

## IN FEAR OF THE SERVANTS.

(MRS. RUDDERBUFF'S CONFESSIONS.)



COLONEL RUD-  
DERBUFF likes  
to think that his  
wife is beyond  
mistakes, though  
I tell him it would  
be very wonderful  
if I was. You  
have often heard  
him say that he  
married a wife  
straight out of the  
school-room. For  
some inexplicable  
reason, he is proud  
of the fact; he  
ought rather, if he  
is proud of any-  
thing, to congratu-  
late himself upon  
the heroic manner

or a lobster, while my kind husband would try to turn my neglect off with a joke.

At other times he, who was most careful about the accounts, and never owed a penny, would give me the money for the weekly books, and I, with my head full of other things, would put them aside, and forget all about them till I had run up arrears which I had not money to meet.

I was terribly afraid of my servants, and would put up with badly-cooked meals and late, untidy ways rather than speak. I used to hide a duster in that lovely drawing-room you have seen pictures of, because I was ashamed visitors should see the dreadful way in which it was kept. This was a mistake. I ought not to have done the work for which I paid a servant, and which she had ample time to perform.

My ignorance of all domestic details stood very much in my way. I let our beautiful polished brass stove be black-leaded, because the maid thought it would save trouble! And I implicitly believed that cook required a bottle of best brandy for each plum pudding!

I spent a great deal upon dress, and yet never looked nice. I was always trying experiments.

I bought heaps of cheap things at sales which I did not really want, and had the dress-lengths made up by cheap dressmakers. The result was that I had a numberless quantity of dresses, and not one *decent one*. I called myself economical, and wasted half my dress allowance.

Then our baby came; and on looking back, I wonder that the Colonel did not drown us both! His life must have been unbearable. From the moment that I felt that baby hand in mine I had no other thought, and for the first three months of my child's life I had no other subject of conversation.

I gave up housekeeping entirely, and my dear husband, believing me to be weak and languid instead of lazy, undertook it himself, and got bothered to death: for he is a busy man, a magistrate, with all sorts of duties outside his own home.

I refused to have a proper nurse, as I wanted to have the management of the infant entirely in my own hands; so I engaged a young girl, and between us we played all sorts of experiments upon that poor dear child. That the young life was not sacrificed was due neither to her mother nor her nurse, for we kept her up at night, awakened her suddenly any hour of the day, left her for hours without food, to be over-fed in proportion at other times; we actually did not always wash and dress her!

I refused to part with her at night, when my husband often spent hours walking up and down with the wailing child in his arms. I shall never forget those nights, neither, I fear, will he, nor the long lonely evenings when he sat alone while I was occupied in my nursery.

in which for one long year he bore my failures and mismanagement.

Naturally, I had had no experience whatever, but I felt very grand in being the mistress of a large house. The Colonel had only settled in England upon his marriage, so I took to no old-established servants, but, unlike the heroine of a novel, I had to get and keep my own.

This was mistake number one. I did not set the proper way about it. I went to a registry-office, of the character of which I knew nothing, and engaged servants upon the recommendation of the proprietor, without even taking up their references—one or two produced written documents, which I just glanced through; but as I did not insist upon a personal interview with their late employers, I had no means of finding if they were forgeries.

The result of my neglect was that we were ill-served, insulted, robbed; our house was filled with a set of desperate characters. I used often to shudder at my cook, and I afterwards had good reason for my impression that she was hiding from justice. Further details I will spare you, for I strive to avoid one of the most common errors of English women—constant talk about servants.

At last I got respectable people, and we settled down to safety, but I fear not to comfort. I was a wretched housekeeper; some days I forgot all about dinner, while on others I would fuss about it for hours.

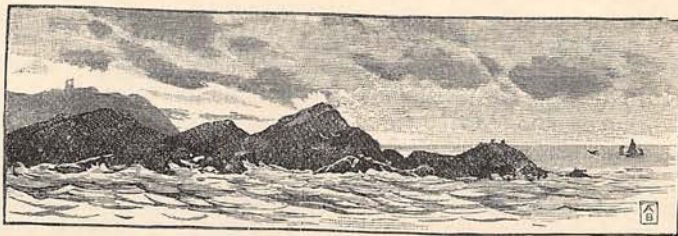
Often when friends stayed with us we would drive to a concert, and sometimes on the way back my husband would ask me what I had arranged for supper. I must say, to my shame, that nine times out of ten I had forgotten all about it, and before our guests the order had to be given to stop to buy oysters

We saw no society. It was little wonder that our house lost its popularity; even our dearest friends got weary of the repetition of my baby's charms.

At last my mad career was very mercifully stopped. The Colonel fell ill—so very ill that the doctor thought it more than probable that he would not recover. I knew then that he was dearer to me than twenty babies! And I heard then something else. Sitting by his side one night, when he was far down in the valley of death, I heard him whisper; he was talking not to me, but to the angel of that other great first love of his, who seemed to be at his side; he did not go into any ecstasy at her presence—I suppose it was

too natural—but he just looked up with a kind of gasp of content, and said, "Oh, Mary! it has been so uncomfortable."

That was my husband! The only complaint he ever made was in the delirium of fever to a dream woman, but his patience worked my cure. He was given back to me, thanks be to God, and he came back into a different world from that he had so nearly quitted. It is difficult to put the wrong right, but never, while life lasts, impossible; and through much disappointment and many failures I have at last made our home as comfortable and cheery a place as it is beautiful.



"BOTH SIDES OF THE SHIELD."

SHALL OUR SONS EMIGRATE? YES, THEY SHALL.

BY ARNOLD WHITE, AUTHOR OF "PROBLEMS OF A GREAT CITY," "TRIES AT TRUTH."



SITTING at my study window on the northern heights of London, and looking at the broad province of houses in the Thames valley canopied with smoke, the earth paved away with granite, asphalt, and wooden blocks: rain falling and wind sighing: the thought of

the blue sky unappreciated in many distant lands assists me in the pleasant task laid upon me by the Editor of CASSELL'S MAGAZINE. Decidedly it is good in the abstract for some of our sons to get away from this fierce struggle that year by year increases in severity. If the son contemplated be

"Tall and handsome, and twenty-two,  
Ten thousand a year and nothing to do,"

then, perhaps, there is something to be said in favour of settling down at home, in spite of the general want of employment, the muggy air, and the depressing environment incident to "merry England" in the end of the century.

Or if he be an Admirable Crichton, or even an Asquith, and owns a "brain and cerebellum too" that give him a pedestal above his chums, a banker's balance, with healthy, lucrative, and interesting occupation, then it is equally clear that the mealie pap of

the Transvaal, the salt pork of Manitoba, or the tea and damper peculiar to the Darling Downs, are delicacies that may be left to others. The sons who shall emigrate, to my mind, however, are the scions of those middle-class families who are the strength of our country.

These lads are not very brilliant, but they are numerous. They are no fools, but they have good appetites, plenty of pluck, healthy instincts, strong home affections, prefer cricket to Cato, football to Photius—Macaulay used to read him as a relaxation from study—and not seldom have fallen in love with the dearest girl in the world. From their youth up they have read Marryat and Kingston, Rider Haggard and Kipling. In their British blood there is the microbe of travel.

They have vague longings to get on in life, to travel, see the world, seek adventure, and, like Balbus, marry the girl. Their souls abhor the minute sub-divisions and restrictions of our intricate civilisation so far as they themselves are affected. Clerking is a miserable trade, and sucks the life out of tens of thousands of the finest fellows in the country. The sons who shall emigrate north, south, east, and west, if they have the right stuff in them, suffer from restless, unsatisfied longing.

The ostriches at the Cape, bred from a single pair of wild birds captured on the free and breezy plains