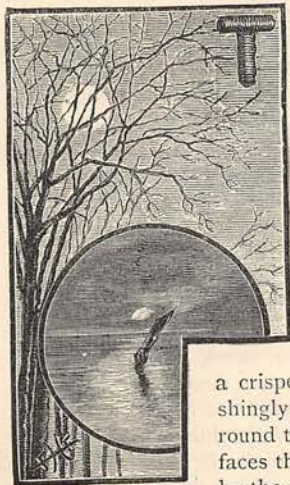
accounts, the post would have brought a bill which had escaped their memory, and which must be paid immediately.

“Before we had recovered our astonishment, the celebrated Jenny came in. Perhaps you wonder that I have not mentioned Jenny before. The reason is that I have not seen much of Jenny. She is very busy. So is Mr. Malcolm. They seem, too, to be engaged with the same things. Moreover, there is a happy look in Jenny's eyes, and a smile on her lips. When no one is looking at her she laughs and sometimes sings. As for Mr. Malcolm, he is most absurdly and perseveringly important. Can you tell what it all means, you two old ladies, who are sitting quietly at home by the fire? I think I can. Another couple are going to make experiments in house-keeping.

“When Jenny heard of Uncle William's intentions she was very much pleased. ‘You won't have to plan so carefully now, Molly,’ she said; ‘you will be able to spend without a thought.’ But Molly said, ‘No, that was not the case at all. The amount of income was nothing, the relation between income and expenditure was everything. The right balance must be preserved, no matter what the amount to be disposed of might be. We have succeeded,’ she added, ‘because we have learnt how to make income overlap expenditure. We should be poor even though we had thousands a year, if we could not accomplish that feat.’”

ON THE EAST COAST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF “THE BRIDGE BETWEEN,” “THEIR SUMMER DAY,” ETC. ETC.



HE east coast has many attractions during a hot summer. A cooler breeze steals over the sea than that which fans us at the watering-places farther south, a greater freshness is in the air, there is more life and not less brightness in all the surroundings. Even the waves sparkling in the sunshine seem to fall with a crisper, swifter sound upon the shingly beach than they do farther round the corner, where the island faces the south and is first sighted by the swallows. Do any as they

sit watching the great waves coming in faster and faster, each seeming as though it brought some message from the ships far out at sea which from sheer hurry it cannot deliver, ever think what the same little place in which they are staying will look like a few

months later, or looked like a few months back—in the month of March, for instance? There is a place we have in our mind as we write; it is gay enough now in all its summer bravery. In March, that wild bleak March of this year, it would have been difficult for those who throng it now even to recognise. A little strip of a place calling itself a town. The arrival of a couple of visitors is so rare in the winter that it is a mild but lasting sensation, and they are regarded with a good deal of curiosity, and some pity; but it is mild inoffensive curiosity, and sleepy inexpressive pity, for in our out-of-the-way watering-place, as in many others, the people only seem to be wholly awake or altogether alive in the bright season and at the profitable time of year. It is an excellent condition, all things considered, for the little town has few enough resources, but in the time of their torpor the needs of the natives are few enough also. Food, of course, they must have; there is excellent meat for those who can afford it; fish is scanty and dear; milk is cheap, and the butter is good save when it tastes over-much of turnips. The difference of butter from turnip-fed cows and hay-fed cows, and from which the farmer's wife churned last, and who