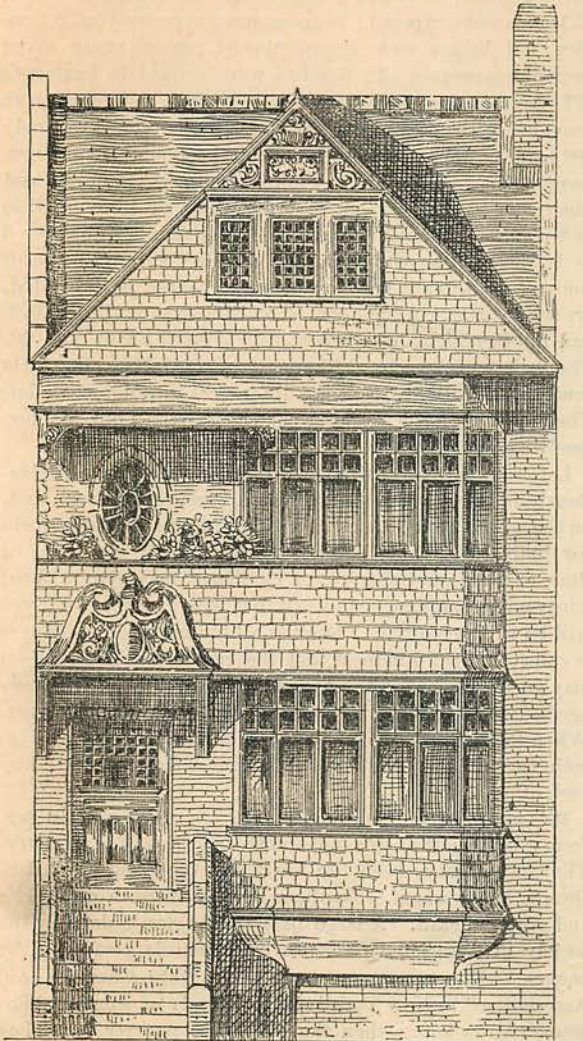


HOW † WE † LIVE † IN † NEW † YORK.†

BY JENNY JUNE.

A MODEL HOUSE FOR THE NEWLY MARRIED.

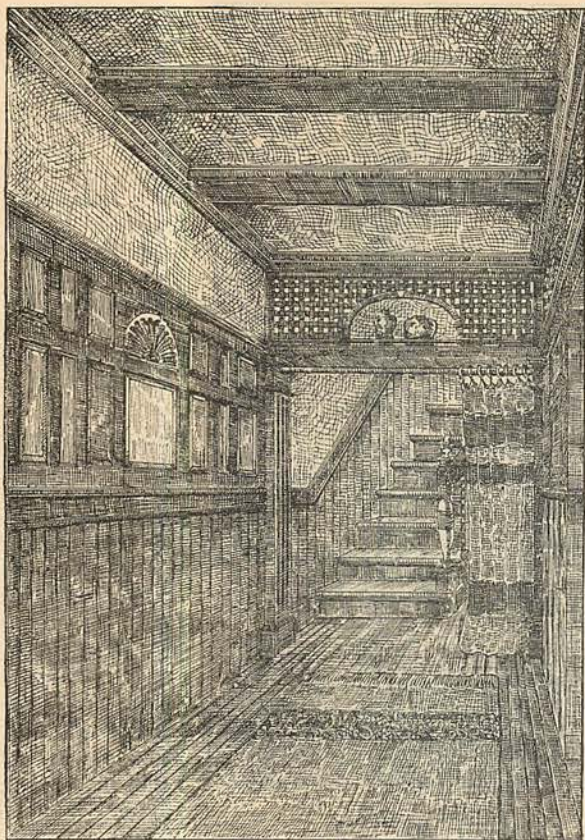


Street Elevation.

PERHAPS there is no city in the world where the dwelling is a greater problem than this of New York, both on account of its topography, which I have incidentally alluded to many times in these papers, and the rapidly changing character of its population and their fortunes. These constantly operating causes have been reinforced of late years by additional motives to change, and movement to increased cost and accession of values; in the new rage which has sprung up for "apartment" houses, on the principle of the French flats; and in the revolutionary tide in favor of a totally different order of architecture. Sixty years ago there were farms where are now rows of houses which have already outlived their social repute, and the "Battery" was the fashionable evening promenade. The fine houses built in those days had little of architectural beauty to boast of. They were square box-like structures, or tall, unornamented edifices, not that ornamentation was unknown, but that the early settlers had little time or money for it, and the Dutch, the Puritan and Quaker ele-

ments, the three great factors, little taste for ornament. But the fine houses of those days had spacious rooms, which must, however, have been bitterly cold with only grates or open fire-places for warmth, and many a poor man of those days has founded the rich family of to-day, by holding on to the "lots" which he purchased for a few hundred dollars, including the small frame house no better than a "shanty," which was the dwelling, and perhaps the "shop" as well, the humble beginning of those who now build palaces upon Fifth Avenue, and lord it at Newport. The social growth of New York has been steadily northward, and with slight deviations has maintained its hold on the center of the island, continually growing up, and spreading itself out like a fan, in a wider circle, with the aggregation of population, and its increasing wealth. This centralization is one of the reasons for the immediate favor with which the apartment house idea has been received, but it is against the growth of the small houses, adapted to young couples and small families, such as abound in Philadelphia. In former times, say forty years ago, there was a remote region west of Bond street (Bond street being then a center of fashion), which is now, as then, a labyrinth of narrow streets and lanes known as cow tracks, and undoubtedly evolved from the meanderings of stray cows and pigs and goats, as they rooted or ruminated, chewing the cud of sweet or bitter fancy, but certainly not foreseeing the annihilation to which they were destined, or the transformation which was so soon to occur into this crowded, gigantic center of activity and civilization, with its elevated roadways, its underground tunneling, its electric improvements upon gas, which had not then replaced the candle and the tinder-box, and the new applications of force to take the place of animal strength and human intelligence and labor. How could they realize it? When the cow and the pig were the most prized of domestic animals; when the milk of the one and the flesh of the other were the most important aids to existence; when the cheery cries of the milk-man or milk-woman, with wooden yoke upon their shoulders supporting the pails, from which the precious fluid was distributed, were the most welcome sounds to be heard in the early morning, and the annual killing of the pig a season of rejoicing, signalized by neighborly gifts of "brisket," and "spare-rib."

That region known as the Fifth Ward, an unknown quantity to many living within a few blocks of it, was eminently a neighborhood of small, unpretending, middle-class homes, composed of brick houses mainly, two or three stories in height, some faced with stone, all finished with green blinds or shutters, and witnessing probably as much real comfort as could have ever been found within the same area in any other spot in the world. Those were the days of hearty New Years' greetings and festivities, of indiscriminate calling and much laughter, of loaded tables, and persistent hospitality, of neighborly evenings, with apples and nuts and freshly drawn cider for the refreshments, and at this particular season the piled-up dish of dough-nuts, as for evidence of welcome and good wishes for the New Year. There was little that was superfluous in those days, but there was a great deal of hearty good cheer and neighborly feeling, much of both of which departed with the small brick houses, the dough-nuts, and the habit of putting the dinner

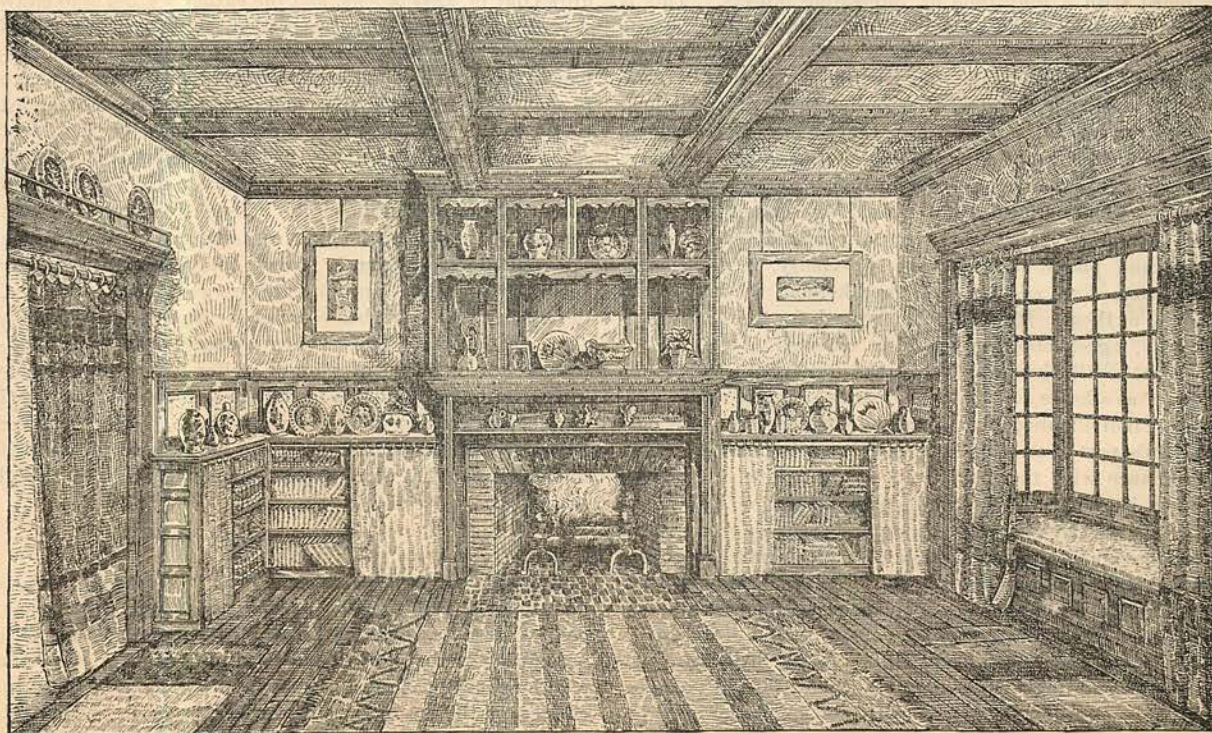


The Hall.

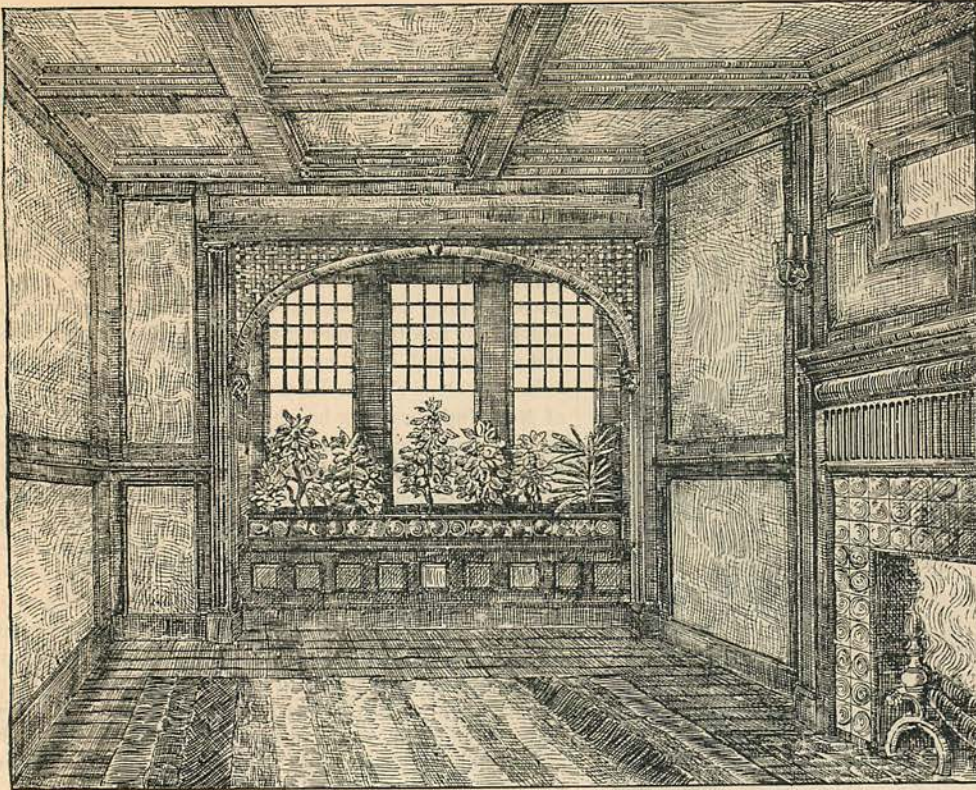
on the table, instead of on the sideboard. As late as twenty-five years ago it was possible to hire a small house, or a part of a house, in a respectable, not fashionable locality, for from two to three hundred dollars per year, but that was still

“before the war”; the “greenback” era changed all this, and put a fictitious value upon houses and lands, swelling the natural appreciation in values from growth in population and business, to exaggerated and abnormal proportions. This change was so great and so rapid, that dwellings which would have sold in the beginning for five thousand dollars ran up in a few years to fifteen and twenty; and houses and parts of houses that had rented for from three hundred to seven hundred, went up to twelve hundred, to three thousand dollars per annum. Under these circumstances a sudden panic seized the matrimonial market, thousands gave up house-keeping and resorted to “boarding,” and for young people who had the temerity to fly in the face of providence, and get married, boarding seemed the only resource.

In a previous chapter I have detailed some of the features of New York boarding-house life, and it is not necessary to repeat them here; all that need be said is this, that at best it is but a temporary expedient, and furnishes no material for laying the foundation of a permanent home, which ought to be the first object of a newly wedded man and woman. Doubtless there is a life in which community of interest may be made to work for the individual as well as for the general good, but as yet we have not worked out the social problem to the extent of making communal or co-operative family life a success, and we have still to base our calculations upon the home as it may be built up by the loving and united action of two persons, rather than two hundred. The best fruit of marriage is the home-life which grows up out of unity of interests centered in a spot which two closely united people call home, which is the theater, day by day, of all the personal events and happenings which interest them more nearly than fluctuations in stocks or politics, and which grows in value with every added association, every day's addition to the double joys, the divided sorrows. The “flat,” it was supposed, would provide the “home” desired by so many, in the absence of the small house. The “flat” house utilizes space, it puts twenty-five small houses or “apartments,” of perhaps seven rooms each, in a



The Parlor.



The Dining Room ·

space that would formerly have been occupied by four or five. What it does is to pile them one on another, and make them fit in like a compartment box. One recently completed in this city is eleven stories in height, and attached to the three upper stories are balconies, from which a wonderful bird's eye view of the entire central portion of New York can be obtained, the long avenues blazing with lights, and environed with a multitude of interesting objects. This is very interesting, and can never become monotonous; but the balcony views are a feature of few flats, the limitations which so many find intolerable belong to them all. The contracted quarters, the want of outlet, the shut-in kitchen, which the servant girl of the period dislikes and considers a direct infringement on her rights, and lastly the enormous cost, which is the result of the fashionable craze for "flats," and bears no relation to the original investment of capital. The greatest evil that grows out of confined spaces, multiplied and placed in such close proximity, is the emanations from food, cooking, and the like, and the inability to get rid of them. If one kitchen served for the entire community, a great objection would be removed.

There is still, however, this great primary objection to the "flat" as a home for the newly married: it is a not a sufficiently individualized and independent structure; it is only one little part of an organized body, and it can act only in accordance with the movements of the whole. It may of course do certain things for its own decoration and adornment, as we can wash our hands and beautify them, place rings on our fingers, and the like; but the laws which govern the whole are imperative, and the right of transfer, the selling, the renting, even the amount of noise made within your walls, is subject to a committee of the whole. All this in time becomes irksome; "flat" life is found little more permanently endurable than boarding-house life, and possesses but few more elements of growth and expansion. A life that does not grow, whose interests do not widen and deepen, is not worth living. A Hindoo preacher once likened life to

the seed of a giant tree, such as are found in India; which cast into the ground, grows and grows, bearing fruit, casting shade, until the branches expand so that they grow downward, strike their roots into the earth, and form natural halls and cloisters, in which the sages in the ancient times were wont to gather and talk wisdom. This simile is more happily illustrative of the married than of the single life; for social growth and social usefulness are the great objects of the union of single lives, and if they do not fulfill their object, but only cultivate their own selfish-

ness, they fail to increase the happiness of others, and also in securing their own. The first object of the newly married should be the cultivation of the home-life on foundations capable of growth and expansion; the second, the enlargement of their home into a social center, capable of giving protection, pleasure and comfort to others. We cannot know early in life how much of our permanent happiness grows out of associations, and the earlier we begin to cultivate them after marriage has settled the wild longings, and given us a center around which to group desires and achievements, the more we shall have to enjoy, the less shall we have to mourn over wasted time and energy. A newly married couple in this city recently established themselves in a flat of seven rooms, in the ninth story of a new apartment house in this city, at a rental of twenty-two hundred dollars per annum. The apartment is on the "Duplex" plan, that is it consists of two floors, the first containing a parlor opening into a small sitting-room or library, and this into an equally small dining-room. Up stairs are two good sized bed-rooms, the kitchen and small bed-room or servants' room. There is also a bath-room. The kitchen connects with the dining-room below by means of a dumb waiter. We propose now to present to our readers a model house for a newly married couple who are not rich, but who wish to begin life under happy and wholesome auspices, and who desire to lay their foundations so that there will be opportunity for growth and expansion.

A MODEL HOUSE.

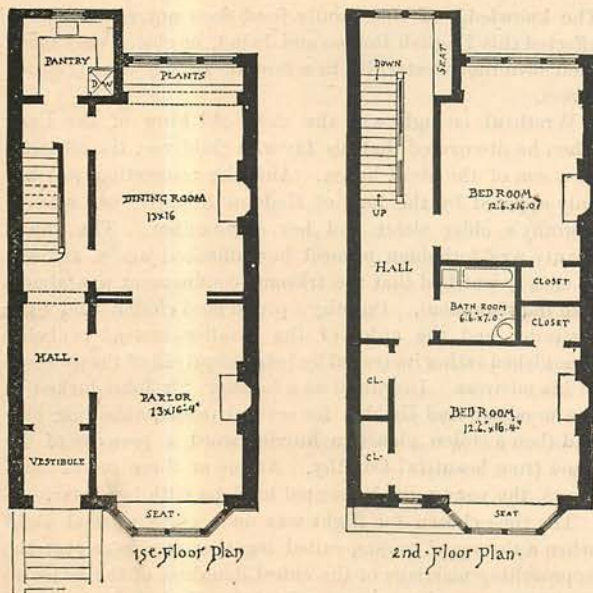
The pretty house of which the plan is given herewith, is two stories in height, with a small attic containing two rooms, one for servants, the other for storage purposes. This attic is so arranged that it can be utilized in the future, should an additional one or more stories be required, as the family increases, or the means for supporting a larger establishment. The exterior front of the house is of red brick, with wide bay-windowed front, the gable and roof to be of red tiles, the

moldings and ornamental work of iron painted in bronze colors. The steps are of stone with brick copings, and the transom lights are leaded, and afford abundant opportunity for stained glass effects. The door is square timbered and low set, as is the fashion at present, but this, like all other details, such as the small square panes of glass in the parlor windows, the lattice finish above the doors in hall and archway, are all matters of individual taste and subject to individual change and modification. The design as given embraces the latest ideas, or rather revivals of ancient ideas, and these are at least well adapted to the formation of a pretty and picturesque home. The number of rooms and the arrangement of this house have been specially studied with a view to combining refinement and comfort with economy. All the rooms therefore are utilized, there are no cheerless and empty drawing-rooms, no unused libraries, with tall book-cases for show; on the contrary, the parlor is also library and sitting-room, and connects with the dining-room by a wide space which is occupied by a portière, or may be filled in with sliding doors. The vestibule paneled and not broken up by the stairs, which are at the back and curtained off from the entrance, can be made very effective by the use of wood and wall decoration of an artistic but not necessarily expensive kind. Thus by cutting off the stairs, and finishing it in modern style, the vestibule becomes practically part of the parlor, and assists to form the bright and beautiful "interior" view which is so captivating in the modern house. The finishing of the parlor needs to be

studied, for it provides so much of the furnishing, and saves much in space. The book-cases are built low in the walls, with broad tops for china jars and bric-à-brac; these and the square frame with shelves above the mantelpiece supplying ample space for decorative articles of this description, and obviating the necessity for frail shelves and expensive cabinets. An open or grate fire is essential to the true home effect of the prettiest room, no matter how handsome or elaborate its finishing and furnishing, and the presence of this one feature makes up for the absence of many others that cost a great deal more in time and money. Modern fireplaces are a noteworthy part of the decorative finish of a dwelling. They are constructed on better principles for the utilization of heat and fuel than of old, but otherwise they reproduce much that was familiar to the firesides of our grandmothers and great grandmothers. The square form of the fireplace is the same, the tiles are more expensive, but not prettier, the carving of the wooden mantelpieces more elaborate, but not so characteristic, because it is merely copied from old models. The low swung curtains in front of the books protect them, but do not imprison them. They are hung in precisely the same manner as all curtains and portières are now hung, from a rod and by means of hooks and rings. The portière opposite the window, it will be seen, is hung in the same way, and shows the line of separation between parlor and dining-room. It is not a house in which to give "crushes," for it may naturally be supposed that a young couple who must study economy would not want to give large parties, but it is a delightful house for "little" dinners and "small and early" evenings; just the house in which to enjoy one's friends, one's books, one's belongings, one's "domesticities," as one writer puts it.

The dining-room in most small city houses is in the basements; this is an outrage on one's self as well as on one's friend. We eat two or three times in the day, and on an average consume perhaps an hour at each meal.

The time occupied at the table is almost the only opportunity afforded a busy man for cultivating the society of his family, and, secondarily, of his friends. All the possible elements, ought, therefore to be combined to render the dining-room one of the most agreeable rooms in the house. A basement dining-room is useful where the family is large, the household service meager and of poor quality, for it saves labor and it keeps it and the shortcomings out of sight; but it is never a desirable feature of the *menage*, and puts an absolute veto on dinners as a form of hospitality—that is to say, dinners which make any pretensions to elegance. For a small family domestic service can be organized on an entirely different footing from that which is necessary where there are children, and their work and the needful attendance upon them made part of the routine duty of perhaps too inefficient servants. Two in a family—one of these a lady who will doubtless take care of her china and linen closets, and who will at least find compensation in so doing—offer no obstacle to the most refined hospitality on a moderate scale, and there is no form that is at once so easy and so difficult as "little" dinners; the difficulties, however, disappearing largely before the possession in perpetuity of a convenient agreeable dining-room. To my mind, the one picture as belonging to the modest house which we give as a model leaves nothing to be desired. The window for plants, the tiled fire-place, the timbered ceiling, the communication with the parlor, so that both rooms can be thrown into one, and space and perspective obtained, are all charming and highly approved features, which contribute to the picturesque effect. The paneled walls are adapted to the insertion of pictures, mirrors, or wall decorations of any kind preferred that are in keeping with the general style and finish of the dwelling. A great convenience—one that women will thoroughly appreciate—is



MATERIAL.—Exterior front of red brick, front of bay window, gable and roof to be of red tile, moldings and ornamental work of iron painted in dark colors.

Stone steps with brick copings.

FIRST ESTIMATE, \$7,000, to include kitchen in basement, plumbing, servants' room in attic—pine finish throughout, excepting in hall and staircase—which would be of hard wood. Floors of narrow strips of Georgia pine.

SECOND ESTIMATE, \$9,000, with hard wood finish throughout first floor.

THIRD ESTIMATE includes hard wood finish in first and second floors, \$11,000.

These estimates are for the design as shown in sketches, whether of hard wood or pine, plastering in halls and ceilings, parlor and dining-room to be of sand finish.

Note moderate height of ceilings, ten feet in both stories.

Plumbing confined to one bath-room a butler's pantry and kitchen sink, and plumbing in basement.

Fire-places lined with fire brick of ample size for wood or coal.

Window seats to contain cupboards underneath.

Book shelves built into library walls, with panels of plaster work above.

the number of closets; and particular attention is directed to the cupboards built in the walls under the deep window seats,—convenient receptacles for papers, magazines, and many things that it is useful to have closely at hand, yet untidy to have what housekeepers call “lying about,” and which is meant reproachfully, as if lying about was a crime.

The architect and designer of this house, as here shown, upon a lot not more than twenty or less than seventeen feet wide, is Mr. Wm. A. Bates, of 190 Broadway, and his estimates of cost are given underneath the ground plan. Details and finish are matters of individual taste and resources. Our architect, who is also artist as well, with a loving eye for delicate and graceful effects, has carefully elaborated many of the latest ideas in architectural ornamentation, and structural completeness. The lattice effect, for example, in the corners of the dining-room windows, and also forming the arch in the entrance hall, the latticed windows, the deep window seats, the overhanging walls, the low-set doors and the timbered ceilings are all modern revivals of old ideas, which, however, in being modernized and combined with new appliances for comfort, have been rendered greatly more attractive to the luxury-loving men and women of the period.

Whoever plants a tree does a good thing; but whose plants a home with foundations set in purity and honor does much better, for he has planted that which shall live, and bear fruit forever.

The Home of Dorothy Vernon.

LONG ago, when I was a boy, there hung in our sitting-room a framed picture that was a source of never ceasing admiration on my part, and never ending mystery as well. The picture represented the rear of an old turreted mansion beautiful in itself and picturesque in its environment, perched on a natural elevation above a winding river that was spanned by a venerable bridge. Its style was unmistakably Gothic, with a hint of the early Norman in the stone turrets and towers, square battlements and deep-arched casements. The castellated manor-house filled nearly all the background, with the river rippling around it and the tall ancestral oaks tossing their branches around the ivy-covered walls that were now all aglow with the radiance flashing from the windows. In the foreground was the exquisite figure of a young girl in the ruff, farthingale, and coiffure of Queen Elizabeth's time, stealing along the terrace, with a guilty look behind her, toward a gay-looking cavalier who stood by the head of a noble steed half concealed by the foliage of some low shrubbery.

What did this picture celebrate? Evidently it was an elopement of some kind—but whose? That was the puzzle. No one whom I asked about it knew. Many well educated and traveled people who came to the house, noticing the picture, would ask its subject, but there was never one who could give any satisfactory answer to this question of mine. So it hung there for years—a beautiful mystery, none the less interesting, perhaps, because it remained unsolved.

One day at last the solution came. I was reading in the “Reliquary,” a story by Silverpen, “The Love Steps of Dorothy Vernon,” and then I knew that the grand old mansion with

“The green old turrets, all ivy thatch,”

and the light streaming from the wide windows, was Haddon Hall. The graceful girl could be no other than Lady Dorothy herself going forth to her lover, Sir John Manners.

That love story and elopement of Dorothy Vernon is one of the sweetest, most romantic idyls of old English life. A

halo of tender interest has gathered around the beautiful English girl who stole out into the moonlight like Jessica to join her lover. She was the youngest daughter and co-heiress of the rich Sir George Vernon, sixth lord of Haddon, called from his magnificence the king of the Peak. Her mother was a Seymour, a relative of King Henry the Eighth's third queen. Dorothy was nobly-born, generous and high-spirited, and possessed withal the pride of the old Vernons who had been marrying Bohuns, De Veres, De Avenels and Talbots before the Tudors wore a crown. Tradition delights to dwell upon her as the most beautiful of all beautiful women. If the portrait at Haddon is a true likeness of her, tradition is not far out of the way. The eyes blue as English violets, the exquisite mouth and the slender, graceful figure that does not look a whit less graceful in that trying style of costume in which it is dressed, all bespeak her of the highest patrician rank. Yet it seems that there was something of the wild bird in Dorothy. She loved the woods, the wild fowl, horses, and wild gallopings over the meadows, and long ramblings along the river side, and in the grand old park. In one of these flights or rambles she met the man to whom her heart went out in all its wild and ardent yet steadfast love.

John Manners was a gentleman and the son of a gentleman. His father was Earl of Rutland, and the family name is found among those illustrious ones on the Abbey Roll. But he was a younger son, and, moreover, between the house of Vernon and the house of Manners there was a hatred like that between the Veronese houses of Montague and Capulet. The knowledge of this family feud does not seem to have affected this English Romeo and Juliet, or else it only made their love the sweeter, for in a few weeks they were plighted lovers.

Wrathful enough was the stern old king of the Peak when he discovered that his favorite child was the affianced of a son of the rival house. And the connection was not only opposed by the lord of Haddon himself, but also by Dorothy's older sister and her step-mother. The young beauty was forbidden to meet her affianced again, and was so closely watched that the irksome confinement was almost like imprisonment. Dorothy's proud soul chafed under the restraint, and the ardor of the cavalier instead of being diminished rather increased by being deprived of the presence of his mistress. Disguised as a forester, Sir John lurked in the woods around Haddon for several weeks, obtaining now and then a stolen glance, a hurried word, a pressure of the hand from beautiful Dorothy. At one of these secret interviews, the young girl consented to elope with her lover.

The time chosen for flight was on a certain festal night when a throng of guests, called together to rejoice over the approaching marriage of the eldest daughter of the house to Sir Thomas Stanley, second son of the Earl of Derby, filled the hall with mighty doings. Music and the murmur of gay voices go out into the dark night. In the broad halls, under lofty roofs of oak, tall, gallant figures and fair, high-bred faces gather in the lamp-light. Graceful feet shod in daintiest morocco trip it merrily over the polished floors. In the great banquet hall there is lordly feasting. The dais is in its glory. It is carpeted with velvet and canopied with tapestry of azure silk. Under the canopy stands the master of the Hall, Sir George Vernon himself. In truth, a fine old English gentleman, tall and kingly in his robes of state, with his silver beard and hair falling upon the purple velvet of his doublet.

The noble lord of Haddon is in one of his best moods. The usual sternness of his fair, proud Saxon face with its blue keen eyes is subdued to something genial and kindly. The colossal form which, cased in armor, had rode with two hundred retainers, all wearing his badge and colors, to welcome