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MARGARET TRENT, AND HOW SHE KEPT HOUSE.

BY DORA HOPE

MARGARET'S FIRST AT-HOME.

"SEPTEMBER 4th.—At the Parish Church, Monkstown, by the Rev. Archibald Trent, uncle of the bridegroom, assisted by the Rev. John Colville, cousin of the bride, Wilfred Trent, of Roseneath Cottage, Bayswater, London, to Margaret, younger daughter of Henry Colville, Esq., of Monkstown."

Some two years after we last heard of the Colville family this notice appeared in various daily and weekly papers, and was perused with no small interest by a considerable number of people. Wilfred's friends and acquaintances, when they read the announcement, exclaimed, "Ah, there's Trent has done for himself! Well, he's a good fellow, and she's a fortunate girl, whoever she is." Margaret's friends, reading the notice aloud at the breakfast-table, said, "Oh, here is Margaret Trent's wedding! What a fortunate man that Mr. Trent is to get such a wife! She is the nicest girl in all Monkstown." And Margaret herself, reading it in the hotel at Baden, said "Oh, Wilfred, how

dreadfully public it makes one feel to see one's name in the newspaper! I wish we could stay here for ever, for I never was so happy in my life before."

Margaret had soon, as we prophesied, come to change her mind about marrying. To tell the truth, Wilfred did not agree with her as to the charms of a never-ending engagement, and soon began to press her to fix a time for their wedding. Then the home ties were, one by one, severed. Dick, at his own urgent desire, was allowed to go to his uncle in Ceylon, whilst Tom, who had a less roving disposition, had been advised to accept the offer of a position of trust in a branch house in Edinburgh. Mr. Colville considered this a mark of his employer's confidence and high opinion of Tom, and judged it would be foolish to let slip so good an opportunity for improving his position. So, finding a home in the house of an aunt there, he, too, left the paternal roof, to sojourn in a strange land.

Mr. Colville, having in the meantime retired from business, declared that he would not stand in the way of his daughter's happiness (though she persisted that the summit of her happiness would be to stay at home with him), and decided, upon Margaret's marriage, to give up his house and carry out a long-cherished plan of travelling for some time, after which, he said, he would consider the expediency of acceding to his daughters' eager request to find a home with each of them in turn. Thus it came to pass that Margaret's scruples were all overcome, and she taxed her ingenuity in vain to find an excuse for postponing it any longer.

With the modesty which veils most brides, Margaret begged for a quiet wedding.

"But you would not like to be cheated out of your pretty wedding dress?" suggested Dorothy Snow, who was a frequent visitor at the house.

"N-no, I think I should like to wear a proper wedding dress," said Margaret.

"And what is the use of having a very nice dress if there is no one there to see it?" chimed in Joanna, philosophically. "And you know, Madge, there are so many relatives who will think it strange if they are not asked, that I do not see how it can be so very quiet."

So Margaret's humility was overruled, and as many friends as could be squeezed into the house were invited to the wedding.

As we hope to hear of Margaret occasionally now that she has assumed the dignity of wifehood, we ought to have an idea of the home which is awaiting the arrival of its mistress.

Wilfred Trent had lately obtained a good appointment in London, so they were obliged to pitch their tent in one of the suburbs of the great metropolis. Many were the journeyings backwards and forwards before the locality was decided upon, but finally the important point was settled, and they fixed upon Bayswater, principally because Margaret had an aunt and cousins already settled there, so that she could be sure of a friend to whom she could go if she felt dull during Wilfred's absence on business.

Here amongst the never-ending streets of modern ugly houses, one finds once and again, almost hidden amongst their ostentatious bold-fronted neighbours, little modest cottages, with fair-sized tree-filled gardens behind them, relics of the time when this district was as yet unsullied by the breath of ever-growing London, and was still the fresh fair country. These little nooks, very few, and even growing fewer, have a strange, out-of-place air, as though they are really dismayed and ashamed to find themselves amongst the din and hurry of modern life, and would fain shrink away and vanish as their old surroundings have done. This happily they have not yet entirely done, though how long the greedy hand of the builder will refrain from tearing them down, and digging up the poor little gardens with relentless energy to convert them into building lots, we are unable to say.

One such little old-world residence Margaret and Wilfred were fortunate enough to obtain; not altogether unspoilt, it is true, for what had once been a large comfortable double house, had, by means of a dividing wall, been made into two decidedly small and uncomfortable ones. In the original house there was a large handsome room on either side of the entrance hall; these were now each made into two small rooms separated by folding doors, while the rest of the house was divided and spoilt in the same way. Nevertheless the comparative quiet and retirement of the house was such an attraction to Margaret, whose whole life had been spent within a few minutes' walk of real country, that they decided upon it at once. They found that, by taking it on a long lease, the rent would be considerably less, and as it seemed to be a house which would be easily sub-let, Wilfred felt justified in doing this.

Let us go and investigate now that all the manifold puzzlements of furnishing are ended and the house is all ready for the home-coming of its master and mistress.

There is a little porch over the door, on entering which one finds one's self in a rather narrow hall, the floor of which is at present covered with a good dark linoleum, to last until the master can afford to have it laid with tiles. The upper part of the walls are painted the shade known as "duck-egg," the lower part being hung with a paper dado. Besides the usual hat and umbrella stand, with marble slab for hat brushes, there is a cushioned bench with an arm at each end, and a back padded with leather like the seat, offering a comfortable resting-place to anyone waiting in the hall. This was an idea of Wilfred's own, as the size of the hall rendered economy of space necessary, and the originality of it consists in that this same back is made to shut down over the seat and thus form a table on which to rest trays and dishes at meal times. After the meal is over and everything carried downstairs, its use as a slab is over for the time, the top is lifted to rest against the wall, where it is fastened by two brass hooks.

In the front room, which is used as a dining-room, the walls are treated similarly to those in the hall. The floor is stained and varnished so that it can always be kept clean by wiping with a damp cloth, and a rub once a week with oil and turpentine is all that is required to keep it in perfect condition. The middle of the floor is covered by a square Turkey rug, which, though expensive to begin with, will outwear half a dozen carpets of a cheaper sort.

Having only the two rooms, Margaret will be obliged to use this to some extent as a sitting-room, though she has no idea of keeping the drawing-room sacred to company, so, besides the orthodox dining-room leather-covered chairs, she has two or three low and luxuriously-padded ones and a small but comfortable couch. A little square dining-table stands in the middle of the room, amply large enough for the select party who will usually occupy it, while to provide extra accommodation when necessary there are two small tables in the room, the one to be used as a writing-table, the other at present occupied by Margaret's cage of birds; but, both being exactly the same width and height as the centre one, they can be placed one at each end of it when required, thus avoiding the trouble of the telescope arrangement, with which the patience of so many housekeepers is tried. There is a plain oak side-board, consisting merely of a wide, deep shelf, with drawers resting at each end upon a cellaret, the whole free from those unnecessary curves and twists with which such articles of furniture are usually disfigured. The back is fitted with shelves, for the display of a little beautiful old china which had belonged to Wilfred's grandmother, and is now the pride of Margaret's heart. The curtains of the pretty bow window, sufficiently long to touch but not to sweep the ground, are hung by rings to a simple brass rod. And as the brass rod and rings are good of their kind, and nothing to be ashamed of, Margaret would not have them hidden by the usual heavy valance surmounted by the inevitable, ungraceful barber's pole.

We must pass on, however, to the drawing-room without entering into more details.

Here the floor is covered with India matting to within two feet of the wall, where is a border of wood parquetry. When the winter fairly sets in, this pretty-looking matting will be taken up, scrubbed with soap and water, and put away till spring, to give place to a more comfortable square carpet of Wilton pile.

Pretty curtains of a stout material, resembling Madras muslin in all save its flimsy texture, are hung in the windows, whilst the walls are papered with grey and gold. Of tables the room contains two, one an oblong one which just fits into a recess, the other a so-called "Queen Anne" table, covered with dark green velvet, can be moved about just as it is required. But, though light, it stands square and firm on four legs, and is by no means of the "keggly" description, usually to be found in drawing-rooms, which gentlemen abhor, and which keep ladies in a perpetual fidget, as sooner or later they are sure to be upset.

The chairs are of a very varied description, no two alike save in the matter of comfort; amongst others, one or two of those delightful bamboo and Austrian bent-wood chairs which are so delightfully comfortable for hot weather, and so cheap. The drawing-room is not supposed to be permanently furnished yet, the owners have only bought just as much furniture as was quite necessary to begin with, and have wisely kept back some of the money destined for the drawing room, that they may be able to secure any pretty things as they meet with them.

The mantelpiece being an old-fashioned handsome one, does not require any of the draperies which are such a convenient fashion for hiding poor or discoloured marble. On either side of it, at a convenient height, is a bracket for the cup or book of the occupants of the luxurious easy chairs.

On going upstairs we find two fairly-sized bedrooms, two small rooms, and a good bath-room, the latter added probably when the old house was made into two.

The servant's bedroom—one of the two small ones—has the wall painted instead of being papered, so as to be easily washed and kept clean: a great matter, particularly in London, where some of the houses at which the servants visit are not as scrupulously clean as could be wished. A small recess has been furnished with doors, and so transformed into a cupboard for dresses, with a good shelf at the top for bonnet boxes and other domestic treasures. The bedstead is a small iron one, that being preferred to wood for the same reason that paint is better than paper for the walls. The carpet of this room is a good Kidderminster, that of all the other rooms, including the landing, being Brussels, exactly alike, so that if the family move into a larger house the carpets can be used one with another. But in each case the carpet is made in a square, leaving about a foot of stained wood visible all round. Margaret insisted upon this plan, having learnt from

experience the difficulty, particularly with only one servant, of keeping the rooms clean where the carpet is firmly nailed down, so that it is impossible to remove the dust from underneath it. There is a very great saving of wear also, if it can be turned about occasionally, so that parts that get the most wear can be sometimes replaced by that which is usually under the bed.

In the spare room, in addition to the necessary furniture, is a convenient little writing table, furnished with necessary materials, also a comfortable easy-chair, drawn up by the fireplace, and a tiny, low table, for book or brushes and comb.

The walls of the principal bedrooms are hung with a grey paper, covered with a small pattern of leaves and flowers, quite subdued in colour, for any striking pattern was voted most unpleasant, particularly if it ever fell to the lot of an invalid to have to occupy either room.

The remaining room, one of the two small ones, is destined for a work and box room. Not a pleasant combination truly, but one not to be avoided. The boxes are to be kept at one end, which is to be curtained off from the rest of the room. Here are Margaret's sewing machine and a small table containing drawers on every side, in fact, it resembles a low, square chest of drawers, in which to keep all kinds of working materials. A chair and footstool complete the furniture of this modest apartment.

Now, having briefly glanced at the unpretending little establishment which is to be the home of our heroine for at least the first year of her married life, we must retire, for the honeymoon is over and the jubilant young couple are coming home. One bright autumn morning not very long after their return home Margaret and Wilfred were going briskly along in the direction of Hyde Park. It was Margaret's custom on a fine morning to accompany her husband part of the way on his usual morning's journey to the city, making any necessary purchases on her way back.

Upon this occasion she is eagerly begging that he will try to be home rather earlier than usual.

"You know, Wilfred, it is my first 'at home' afternoon, and I am so horribly nervous about it, and if you only *could* be home by about five o'clock I think I could endure till then."

"I would come home any minute you choose to say if I could, sweet wife, but till I'm my own master, unfortunately, the firm seem to think I must keep to their hours," replied Wilfred. "And don't you think, perhaps, I should be just a little out of place on the occasion?"

"Well, I suppose husbands are *not* supposed to appear; I only wish they were, for you see, Wilfred, any callers who come will be all strangers to me. I know no one in London. They will only come to inspect me because I happen to be your wife."

"And the next time they will come because you are yourself, dear; you need not be afraid of the result of the inspection," said Wilfred, smiling down admiringly on the bonny bright girl at his side. Shortly after they came to "the corner," the usual limit of Margaret's walk, and she turned back with a graver face than she had yet worn since the wedding-day.

At three o'clock on that afternoon she took up her position in the pretty little drawing-room with her cousin, Elsie Colville, who lived in the neighbourhood, to bear her company. In a short time a knock at the door set the poor little bride's heart beating, and immediately the first caller was shown in and announced by Anne, the neat, trim maid. This same maid was, as she would probably have described herself, a highly superior person, having lived in families of great wealth and position; in fact, Margaret could but feel it very kind and condescending in her to consent to occupy such a lowly situation as her present one. She now proceeded to bring in and set up in the drawing-room a small flap tea-table, on which she spread a dainty crewelled cover. The Japanese tray, holding tea-pot, cups and saucers, &c., was next brought in, with a plate of delicate rolled bread and butter, a silver basket of cake and biscuits, and a second plate with small pieces of wedding cake, for which a fork was required. Anne then withdrew; and whilst Margaret poured out cups of tea Elsie handed them with the other viands. Having helped her guests, Margaret covered the tea-pot with the pretty cosy, which matched the tea-cloth, and was thus enabled to keep the tea sufficiently hot to last all the afternoon without replenishing it. Anne, meanwhile, came into the room now and then to remove the used cups and saucers, or to bring more bread and butter if required.

The nervousness which afflicted the young hostess soon wore off, and as the dreaded afternoon drew to a close, she confessed to Elsie, in an interval when they were alone, that she rather enjoyed watching the curiosity with which she saw all these friends of Wilfred's were regarding her.

Nevertheless, when Anne had shown the last visitor out, and removed the tea-table and its belongings, the two girls simultaneously leaned back in their chairs and indulged in a glorious yawn, quite tired out, as they said, with wearing their "company manners" for so long.

(*To be continued.*)

A DAUGHTER NAMED DAMARIS.

By MAGGIE SYMMINGTON.

CHAPTER II.

GRANDE DAME.

LILIAN BARNES would have described herself at that time as wholly changed by the trials which she had been called upon to endure; but the old nature was exactly the same, it had only taken another phase. Keen-eyed Damaris was not slow to discover this in the days that followed, and the conclusion at which she arrived in her own mind reconciled her to the circumstances which were already conspiring to separate them widely once more.

"It is better for me to go than to stay here," she thought; "better even for Lilian than for me. She is not so much changed as I hoped to find her. If I were to remain she would do just as she did in papa's lifetime, and shift all disagreeables on to my shoulders. I should virtually have to bear the responsibilities, and she——well, she would not seek pleasure in the same way now, but she would still follow the bent of her own inclination in another. It is necessity which compels her to take thought for herself and the children, and that necessity must be good."

Lilian's indolence and love of approbation had two new outlets now, and these pet indulgences were inordinate novel reading, and the devotion of a large portion of her time to church decorations—things innocent enough in themselves under certain circumstances and in moderation, but culpable in her because they led her to neglect her children and her household. Novel reading with Lilian was not a mental relaxation, but a species of moral opium, by means of which she deadened her sense of the uncongenialities of her present position. Nor would her church work bear any more searching inquiry as to motive.

"One must do something in connection with the church in order to be thought anything at all of in a little place like this, and I never could endure cottage visiting," was the explanation she gave to her sister. "Mr. Roseberry—our vicar—can do nothing without consulting me. He thoroughly appreciates my services."

"That is gratifying, certainly," said Damaris, with a little ring of scorn and cruel disappointment in her tones, which Lilian in her self-complacency never detected.

When she had first noticed this religious tendency in Lilian, Damaris had looked upon her with a sort of reverent gladness. Of herself she would have said at that time that she was not a bit religious, and yet within both heart and mind was the true religious instinct, as there is in all profound and earnest natures, undeveloped at present, needing the circumstances Providence was certain to send, sooner or later, to call it forth. Damaris was only conscious of its existence now in a drawing of both heart and mind towards the good, the true, the beautiful. Her heart was like a little wild daisy that turns instinctively towards the sun, which is all it knows of God. And Damaris was as ignorant as the daisy. She did not know that God was under the thought which attracted her soul as the sun does the flower. To her, religion was a gloomy state of mind which one would acquire naturally in immediate view of death and the grave. When she saw Lilian given to the exercise of things pertaining to religion, she looked upon her with a curious, longing interest. Over her, since last they parted, had come the shadow of death: she had lost her husband. He had passed from things visible to the great invisible Beyond, and perhaps something of the mystery of the change had been made clear to Lilian's soul. But all her efforts to learn of her were baffled and disappointed.

MARGARET TRENT, AND HOW SHE KEPT HOUSE.

By DORA HOPE.

MARGARET'S new maid, Anne, was, indeed, a highly superior person, as has been said before. She always wore in the morning the neatest of dark print dresses, changing it at noon for plain black, which impressed one at once with the eminent respectability of the wearer. She was never untidy, never behind-hand with her work, never in a flurry. In a word, she was a treasure, and a perfect contrast from the late domestic, Betsy.

This last-named damsel was now married to the faithful baker, and the young couple, as Mr. and Mrs. Newman, had recently opened a small baker's shop in the neighbourhood on their own account, which, it is unnecessary to say, was patronised by the Trents.

But to return to Anne. She soon fell into Margaret's ways, or, rather, Margaret soon accepted most of her maid's ways and suppressed her own ideas, for her admiration of Anne's good qualities was certainly, at this stage, somewhat tempered with awe. On one or two points, however, they were not quite agreed.

Margaret, as we said before, was resolved not to keep her little drawing-room simply for use on state occasions. She had the idea that it had been furnished and made pretty for their own enjoyment, as well as for that of their friends, and having only the two rooms, she elected to sit there always in the afternoons and evenings. With this idea there had been a gas fire placed there, which could be turned out whilst the family were at dinner, or had vacated the room for any length of time. There had been a good deal of discussion as to the advisability of this arrangement, as gas fires are certainly more expensive than coal, but the consideration which decided them was that with only one servant the very great saving of labour quite compensated for the slight additional expense, and Margaret found it a great comfort, before she began fires regularly, to be able to light it just for half an hour, if she felt chilly, without trouble to anyone.

In spite of its convenience, however, Anne seriously disapproved of this arrangement. She appeared to have conscientious scruples against the "best room" being used by the family when without visitors. She put on a solemn and reproachful look when Margaret told her, after lunch one day, to light the

"'WHY, MARGARET, WHAT A HUGE APRON! AND GLOVES TOO!'"

drawing-room fire, as she would be going in there to sit directly, and replied—

"You'll excuse my naming it, ma'am, but in the 'ignest families where I've lived they've kep' the drawing-room special like for company, with the chairs and everything smothered in 'olland covers, even to the chandeliers, and it do seem a pity, begging your pardon, ma'am, to think of all them new things getting spoilt like before two months time."

This was rather rude of Anne, but as it showed the motherly sort of interest she took in her young mistress, Margaret answered good-naturedly—

"Oh, you need not fear the furniture being spoilt, I shall try to keep the room nice and pretty always, and I shall never take any untidy work in there. I think those must have been very rough, untidy people you lived with, if they could not sit in a prettily-furnished room without spoiling it."

Anne seemed crushed for the moment, and said no more till she had nearly finished clearing the table, and Margaret had half-forgotten the subject, when she revived it by saying—

"Only last night, 'm, begging your pardon, master was sitting in one of them light wooden chairs, which there ain't much wear in them I should say, and had got his feet on that sweet, pretty velvet hassock, and I did feel sorry to see it used so reckless like."

"But that hassock is made of Utrecht velvet, which is very strong and durable. Mr. Trent and I do not like having anything about only for show, and not for use if necessary. So now go and light the fire, please."

And Anne obeyed; but she marched out of the room with such an air of superior wisdom and injured dignity, that Margaret felt relieved when she was gone.

Nevertheless, she so far adopted Anne's ideas as to make some very pretty flowered muslin covers, ornamented with lace frills, to cover some of the more delicately-coloured cushions and chairs during the smoky, winter months, but she was careful that they should be so pretty as to rather improve the appearance of the room than otherwise.

Again Anne disapproved of Margaret's little arrangement of her simple luncheon table. Though she was quite alone, she liked to have the table made to look nice with flowers and glass, and indeed lunch may be made a very pretty meal indeed, and in many ways an economical one too, as all sorts of odds and ends can be used up at that informal meal, which could hardly be allowed to appear at a dinner. Not confining herself strictly to butcher's meat, Margaret varied her bill of fare by little dishes of fish, and *entrées* wonderfully concocted from the remnants of the previous day's dinner. The remains of the last night's pudding, when not "warmed up," were cut into slices and served in a pretty, clear, glass dish. The middle of the table was occupied by a round, china "dumb waiter," on which were placed butter, marmalade, pepper, mustard, and salt, any of which she could bring within her reach by giving the "waiter" a turn. The centre of this was always occupied by a little nosegay. When her supply of flowers was low, Margaret was content with a few green leaves and grass; but she fancied she could not enjoy a meal unless there was something of the sort on the table.

She had four small square Japanese flower-pots, with a fern growing in each, for the corners of the table, and altogether it presented a very charming appearance, which Anne did not altogether appreciate. She, in a series of hints and politely-turned innuendoes, gave her mistress to understand that on state occasions a large and massive arrangement in the middle of the table was allowable, but every day, and quite alone, and at the four corners as well as in the middle, this was certainly unnecessary, not to say improper, and she could not submit to it without a faint remonstrance, though, as Margaret attended to the flowers herself, it gave her very little extra work.

Margaret and Wilfred had found it the most convenient plan to conform to the usual London custom of dining late, the maid, of course, dining at Margaret's luncheon time. At breakfast Margaret always provided fresh or stewed fruit, or, when that was very scarce, stewed dried apple rings, or Normandy pippins, as she considered it not only an agreeable but a wholesome adjunct to the breakfast table. Margaret always contrived to be down a few minutes before breakfast time to make the coffee (which was always done at the table, for where is there a servant who can make coffee?) and to see that all was neat and right, though the paragon, Anne, considered this very unnecessary. An egg cosy, and a coffee cosy to match, worked in crewels, made the table very bright and pretty. At this, as indeed at all meals, the dumb waiter in the middle of the table was invaluable, for those at

A NEW TREATMENT FOR FOLDING DOORS (DRAWING-ROOM SIDE).

table could thus hand things to one another without moving from their seats, and were able to dispense with Anne's presence in the room without inconvenience to themselves.

One morning after Margaret had returned from her usual walk with her husband, she received an early visit from her cousin Elsie.

"Why, Margaret, what a huge apron! And gloves too! Well, you *are* careful of your hands. Do you wear gloves all the time Wilfred is away, so as to have them white and soft on his return?" asked this rude little cousin, after the first greetings were over.

"If you had politely waited to be properly announced, I should have had time to take them off, but now you have caught me," replied Margaret. "I always dust these rooms myself, and before beginning I open the window and put on this large apron and old gloves, which I always wear for any dirty work, for I certainly think it a pity to make one's hands rough and ugly when it can so easily be avoided."

"Well, Madge, I am in great straits; you know mother is away, and now here is a letter from Uncle Andrew, who, you know, is a sort of guardian to us children, to say he is coming to dinner on Tuesday night. So, first of all, I do hope you and Wilfred will come too, for he is so alarming that we really cannot entertain him alone in mother's absence. Then I want you to tell me what to have for dinner, for he is so peculiar, he looks most annoyed if there is not a *very* nice dinner, and yet he is always thinking we are extravagant."

"So you want to hit the happy medium? I think, perhaps, I can help you, for I have been studying the subject of little dinners myself, with a view to Wilfred's birthday. What do you say to beginning with real turtle?"

"Now, Margaret, you are making fun. Why Uncle Andrew would never get over it. He would harangue us on the extravagant habits of the rising generation all the evening."

"But he could hardly think it extravagant if you could tell him that the whole tureen full cost only about three shillings. If he looks very much horrified you can lead up the conversation to the great advantage of using dried turtle, and so, after he has tasted it and pronounced it very good, not before, you can inform him that it is made of strips of sun-dried turtle, which you bought at the grocer's for six shillings a pound. Only if you decide to have it you must go and buy the materials at once, as it takes several days to make properly."

"Oh, I am sure I could never manage anything so elaborate as that! Fancy having soup that takes ever so many days to make!"

"But it only takes time, because the strips, as you buy them, are so hard and dry, and must be soaked a long time. It is really most simple, and if you do exactly as I tell you you cannot possibly make a mistake. You must buy a quarter of a pound of dried turtle, chop it into pieces; put it in a basin of cold water (rather under a pint), cover it and leave it to soak for twenty-four hours in a slow oven. Then take it out, cut it in square pieces, and put it back into the same water till the stock is ready, which should be, if possible, a couple of days longer; but you cannot allow it quite so long this time, and less time will do, though it will not be so good.

"Then for the stock you will require one and and a half pound of shin of beef, the same quantity of knuckle of veal, a ham bone, if you happen to have one, or if not you must buy a good thick slice of lean uncooked ham, a little lemon peel, marjoram, winter savory, two bay leaves, and, if you can get it, which is doubtful, a little pennyroyal. You must put all these into three quarts of cold water, and simmer it slowly all day, and then strain it; this must be done the day before you want to use it. Then, next morning, add the turtle, with the liquor in which it was soaked, and boil it all together for six hours, and it is ready for table, only just before serving it up you should add a squeeze of lemon. This sounds rather troublesome, but it really is not at all—it only requires to be begun in good time.

A NEW TREATMENT FOR FOLDING DOORS (DINING-ROOM SIDE).

"Then for fish, I should advise you to have hallibut, cut in steaks and fried. It is rather cheap, and rather nice, and not very generally used, so it may be new to your uncle. You ought to have one *entrée*, too, but I cannot think of anything very suitable."

"Would mutton scallops do?" suggested Elsie. "People generally like them, and if you would kindly ask me about them, it would give me the opportunity of letting uncle know that they are made of remnants of cold mutton."

"I will certainly, for I should like to know how to make them myself."

"Oh, you make some mince of any sort of cold mutton, nicely flavoured, you know, with thyme, and nutmeg, and parsley, and pepper, and the yolk of one egg, and just a speck of onion, and all sorts of things, but the meat must not be minced too small. Then you put it in scallop shells, and cover it with egg and bread-crumbs, and just brown them in the oven."

"That sounds delicious. I quite long to come and taste them. Have you decided on a joint? If not, I think I should have a well-hung saddle of mutton if I were you, because you can do it up again so nicely next day, by filling the gap made in it at dinner with mashed potatoes. Then have it warmed up, and it looks like a fresh joint."

"Madge, you certainly are a genius. Now I must rush off and buy that turtle, or the soup will never be done in time. I can manage to invent some sweets myself, I think. Do not forget to be punctual at the banquet on Tuesday. Uncle Andrew is nothing if not punctual. And do not forget to work round the conversation to cold mutton and dried turtle. You might persuade Wilfred to make a few remarks on the various industries of the West Indies, and then it would come in quite naturally, only I am afraid I shall laugh, and spoil it. Now, good-bye; I can see you are longing for me to be gone, so that you can go on dusting those lovely plates on the book-case."

So saying, she departed, leaving Margaret to finish her interrupted work. As "lovely plates" are not always to be found on a book-case, perhaps their presence there ought to be explained.

It will be remembered that the drawing and dining-rooms were separated by folding-doors, to the appearance of which Margaret had a great objection, so they were hidden, and the space occupied by them turned to an account in an ingenious manner by Wilfred's fertile brain. It was in this way. One day before their marriage, Margaret and he were talking over the best place to put the book-case, which was rather a difficult problem, for the space was limited in the little dining-room.

"Look here, Madge," cried Wilfred, suddenly, "you said you did not like folding-doors, so why not have them done away with, or permanently fastened, and the book-case placed in front of them?"

"Yes, perhaps that would do," said Margaret, ponderingly, "and yet I think, perhaps, a communication between the two rooms might be very useful sometimes, though I did condemn folding-doors."

"Well, then—I have it, Margery!" cried the young fellow, starting up, and energetically commencing a rough sketch of his idea on the back of an envelope. "Look here, dear; you have the book-case built the same size as the doors—not absolutely square, but with a few elegant irregularities at the top: so. Have it fitted with shelves of different depths for books, and here and there, perhaps, a shelf for odds and ends of china, or a rack for newspapers and magazines, or a cupboard with handsomely-carved doors, or—in fact, there is no end to the variations you might introduce if once you began——"

"But, please," broke in Margaret, "I do not quite see how we are to transport ourselves through the book-case; or did you mean us to step on the shelves, and so climb over?"

"I was about to observe," remarked Wilfred, "when I was so rudely interrupted, that a doorway should be cut through the middle of the book-case, from which should hang a curtain of some rich, heavy-looking material: red plush, I believe, is considered the correct thing."

"Oh, charming!" cried Margaret; "but I fear plush will be rather beyond our means."

"And the whole affair mounted on castors, so that, if *necessary*, it may be moved away bodily, and leave the whole space clear; but as it will weigh probably about two tons, I fancy those occasions will be rare," continued Wilfred.

Margaret's admiration of the genius displayed in this invention was unbounded, particularly after the idea had been most successfully carried out.

The drawing-room side of it was managed thus: the back of the book-case and sides of the recess were papered like the drawing-room. A small, low book-case was made at each side of the curtained doorway, and on them china and other ornaments were displayed, leaving just room above for corner brackets, holding vases of flowers and a couple of pictures. This gave it the appearance of an ordinary recess, and had the advantage of making the room that much larger.

These book-cases and their ornaments Margaret always dusted and arranged herself, whereby she gained the very desirable end of having no ornaments broken, and also having the books always put back into their own particular places, so that she could find any favourite author in the dark.

(*To be continued.*)

THE FOUR PERIODS.

By Alice King.

I.—SCHOOL-LIFE.

THE school-life of our English girls! We speak the words, and they seem at once to call up before us the dream of a rose-garden all filled with buds and perfume. The school-life of our English girls!—we speak the words, and as that rose-garden dream fades away, we grasp firm hold, in joyful thankfulness, of precious certainties, of glorious results, of which this same school-life will be the fruitful root, the fair first chapter, the fountain-head from which stream upon stream of sweet waters will flow to gladden generations yet unborn.

Now, in speaking of a girl's school-life, we wish it at once to be understood that we do not mean to limit ourselves to remarks upon what goes on in the class-room and in lesson hours, when grammars and dictionaries are in the hand, when music-books and drawing portfolios are open. These things have in truth their own fitting time and place in our girls' school-life, and we shall say something about them in their turn; but a girl's school-life will be very meagre and incomplete if it does not extend beyond the doors of the school-room. Girls are meant for practical daily life even more than boys; girls, even more than boys, must have an education of the heart as well as of the head, because for women's hearts there is quite as much good, brave work to do in the world as for women's brains; therefore our girls' school-life must be in the home as well as in the school. Let mothers look well to this, for this is their especial province and duty and kingdom, this training their girls in the other school-life, which is not the school-life of the schoolroom. A schoolmistress or a governess may fill a girl's mind with rare stores of knowledge, may deck *her with* graceful accomplishments, but few save a mother can form a girl's heart. And where can this part of a girl's education be carried on so well and thoroughly as in a bright, sympathetic home? And since this is the case, let us strive to make our homes bright and sympathetic to our girls from the very beginning—from the moment when their sweet young eyes peep out of their cradles.

The first thing which the home school-life must give our girls is a solid religious foundation to their characters. No form of religion that the human mind can imagine could be so well calculated as Christianity to make the female sex shine. Let women, then, seize eagerly the proud privilege, and strive to form their daughters on a high Christian pattern. Love, patience, meekness, long-sufferance, self-sacrifice, are all, at the same time, the noblest products of Christianity and products natural to woman's character. Thus, then, mothers, you have a rich soul full of good seed ready for you; in God's name, in the name of children yet unborn, do not root up, or let die through want of care or sun, or dwarf the precious growth, but help it with every effort to come to perfection.

One excellent way of training our girls' hearts is to lead them early to the homes of the poor, to bedsides of the old and sick. Here they will learn to watch suffering bravely, and to meet it with every possible remedy; here they will be taught—without knowing that it is a lesson, the task will grow so sweet to them—how to feel for others, and how to work for them. A woman's influence depends in a great measure on her depth of feeling and sympathy. A woman's noblest work is, in general, for those immediately around her in her home—for husband and children; then this learning betimes to be full of kindliness and charity must be, surely, a bit of good schooling for our girls.

It is also good for our girls, in the home school-life, to be taught to take a lively interest in the management of a household. This may be instilled gently, and almost imperceptibly, into them, by inciting them to strive to gain a loving influence for good over the younger servants. They should be encouraged to form sewing-classes or singing-classes, or other little schemes for their improvement, and to exercise over them a lady's high moral power—the power which comes from mental cultivation. Let our girls, too, in their home-school be taught not to hold their pretty heads above bending sometimes over the week's account-book, or the cookery-book. Such things will steady the wings of their young imaginations, without making their flight less swift.

There exists among a certain class of English society a received and well-cut-and-dried opinion that it is a necessary sign and insignia of ladyhood to spend a large portion of every day in a state of elegant idleness, that allows of nothing more serious employing a woman's time than gossip, and some flimsy, utterly useless piece of work in wool or silk, or, by way of variety, a little very-indifferently executed music, or illumination of texts that certainly do not shine the more from the way in which they are thus adorned. Can anything be conceived more

making all who are guests like yourselves wish for a similar meeting, and remember with pleasure the one that is past.

In giving invitations, if you wish your visitors, whether few or many, to be happy, bestow some thought on the elements which are to compose your party. Think whether they will be glad to meet each other; consider in what amusements they have shown an interest, what are their tastes and accomplishments, and how you may best turn these to account for the general good.

A chemist who was combining various ingredients would not put in an extra one which would set all the rest in a ferment, merely for the sake of filling up the vessel which contained them. So let me advise you, dear girls, never to spoil your party for the sake of filling up a seat or giving what may be deemed a "duty invitation," in order to pay a social debt. And let all understand beforehand just the kind of gathering in which they are to take part. In my next chapter I shall endeavour to suggest some ways of entertaining your friends when they are met together.

(*To be continued.*)

MARGARET TRENT, AND HOW SHE KEPT HOUSE.

By Dora Hope.

"How nice and soft and thick your stair carpets are, Margaret," said Dorothy Snow to her friend as they went upstairs together. It was a week or two before Christmas, and Dorothy had came to spend a long day, to take advantage of Margaret's proximity to the London shops. "It gives me a most luxurious feeling, suggesting velvet pile and that sort of thing, which one does not expect on a staircase," she went on.

"I expect yours are the same, only that my pads being new are perhaps more noticeable."

"Pads!" Whatever have they to do with it?" asked Dorothy.

"Oh, don't you know that it is such an advantage to have a pad on each stair, under the carpet? We used to have an old stair carpet instead, at home, which does almost as well; but in our new house of course we had no old ones, so the upholsterer put down these pads. They make the carpet feel and look much thicker, and save the wear a good deal too; I have a great objection to threadbare stair carpets, but they require a great deal of care to prevent them becoming shabby; I have them moved about an inch either up or down every week. Perhaps you are not aware that stair carpets are always bought rather longer than is absolutely necessary to allow of moving them about, and the surplus piece is either hidden under another carpet, or turned under, according to circumstances."

"Oh, yes, I did know that. At any rate, I am constantly falling headlong downstairs, and then being scolded for my carelessness in not noticing that the rods were out, and the carpets being moved."

"Well, there is nothing like an experience of that kind for fixing a fact in one's mind," rejoined Margaret, laughing. "Now I think I shall have time to try an experiment on these wax candles before we go out. I am rather anxious about them, for Aunt Annie gave them to me; she was going to use them up in the kitchen, as being too dirty and discoloured for anything else, so I begged them, as I thought I could whiten them by rubbing with flannel dipped in spirits of wine."

"Did you invent that, Margaret?"

"Oh, no. Somebody or other told me about it, but I have had no opportunity to try it before."

Margaret's aunt, being country born and bred, had hitherto had a strong prejudice against gas, and had used nothing but lamps and candles in her house. At last, the superior cheapness and convenience of gas had overcome her scruples, and she had submitted to it; at least, so far as the halls, kitchens, and bedrooms were concerned. She refused, however, to have the large ugly gaseliers hanging from the centre of the ceiling, and instead had branch lights from the walls, in various convenient spots, by which arrangement it was possible to read or work comfortably in any part of the room.

"IT'S ENOUGH TO MAKE A MAN TURN BURGLAR."

The dinner-table was illuminated by two, or sometimes three, lamps placed down the centre, which, covered with shades, shed a soft, clear light on the table without causing a glare upon the faces of those seated round it. These lamps gave Mrs. Colville some little extra trouble, as she insisted that they should always be cleaned and filled by herself or one of her daughters (which ensured them being thoroughly cleaned, *without* which there is always an unpleasant smell of oil), and the servants were never allowed to touch the oil-can, which was kept in the cellar for safety.

Margaret had gladly accepted the rejected wax candles, for in her little dining-room, besides the gas branches from the walls, she had one or two quaint old branching candlesticks on the table at dinner time, as she objected to lamps, because they obstructed her view. Each candle had its own tiny coloured shade on the usual wire frame, and the effect was very pretty.

"Now, Dorothy, will you not make out a list of the purchases you have to make? You are sure to forget something if you do not," suggested Margaret, rubbing away at her candles. "You will find a scrap of paper on that little writing-table, in a gilt clip which I keep for half-sheets."

"Oh, yes! here it it. My dearest Margaret, what a model writing-table! Here is a dictionary, directory, letter-weigher, railway guide, almanac—everything it is possible to want. And underneath a waste-paper basket, I declare!" exclaimed Dorothy.

"And I think you will find a sensible pad of blotting paper and a reasonably large ink-pot, which is kept clean, and several *good* pens," added Margaret, smiling. "I do rather pride myself on that table. I made up my mind that when I had a house of my own the writing table arrangements should have my first attention, because it is so often neglected, and I know how difficult it is in some houses to write a letter. The stamp-box, note-paper, and envelopes, and a box of new pens are in the table drawer. Now, Dorothy, do see how nice these candles begin to look; not quite equal to new, of course, but they are really very much improved."

That night the little household at Roseneath Villa had a great alarm, and narrowly escaped something much more serious. It happened that the outer wall of the house was slightly damp in some places, and Wilfred, judging rightly that this state of things was extremely bad for the pictures, determined to protect them from it. For this purpose he took several of them down in the evening, and fixed half a cork at each corner of the frames, at the back. This causing the pictures to project slightly from the wall, allowed a current of air to pass behind them, and so prevented the damp from affecting them. This proceeding took a considerable time, so that it was late before Margaret, as usual last thing before going to bed, threw two or three large clean dust-sheets over some of the pretty drawing-room furniture to protect it from the night's dust, and shutting the piano, went upstairs. These dust-sheets were always left on till the sweeping and dusting were finished next morning.

In the dead of night the whole household were aroused by a loud ringing at the bell, which was repeated till Wilfred went to see what was the matter. *Opening* a window, he looked out, and saw a policeman, who at once turned his bull's-eye full upon him.

"I don't know whether you know, sir, that your back-room window is wide open, and there's been somebody in there, though he's took himself off now. Shall I come in and have a look round, sir?"

Wilfred thought, on the whole, it might be as well to make sure that the intruder had really "took himself off," and accordingly admitted the policeman, and the two together searched all the rooms. It was evident that some burglar had been in, for several drawers were left open and the contents scattered upon the floor; but he had apparently been disturbed before he had time to find anything of any great value, and nothing was missed but a couple of silver serviette-rings which had been left in a drawer in the sideboard.

The policeman glanced around with a rather supercilious air, and finally fell to examining the window.

"Look here, sir, this window hasn't been forced; it must have been left open. This house is a pretty tough job for a burglar, I should say, so long as the windows and doors are properly fastened; but to go and leave one of them open! why, you might every bit as well ask them to walk in," he said, with a touch of scorn at the carelessness of householders. "Why, bless you, sir! it's enough to make a man turn burglar, just to walk about at nights and see how people puts every convenience in their way. If they wanted 'em to come in they couldn't do more to entice 'em. Now I daresay you had your dinner to-night with the blinds turned open, so as everybody could see in and watch exactly where the servants put the silver, and how you was all joking and laughing and never noticing as the window was a little chink open at top, and not latched. Ah! I thought so," as he saw a smile pass over Wilfred's face at having his faults pointed out to him in this way. "And look here, sir," he added, being mollified by a silver coin which Wilfred had slipped into his hand, "look here, sir; if you've got servants as you can't trust to look after this work better than that, you take my advice, and look at all the windows and doors yourself every night, and that's good advice from a fellow as has seen a good many jobs of this sort, and not all let off so easy as you've been," and touching his hat, he went out and continued his round.

Wilfred found the rest of the household collected on the landing in a state of abject terror, and expecting every moment to be assailed by fierce housebreakers armed with revolvers, but encouraging one another to defend themselves to the last gasp with the pokers and other weapons with which they had armed themselves.

It took some time to assure them that their lives were not really in danger, and that they might go back to bed without fear of being murdered in their sleep.

On Christmas Day, as it was no longer practicable to keep up the old family custom of all meeting together, Wilfred and Margaret agreed to spend the day with the latter's aunt, Mrs. Colville, their own maid Anne being allowed to invite her mother and brothers and sisters to dinner with her, and to keep her company for the evening.

Aunt Annie's family was a large one at these holiday seasons, for besides the addition of several boys and girls home from school and college, she liked to have with her any waifs and strays who would otherwise have to pass a solitary Christmas, and if no relatives in this condition presented themselves, she made up a houseful by inviting some inmates from the schools for missionaries' children, many of whom would otherwise have to spend their holidays at school.

At the cold lunch which was always provided on Christmas Day, the *pièce de résistance* on this occasion consisted of a large piece of corned beef, whose bulk indeed excited considerable mirth. The flavour was particularly good, however, and as Margaret, even on such festive occasions, was anxious to get any hints she could, she asked her aunt afterwards how she managed with such a large piece.

"You see, my dear, in such a large family as ours a small joint is gone directly; I am obliged to have something which one can cut at freely. So about three weeks before Christmas I buy a large piece of the round of beef, about twelve pounds, and either let the butcher put it in pickle or do it myself, for about forty-eight hours. Then I take it out, wipe it dry, and rub it with coarse Demerara sugar and allspice, adding a little cinnamon. Then I lay it in a cool place, and turn it every morning, and whenever it looks in the least dry I add some more sugar and spice, but if it does not I simply rub it with the pickle which has drained from it. This has to be continued for a fortnight, or as much longer as happens to be convenient. Then I do not wash it, but put it just as it is into a jar or tin, into which it fits pretty tightly, with a very little cold water. This is placed in a large saucepan of water, which is made to boil fast, and left on the fire for five or six hours, but it need not boil all the time. I leave it in the jar till it is cold, and then take it out and scrape it, as the spice makes the meat look black, and it is ready for use. It is very simple, you see, and everyone likes it."

"But, aunt, why should you take the trouble of having two pans? It would be much easier to put the meat straight into the one saucepan."

"It is very little extra trouble, and the advantage is very great, because it cooks the meat without hardening the albumen, for though the water in the outer saucepan boils, that in the inner one never gets above 180 degrees. It would hardly be a suitable dish for your small establishment, but if you ever have a picnic, or a good many people coming in hungry, you would find it very useful."

So far from making use of this recipe at once, however, Margaret's principal aim for some few days was to find means of cooking in fresh ways the large supply of meat already in the house, and she wrote to Joanna to describe her experiences.

"DEAREST JOANNA,—Many thanks for your kind thought of us, but you need not have had any anxiety lest we should miss the plentiful fare of our dear old home. On the contrary, we have been rather overwhelmed with presents of good things. You know of old that there is nothing I like more than cold turkey, but I have really had too much of it. You know, we went to Aunt Colville's for Christmas Day, and when we returned, the first sight that met my eyes was a large hamper in the hall. Uncle John had sent it to us full of delicious country produce, chief amongst which was a monstrous turkey.

"Everyone is engaged just now, or we might have a small dinner party on the strength of it, so we are obliged to cook it at once as it was just ready for Christmas Day. We had it roasted on Boxing Day, and two of the Colville boys came in to assist, but even then we did not nearly finish the breast. The next two days we were out to dinner, and Anne feasted luxuriously on the cold remains.

"I felt obliged to have the creature in some form for breakfast, so one morning we had the gibbets fricasséed. (You may copy my idea if you like, as imitation is the sincerest form of flattery; there are several recipes in the cookery book). The next morning I had a brilliant idea. I cut some nice slices and severed the wings as neatly as I could, then dipped them in egg and bread-crumbs, and had them fried. It made a very successful dish.

"Matters became desperate at last, and I begged Aunt Annie and the girls to come to my aid. They rallied round me at lunch yesterday, and I had the satisfaction of seeing the last bone of the turkey disappear downstairs as the final remains of a salmi, or, as Anne calls it, 'an 'ash,' which she and I concocted together."

(To be continued).

THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER

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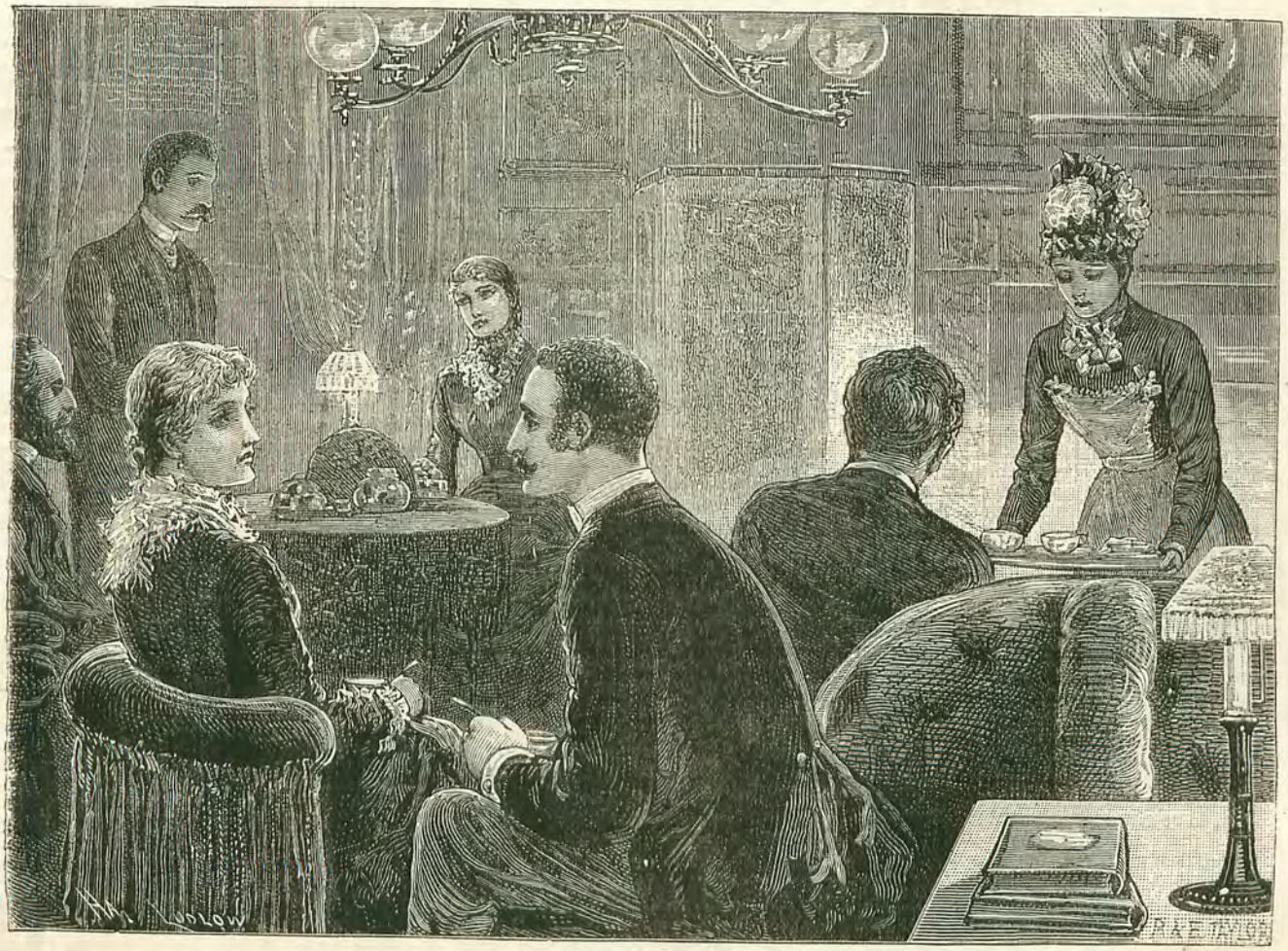
MARGARET TRENT, AND HOW SHE KEPT HOUSE.

BY DORA HOPE.



IN THE DRAWING-ROOM.

"THERE it is again, Anne; don't you hear it?" ejaculated Margaret, under her breath, with a horror-stricken expression. She had been sitting sewing in the little work-room upstairs one morning, when a curious noise in the box-room end of the apartment had startled her, and she had called Anne from her sweeping in the next room.

"Oh, that's a mouse, clear enough, 'm," replied Anne, boldly parting the curtains, and moving about amongst the boxes, when, of course, the noise ceased.

Margaret was relieved to find the noise arose from so slight a cause, for the attempted burglary had increased her natural nervousness.

"The house is regular overrun with them, 'm, and I do think it is time something were done; even my boots was gnawed dreadful last night, and as for our old cat, he ain't no more use than a stuffed one, for if you'll believe me, 'm, I saw a mouse run right across under his very nose, as you may say, and him sitting there blinking and purring and never so much as trying to catch him. He's what you may call *too* affectionate, he is."

"Oh, why did you not tell me before? I had no idea we had so many," said Margaret, rather severely, as her courage returned. "As to the cat, it is clear you give it too much to eat; you must give it less, and not pet it, and then I am sure it will at least try to catch the mice. If it does not, we will get rid of it, and try to find one with a little more spirit, for a good cat is the very best preventive of mice. And then you must be particularly careful not to leave any crusts about, or candle-ends, or bones on the shelves or in any uncovered place; it is usually some carelessness of that sort which first entices them."

Anne did not approve of the personal turn the conversation had taken, so began herself to make suggestions.

"Yes, 'm," she said, "and it happened that Mrs. Newman—Betsy as was—and me was naming the very same subject last night when she called round to bring you them cauliflowers and things she'd had sent her from the country, and was telling me they'd been served dreadful with mice at their shop, but they've cleared them all out now, for her husband he took and filled up every hole he could find with plaster, and then they set traps and kept changing the bait, and the traps too sometimes, or else they cleaned them out well, for mice they are that cunning they can smell if one or two have been caught, and they won't go in the trap if you tempt them ever so."

"Well, the best thing we can do is to follow Betsy's example, and I hope we shall be as successful."

The work in which Margaret was engaged that morning was the manufacture of a warm skirt, to be given to a poor old flower woman, whose post she and Wilfred passed every morning in their usual walk together towards the City. A few weeks before Margaret had given her old *protégée* one or two strong under-garments, and these the recipient constantly declared to be, "Oh, so warm and comfortable, just like a piece of board," which, but for the rapture of the old woman's face, might have been considered a doubtful compliment.

The way Margaret managed her charities was this. She and Wilfred had agreed before they were married that they would begin from the very first to lay by regularly a tenth of their income for charity, and this, after the amount was deducted which they gave in regular subscriptions, was kept in a special cash-box, so that when any appeal was made to them for help they could go to this box and judge by the state of its contents whether they could spare anything, though it must be confessed that the amount was occasionally supplemented from other sources. Wilfred had very decided ideas about money spent in charity, considering that it should not be given indiscriminately simply because it was asked for, but should be spent as carefully as any other investment, after considering, in a business-like light, whether it would produce the desired results. The carrying out of this principle occupied Margaret's leisure moments a good deal, as it involved visiting and inquiring amongst charitable societies and the individual poor who came for help, but she was glad to feel she was of some use, and did it willingly.

The January weather during that year was unusually severe, and there were several heavy snowstorms. Margaret was careful to have the steps swept frequently to prevent them becoming slippery with clogged snow, and also to avoid having it trodden into the house, to the damage of the carpets. But any further precaution did not occur to her, and it was a very unpleasant surprise one morning to discover the ceiling in one of the bedrooms covered with moisture, which was running down the walls in some places and dripping from the ceiling in others. The snow had choked up the gutters, and now that a thaw had set in the water could not escape in the proper direction, so had made for itself a passage through a weak point in the roof. There was nothing to be done but to move the furniture and put pails to catch the drops, and send for a man as quickly as possible to clear the pipes and stop the hole in the roof. When he had finished all he could do at the time, he advised Margaret for the future to have the snow swept from the roof always after a very heavy snowstorm, as soon as it had ceased falling, particularly as theirs was a flat roof, for after the thaw had set in little could be done to stop the mischief.

Margaret mentally vowed to follow his advice as she looked sadly round the disfigured room, but her meditations were disturbed by Wilfred's voice calling to her that it was nearly time to start, and he had forgotten to mention that he had asked two friends in to dinner that evening.

As Elsie and Will Colville were already coming, the usual small repast would require a little expansion, and she had to make her arrangements quickly, to avoid hindering Wilfred.

There was some fish left from the previous day's dinner, so Margaret decided to have fish soup. Anne had made it before, and Margaret simply read the directions over to her to ensure getting all the necessary ingredients.

"Three ounces of butter, put into a stew-pan, with two carrots, an onion, and a shalot cut in thin slices, a clove, and a little thyme and parsley. When they are browned, put in three pints of cold water, and as soon as it boils put in a small haddock, cut up (I think we can do without the haddock this time, Anne, as there is such a large piece of cod left), and the heads and bones of two whiting. Simmer it slowly for an hour and a half or more, and when it is strained cut up the fillets of whiting which were taken off the bones, put them in the stock, and boil it up again for a few minutes, adding a little salt and pepper. As I want it to be rather better than usual to-night, I will get half-a-dozen oysters to put in as well."

Then Margaret thought one of Betsy's cauliflowers would come in very well as a simple *entrée*, prepared *au gratin*. This Anne usually managed very well by cutting the vegetable into pieces after it was well boiled, and laying about half of it on a buttered dish. Then she sprinkled it with pepper, nutmeg, salt, and a little Parmesan cheese, then laid the rest of the cauliflower on it, sprinkled it in the same way, and covered the top with baked breadcrumbs, with a little warm melted butter poured over all. It was baked in the oven for twenty minutes, and was then ready to serve.

Finally, Margaret resolved to add to the sweets an inexpensive blancmange, which she made herself after the following recipe. An ounce of gelatine, or isinglass, is soaked in a pint of cold milk; when it is melted add another pint, with two fresh young laurel-leaves, or a few drops of essence of almond, and five ounces of loaf-sugar in it. Let it boil a minute or two, then take it off and pour a cup of cold water into the boiling jelly, and let it stand aside, covered, for a quarter of an hour where it will keep quite hot, but not even simmer; then it is ready to strain into the mould. The adding of cold water makes it nice and clear.

"How did that sample of cheap soap answer, Anne, that I told you to try the other day?" she asked, as she was leaving the kitchen.

"Oh, it didn't go no way at all, 'm; 'twas all lather and no substance, as you may say."

"Well, I think we have proved now that the best soap is the cheapest in the end; indeed, I am told that the laundresses always use the best soap to be had, as being really the most economical."

"Yes, 'm, I have always heard so too. My mother, she always buys the best, and has it in the house for weeks before using it, for keeping offices, as she do, she knows how to make it go the furthest, and the longer you keep it in a dry place the harder it gets, and goes twice as far as if you use it all soft, like it is most ways when you buy it."

"Your mother certainly ought to be a good judge with all the scrubbing she has to do."

"Yes, 'm, and she says, for the rough work, there's nothing like some of them cold-water soaps: it takes the dirt out wonderful, and not half the work, and don't take the paint off like using soda."

Margaret had long ago given up the cheap or highly-scented soaps for toilet use, having been so repeatedly warned of their injurious effect on the skin, but she thought cheaper soaps would do for household use. She found now, however, as the result of her experiments, that economy and cheapness were in this case two very different things.

As the party sat chatting after dinner that evening Margaret told her guests about the calamity of the morning in a manner which enlisted all their sympathies.

"I'm awfully sorry for you, Mrs. Trent," said one of Wilfred's friends. "I was very nearly having the same thing happen last winter in my rooms. You must know that like the love-sick individual immortalised in song, who lived in Leather-lane, 'My parlour is next the sky; it lets in the wind and lets in the rain'—at least, it did on one occasion; but my man—a very sharp fellow he is too—noticed the first small patch of moisture on the ceiling, so with a gimlet he bored a small hole right in the middle of the wet patch, and in a few minutes the water began to drip through the hole straight into a bucket he had placed ready under it, so the wet was confined to one place instead of spreading all over the ceiling, and perhaps the walls too."

"That was clever! I shall remember that

for future occasions. Oh, Wilfred, wait a minute," she exclaimed, as she saw her husband rise to put some coal on the rapidly expiring fire; "I was so absorbed in the conversation that I did not notice how low the fire was, but I think you will finally extinguish it if you put coal on now."

So saying, she went to the bookcase, and opening a small cupboard, took out a paper-bag of dried orange peel. A few pieces of this placed carefully amongst the coals soon burst into a blaze, and a bright little fire was quickly obtained.

"Please excuse my playing the part of stoker for the moment," she said, as, with heightened colour, she returned to the table. "It is so pleasant to coax back a fire to life, and there is nothing so good for the purpose as orange peel, so I always keep a few pieces at hand on purpose."

"But where do you get it from, and how do you prepare it?" inquired Elsie.

"I get it from the greengrocer's, and I do not prepare it at all. There is not the slightest mystery about it, Elsie; you need not look so perplexed. The whole secret of it is that I keep a large paper-bag hung up in a warm corner of the kitchen, and whenever we have oranges the skins are put in the bag and left there to dry till they are wanted. Sometimes, if we have a good many, we put them into the oven for a few minutes, and they are most useful for either lighting or reviving a fire. I am told they are useful, too, in cases of sickness, if the fire gets low whilst the patient is asleep, as they will blaze up without making a loud crackling noise like wood does."

When the tea was brought into the drawing-room, Anne handed with it slices of bread and butter and gingerbread cake, for which latter Margaret made many apologies, confessing that her agitation about the leaking roof had made her entirely forget to provide any suitable cake or biscuits.

"It was a wonder you happened to have any in the house at all," said Elsie. "If I ever forget anything like that the fates are sure to be against me, and I find, when it is too late, that there is nothing at all that will do."

"Oh, I always have cake in the house. I am blessed with a very good appetite; and invariably get hungry at the wrong times; besides, it is not wise if children come in not to have anything to offer them, so I have a plain cake made every Saturday, generally plum or seed cakes, varied by occasional soda or gingerbread ones, and I am never at a loss for something either for myself or any children who happen to call."

The recipe from which this particular cake was made was a very simple one. A quarter of a pound of butter was melted in a pound of treacle, and the two stirred into a pound of flour, and mixed well together with a quarter of a pound of coarse brown sugar, half an ounce of ginger, a little candied peel, and a *very* little cayenne pepper, and baked in a shallow tin in a very slow oven.

"Have you heard from Tom lately, Madge?" asked Elsie, whilst the gentlemen still tarried in the dining-room.

"Oh, yes, I heard this morning; he wrote to ask for father's address, who, you know, expects to remain abroad some months longer. Tom writes such bright cheery letters. But had you any reason for asking?" returned Margaret, noticing that Elsie looked rather grave.

"Oh, I hardly like to tell you, Madge dear, and yet mamma thought you ought to know that she has heard from our aunt in Edinburgh, with whom Tom lives, and that they are feeling a little anxious about him, because of some rather wild companions of *his*. *There is one* young fellow particularly, who is not at all a desirable acquaintance, aunt thinks, and yet Tom and he are inseparable."

"But Tom, himself, does not cause aunt anxiety?" asked Margaret, eagerly.

"Oh no, he is so good and hard-working, so kind and affectionate to aunt and all of them, that it seems all the more strange for him to care to mix with these doubtful acquaintances."

"I cannot think that he would ever do anything *wrong*," said Margaret, after a few moments' silence, "and yet it *is* wrong to have bad companions. Perhaps aunt is mistaken in her opinion of these friends of Tom's. At any rate, we must hope and pray that he may be kept right. I will write to him more frequently, and get Wilfred to do so too, and I am sure that he will soon be himself again. However, here are the gentlemen, so we must banish the subject. But you will pray for poor Tom, Elsie?"

(*To be continued.*)

DECIMA'S PROMISE.

By AGNES GIBERNE, Author of "Sun, Moon, and Stars," &c.

CHAPTER XVI.

WHETHER TO TELL?

DECIMA sat in her room alone, gazing out of the window, and wearing still the same bewildered air that she had worn at first. A tap at the door, twice repeated, failed to attract her attention, and Mrs. Fitzroy entered, without more ado.

"My dear, I have brought back your letters," she said. "Thank you for letting me see them. It is very sad about the poor little child."

Dessie gave one look into her aunt's face, and then gazed resolutely out of the window.

"You were very fond of him, were you not?" said Mrs. Fitzroy, doubting the exact meaning of this mood.

Dessie shook her shoulders impatiently. "Yes. O you don't know. Nobody *can* know——"

"I think we all know enough to feel for you, Dessie."

"Feel! I tell you, you don't know—you *can't*," said Dessie, in a tone that Mrs. Fitzroy would have thought rude, but for the evidences of suppressed excitement accompanying. She saw that Dessie was not mistress of herself.

"We do not know the poor little fellow personally," she said gently. "That makes it so much worse for you."

Dessie writhed, and shook herself again.

"Worse! O it is horrible—dreadful!" she said passionately. "Don't talk about it. Don't say anything."

Mrs. Fitzroy obeyed, standing silently by the window. She wondered whether she had in any degree misjudged Dessie—whether stronger affections than she had suspected lay under the surface. She had counted Dessie rather wanting in heart.

Dessie sat upright suddenly, and tried to laugh.

"It's of no use to mind—not the *least* use. Nothing can change it; Edith says so. I *won't* be wretched. Just look at those students beating their dogs. They are always doing it—isn't it horrid?"

"Dessie, when God sends us sorrow, I don't think He means us to pretend that it is not sorrow."

Dessie's face worked violently. "It's no use," she said again. "Nothing can do him any good now. Don't they say so? Let me see the letters." She read them through to herself, and then flung them down. "Edith doesn't try to make the best of it, at any rate. I suppose she thinks I shan't care. Well, let them think so. It doesn't matter. You see what she means, aunt Laura. Hugh is to be an idiot all his life. They don't say the word, but they mean it. And he *was*—so——."

Dessie sobbed in spite of herself. "O go away—don't stay," she gasped, "please don't stay. I hate to be comforted. Talking does no good. I only want to forget. And nobody understands—O *do* please leave me."

The entreaty was not obeyed. Dessie found herself, somehow, with her face hidden in her aunt's dress. She held it in a tight clutch, sobbing and choking in an unwilling fashion of yielding to grief. Mrs. Fitzroy said no comforting words, and only stood quite still with one arm round Dessie, not even pressing her affectionately. Once she laid a hand gently against Dessie's cheek, but the sobs broke out again, and Dessie said, "Don't," in a short harsh tone.

"Aunt Laura, I *won't* be made to cry," she said at length, raising her face. "It isn't my way, and I won't be made."

"No, my dear child."

Mrs. Fitzroy spoke quite calmly and coolly, as Dessie wished, and Dessie sat more upright, biting her lips vehemently.

"I hate to cry, and I hate to be unhappy," she said. "It does no good. One may just as well not think. Being wretched will not make him better. Besides, it may be all a mistake. He may get all right by-and-bye."

"The doctor gives some hope of improvement," said Mrs. Fitzroy.

VOL. III.—NO. 111.] FEBRUARY 11, 1882. [PRICE ONE PENNY.

MARGARET TRENT,

AND HOW SHE KEPT HOUSE.

BY DORA HOPE.

IT was seldom that a day passed without exchange of visits between the Trents and their relatives, the Colvilles. Their houses were not far distant, and Elsie often ran in for a few minutes' lively chat with Margaret, who, in her turn, found that her walks frequently led her in the direction of her Aunt Annie's

She generally came out much impressed with a deep sense of that lady's good management, for the superintendence of a large house and a numerous family is no easy task.

"You have such a large mind, Aunt Annie," said Margaret, one morning. "You never seem to

"MARGARET SAT WITH PALE, ANXIOUS FACE."

worry about things, and yet I suppose they *do* go wrong sometimes, even in this model household."

"Indeed they do, dear, though I certainly think it is foolish, and wrong too, to let oneself get into a worry, as you call it. When I feel myself becoming anxious or irritable about little things, I leave them altogether for a little while, and go away and read for half an hour; but if I were young and active like you, I should take a good walk before trying to put matters right, if I felt at all inclined to be worried about them. You would come back with your nerves braced up, and ready to face twice the number of vexations. But has anything been going wrong to-day, my child? If you will tell me about it, perhaps I can help you."

"It is nothing very much, aunt. You will think I am very foolish to be put out by such trifles, but I thought when I had a house of my own, and all my own arrangements, that everything would go so smoothly, and I should have quite a pattern house, so I am disappointed when there is constantly some little thing arising to ruin my castle in the air. My last grievance is that the dining-room chimney smokes so badly that my ornaments are getting quite dingy-looking already. I have had a man to see to it, but it is not much better."

"Why, Madge, you surely have not scruples like mamma!" broke in Elsie. "She will not have any of those new patent chimney-pots on, lest they should blow off on to someone's head; but I did not think you would be so particular."

"Now, Margaret, you must not listen to Elsie's nonsense," rejoined Aunt Annie. "The fact is, I have a superior plan of lighting fires which causes so little smoke that it really does away with the necessity for patent chimney-pots, though, no doubt, they are sometimes very useful where there is too much down draught. But my present housemaid forgets to lay the fires in my way, unless I look after her constantly. She ought every morning, after clearing the grate, to put a piece of brown paper in the bottom, and then fill the grate with knobs of coal and a few cinders up to the top bar."

"No sticks?"

"No, nothing but coal till the grate is full. Then, on the top, one of those wooden wheels for kindling, or two or three sticks, a little paper, and a few knobs of coal are arranged. This is lighted and soon becomes a brisk little fire, which burns gradually *downwards* till the whole is alight. The only objections to this plan are that the fire does not blaze up much, and ought not to be poked, and poking, you know, has such a wonderful fascination for some people. The only attention it wants is sometimes a little patting down to make it more compact. If it is left alone and not touched, it will burn for eight or nine hours without more coals, and be a bright clear fire the whole time."

"Yes, Madge, I can second all mamma says," said Elsie. "I am not generally favoured with a fire in my bedroom, but I have had one the last few nights in consideration of my bad cold. I have it lighted a little while before I go to bed, and rather more coal than usual put in the grate, and it is always burning when I get up in the morning."

"What clever ideas you always have, aunt! I will try it to-morrow morning, though I do not exactly see why it should burn downwards, when everybody knows it is the nature of fires to burn upwards. But if the fire lasts such a long time, surely it must be a great saving of coal?"

"It is a great saving. You will find that servants very soon get to prefer this arrangement, because they have so much less coals to carry upstairs, and it saves them trouble in other ways, for the fuel is almost entirely consumed, and leaves very few cinders; and even if there are any they are simply put back into the grate next morning amongst the coals. Be sure you try it, dear, and when you have made up your mind to adopt it, I should advise you to follow my example a little farther, and have a thin sheet of iron fitted into the bottom of the grate, when you no longer need the piece of brown paper put in every morning. But stay and take luncheon with us, Margaret, and then you shall see the lighting of the drawing-room fire."

"Oh, mamma, you know you told me we were going to take a humble luncheon of pork chops, and Margaret is sure not to like that," cried Elsie.

"Yes, I do, very much; but I do not often have it, because I have an idea that pork is not very wholesome," said Margaret.

"Nor is it, if there be any doubt of the quality and freshness of the meat," replied Mrs. Colville. "You should never buy it at any but a first-rate shop, and notice that both fat and lean are very white, and the former free from kernels; the skin should look firm and smooth, for if it seems clammy it is probably stale. But if you are careful on these points you need not have any hesitation in buying it, particularly at this time of the year; it is always considered most wholesome from October to March."

"And do you think it economical, aunt?"

"Yes! but hardly as much so as its low price would lead you to imagine, because there is less nourishment in it than in other kinds of meat, and it wastes a good deal in cooking. A leg of fresh pork is generally considered the most economical joint. Then, of course, the dripping from pork takes the place of the very best lard, when clarified, so that there is a saving there, again."

"The worst of two married people meeting together," observed Elsie, meditatively, "is that their conversation entirely hinges upon such extremely domestic topics, to the exclusion of everything of a more elevating nature."

"Oh, Elsie, I am sorry; I never thought of how wearisome it must be to you. I was going to tell aunt about one other little trouble I have, but I will spare you."

"No, indeed! ask away, Margaret; it is good for Elsie to gain information, so as to be better able to take care of a house of her own some day," said Mrs. Colville.

"Well, excuse me, Elsie, but I find it so difficult to get on with Anne properly, aunt, and I want your advice. I am sure in many little things she is not strictly honest, and I must tell her of it when I see it, and, altogether, I seem to be constantly having to find fault about little things. I know I have a hasty temper, and perhaps I speak more sharply than I ought; but after I have mentioned anything she goes into the kitchen, and if any of her friends are there, as I told you they very frequently are, she talks in a loud voice—of course, for me to hear—about 'people who pretend to be religious, and yet are always finding fault.' What am I to do, aunt? I cannot let the work be neglected, and I do not think I ought to allow dishonesty even in trifles, but it is dreadful to think she looks upon me as bringing discredit on Christianity."

"It is a very difficult question, dear, particularly for you, who are only just beginning to be mistress of your own house," replied Mrs. Colville. "It requires great tact and management with a servant like Anne. You *must* be strictly obeyed if you wish to have any comfort and order in the house. Neglect of your duty in seeing that the work is properly done is only looked upon as weakness, for which servants would despise you. They naturally do not care to work hard for a mistress who does not know good work from bad. But, on the other hand, if you are tempted to speak hastily, you will find it better not to mention a fault, particularly those which have annoyed or irritated you, till you feel that your anger has quite cooled down. Then you will be able to point out a fault or carelessness without losing your temper, which would entirely spoil the effect of a remonstrance, and might reasonably call forth scornful remarks about Christians being no better than other people. And then, you know, dear, it does not do to forget to give praise as well as blame when it is deserved. We all like to be praised when we do well, and it does quite as much good as scolding."

"Thank you, aunt; I am sure that is good advice. I will keep out of Anne's way in the future when I feel cross. I thought I had got over my naturally hasty temper, but I find it was only lying dormant for want of provocation, and Anne seems to have roused it all up again."

"Then there is another thing; we who are mistresses, and able to get sympathy and loving care when we have the least trouble or sickness, ought to make allowances for the many private anxieties and troubles our servants have, and which are greatly enhanced by their loneliness. Our little troubles would seem far harder to bear if we were living alone amongst strangers, so you should try to let Anne see that you are really her friend and anxious to promote her happiness, for while she is your servant you are responsible for her welfare. Speak to her, when it is necessary to scold, in a low gentle voice, and let her see that it is entirely between yourselves, and not a matter for the whole house to hear. You know, dear, you have, as mistress of the house, to set her an example of Christian womanhood, which includes amongst its duties gentleness and forbearance, as well as 'looking well to the ways of her house.' You see, my child, I speak to you plainly, but I do it because I have gone through just the same difficulties myself, and so can judge from my own experience."

"This is certainly more elevating than pork chops, Madge," broke in Elsie, "and I can join in, for I take a great interest in the race of domestic servants, they are so much maligned, poor things, though they certainly are sometimes very provoking. I had to go into one of our servant's bedrooms the other day just after coming out of my own room, which I flatter myself is very prettily arranged, and I was so struck by the bareness of the room and absence of anything ornamental, that I felt quite ashamed of all my unnecessary ornaments; it is really too bad that servants should not have anything pretty about them. So, as a beginning, I got these large coloured texts, and I am binding them with narrow ribbon, and then I shall sew on a loop of rather broader ribbon to hang them up by, and they will decorate their bare walls a little; then I think I shall make them some toilet-tidies out of my Christmas cards, and then—oh! then my patience will be exhausted, I expect; but if it is not, I mean to make their rooms look quite nice. Some people are so dreadfully afraid of making their servants' rooms look pretty that, even if their windows face the front, they give them shabby old blinds and no curtains, and spoil the look of the whole of the house."

"You have given up venetian blinds, I see, aunt."

"Oh, yes, long ago; they are expensive, to begin with, and they get so dirty very soon, and it is such an undertaking to have them either washed or re-painted, so we use those pretty striped linen ones, scalloped along the bottom and edged with fringe, and we have had them lately fitted with patent spring rollers; they are so convenient, and very rarely get out of order. Then for the sitting-

rooms, you see, we have these more elaborate linen blinds, looped in the German fashion."

"Well, aunt, I am ashamed of having asked you such a string of questions, but I am very grateful to you for answering them. I am sorry I cannot accept your invitation to luncheon; the children from next door are coming in to take luncheon with me, and I must run off, or I shall be late."

Margaret had carried out her intention of writing more frequently than formerly to Tom, in Edinburgh. Not that she really feared any harm for him, but she dreaded lest he might feel neglected and uncared for now that personal intercourse with his family was so limited. Joanna's thoughts and attention were chiefly taken up by a little daughter who had recently come to gladden their home, and Mr. Colville's letters from abroad, kind and fatherly always, were necessarily uncertain in their arrival. Thus, Margaret felt that on her Tom chiefly depended for intercourse with the rest of the family. He was a young man now, just twenty years old, but his letters were those of a frank honest-hearted boy still, breathing all through them a deep affection for his sister, so that the hint which Elsie had given of bad companions soon faded from Margaret's mind.

Before long, however, the remembrance of her cousin's words was rudely awakened, and Margaret's love and trust in her brother put to a severe test.

One day, before luncheon, Margaret had just completed the rather unpleasant task of washing her ivory-backed hair brushes. Knowing how easily they are spoilt if carelessly washed, she always did them herself, choosing a dry, breezy day, and dabbing them in warm water in which pieces of yellow soap and a *very* little soda had been dissolved, and being very careful all the time to avoid splashing the backs. After rinsing them in cold water, and shaking them well to get the water all out, she tied a string to each handle and hung them at an open window to dry.

On this particular morning, when she had finished the brushes, she stood at the window a few minutes watching the passers-by, and to her intense astonishment she saw her husband coming up the road, and walking hurriedly towards the house.

Wondering at this quite unprecedented occurrence so early in the day, she ran down to the door, and saw at once, by his face, that something was wrong. Fearing, she knew not what, and dreading to ask, she silently followed her husband to the dining-room.

"I don't know how to tell you, Madge, darling," he began, drawing her to a seat beside him on the couch.

"Oh, Wilfred! is anybody hurt—killed?" she asked in a whisper, with a terrible sinking at her heart.

"No, no, dear! everyone is well. It is, I was going to say, worse than that: it is disgrace and shame that I have to tell you of. It is Tom who has—— But perhaps you had better read this;" and he placed in her hands a letter. It was from Tom's employer, Mr. Macander, stating that he was sorry to inform Mr. Trent that his safe had been robbed to the extent of £100. Suspicion had naturally fallen on young Colville, as he had been sent to the safe a short time previously, and upon all the *employés* being searched, three of the missing bank-notes had been found in Colville's desk. Mr. Macander went on to say that, for the sake of example, he felt compelled, though very reluctantly, to prosecute, but lost no time in communicating with the Trents, as he knew Mr. Colville was absent. He added that the young fellow was for the present simply locked up in one of the offices, and obstinately refused to confess his guilt, though he did not attempt to explain the presence of the notes in his desk, so that there was no course open but to place the affair in the hands of the police.

When Margaret had finished reading, and sat with pale, anxious face, Wilfred began to tell her how he had arranged for someone to take his place at business for a day or two that he might start at once for Edinburgh, to do what he could in this miserable affair; he thought, possibly, by offering to refund the stolen money himself, he might induce Mr. Macander to give up the idea of a prosecution.

Margaret at once declared she must go too, and in a very short space of time the two were speeding on their journey. As the hours flew by, and they approached the city, Margaret's spirits rose somewhat.

"I daresay we shall find him at liberty, with his name cleared, when we get there!" she said. "The real thief could never allow him to be punished, could he, Wilfred? Besides, with his spotless character—Tom's, I mean—and so many friends in Edinburgh to testify to his fine noble ways, he couldn't help coming through all right, even if the thief still held back."

Wilfred looked less sanguine.

"I believe the lad is as honest as the day," he said, "but you must not hope for too much, my Madge, for the evidence against him seems pretty strong, and previous good character does not always tell very much."

They did not arrive at Edinburgh till too late to take any steps that night, and Margaret had to curb her impatience till the morning, when at an early hour they presented themselves at Mr. Macander's office and were admitted into his private room.

"I am indeed sorry that Mr. and Mrs. Trent should have taken so long a journey for nothing," began that gentleman, urbanely.

"Oh, Wilfred, I knew all would be right," ejaculated Margaret, with rapture in her face.

"For," continued Mr. Macander, not noticing the interruption, "the young gentleman has, so to speak, taken the law into his own hands, and, in a word—escaped!"

(*To be continued.*)

VARIETIES.

PROOF POSITIVE.—Our religion should manifest itself in our daily lives, and we should be able to point to as good results as the labouring man who got up the other day at a religious meeting and said, "You all know what I was when I kept my shop open on Sunday—how I delighted in sin; but now I am happy in Jesus, and if you want to know more about the change which has taken place just go down to"—giving his name and address—"and ask my wife and family."

BUSINESS AND BLESSEDNESS.—If we make religion our business, God will make it our blessedness.

LOOKING IN THE LOOKING-GLASS.—Socrates is said to have enjoined all young people to look often in their looking-glass to ascertain if they were good-looking—that, if they were so, they might strive to make their mental attainments correspond; and if they were not so, then that they might endeavour by the superior accomplishments of their minds to make up for their personal shortcomings.

ECCENTRICITIES OF SPELLING.—The most remarkable instances of the various spelling of names in the olden time are the surnames of Lindsay, Stirling, and Montgomery. These appear to have respectively presented themselves in no fewer than eighty-eight, sixty-four, and forty-four different forms.

LEARNING IN SMALL DOSES.—It is well to take in learning in rather small doses at a time. "Treat your mind as a narrow-necked bottle, and don't try to learn too much at once," said an old schoolmaster to his pupil when he left his roof to begin the battle of life. "If you try to fill the bottle too fast very little will go into it."

OUR LIFE.

Our life is but a winter's day,
Some only breakfast and away:
Others to dinner stay,
And are full fed,
The oldest man but sups and goes to bed.
Large is his debt that lingers out the day;
He that goes soonest has the least to pay.

PURE GOLD.—A Christian in this world is but gold in the ore; at death the pure gold is melted out and separated and the dross cast away and consumed.—*Flavel.*

THE MARVELS OF SCIENCE.—This is certainly the age of progress. Farmer Simpson, a contemporary informs us, having manured his wheat-fields with baking powder, his crops shot up luxuriantly, and were reaped in harvest-time in the shape of shilling loaves, all ready buttered, a result only paralleled by the success of Mrs. Simpson with the washing powder which she sprinkled at night over the fine linen, and in the morning it was all mangled and ironed in the drawers.

THE PRIDE OF LEARNING.—An ignorant farmer in the Lake District once married a "heigh larned" woman. Hard times came, and when everybody was complaining, the farmer's wife declared that for her part she would be contented if she could obtain food and raiment; whereupon her husband rebuked her presumption. "Thoo fule," said he, "thoo dosn't think thoo'st to hev mair than other folk. *I'se* content wi' meeat and claes."

WRONG THINGS AND HARD THINGS.—To you girls it is honourable to say of this or that, "I did it not because it is wrong to do it," but it is quite the reverse if you say, "I did it not because it is a hard thing."

A HINT FOR THE AMBITIOUS.—Success and glory are the children of hard work and God's favour.

IN THE GARDEN OF GOD.—Happiness is a fruit that groweth in the garden of God only.

THE WORK OF THE WORLD.—We behold all round about us one vast union, in which no woman can labour for herself without at the same time labouring for all other people.

SMALL EARS AND LARGE EARS.—It is a popular belief that a small and well-shaped ear is not only a beauty, but a sign of good breeding; while, on the other hand, a large prominent ear is a sign of vulgarity. Giotto in his drawing of Envy in the chapel of the Arena at Padua represents the ear as superhuman in size.

A PLAIN STATEMENT OF A PLAIN FACT, COMMON IN NORTHERN REGIONS:—

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C I C I C

G. B. R. B.

ANSWER TO DOUBLE ACROSTIC (page 270):—

MANFRED
ARIOSTO
UTHER
DOMINICA

W. C.

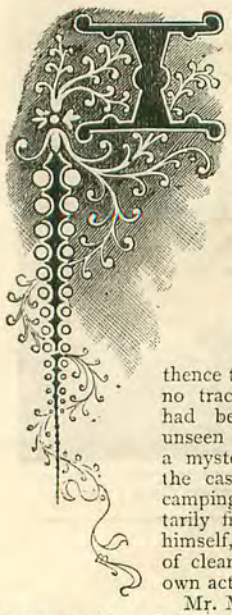
THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER

VOL. III.—NO. 115.] MARCH 11, 1882. [PRICE ONE PENNY.

MARGARET TRENT, AND HOW SHE KEPT HOUSE.

BY DORA HOPE.

"HE WAS SHIVERING WITH COLD."



It was, indeed, true that Margaret and her husband's journey to Edinburgh had been for nothing. For Tom, taking advantage of a delay in the arrival of the police, and profiting by an unsecured window and various ledges and pipes at the back of the house, had managed to make his way down into a yard and thence to the street, leaving no trace behind. How he had been able to escape, unseen and unheard, was a mystery. The worst of the case was that, by decamping, he had thus voluntarily fixed the guilt upon himself, and the last chance of clearing him was, by his own act, removed.

Mr. Macander treated the matter with characteristic coolness. He reasoned that if he pressed the case on and had the young fellow traced and brought to justice, the expenses would be so considerable as to overbalance the satisfaction of it. Whilst, on the other hand, if he allowed the matter to drop, the thief would probably suffer more by privation and constant anxiety, and fear of being caught, than if he were sentenced to a term of imprisonment. So he decided to hush the matter up, which without much difficulty he was able to do.

There was no object to be gained in staying longer in Edinburgh, for Tom would certainly not be remaining there, so Margaret and Wilfred returned sadly home, thinking that Tom would be as likely to make his way to London as anywhere else.

Margaret was cut to the heart to see that Wilfred's mind towards Tom was somewhat changed, and that he was, to say the least, less confident of his innocence.

"You do not know him as I do, Wilfred, or you would see that his very nature would revolt against such a thing as he is suspected of," she said, vehemently, when they were left alone in the railway carriage by the exit of some passengers. "He is hasty-tempered, and very thoughtless, and perhaps a little bit selfish, but beyond that—oh, Wilfred, he is the very soul of honour!"

Wilfred sighed and hesitated before answering. "We can none of us tell the strength of our own virtue till we have been tested by sharp temptation," he said. "I think we should be very slow to judge harshly anyone who falls, in remembering that we ourselves might have fallen lower still, if equally tempted."

Margaret could say no more in defence of her brother. She knew quite well that everything pointed to his guilt, and she had nothing to justify her in her faith in him, save the loving instincts of her own heart. So she fell to talking of how they could tempt back the lost one, guilty or not, and what they should do for him if he came. They composed an appealing advertisement, to be inserted in the "Agony Column" of all the papers, and they made schemes for inquiring in all directions, covertly, so as not to excite suspicion. And, never doubting that they should soon hear of him, they began hopefully planning for his future.

It was irksome to Margaret to have to settle down again to household cares, whilst her mind was constantly at work with the lost brother, as the time went on. The day after their return home was Tuesday, synonymous in her mind with "washing day," for, in common with her neighbours, Margaret had a washing day, though she had expected to leave that unpleasant institution behind her in the country.

The back kitchen and wash-house boasted a convenient little washing-machine and wringer, which saved a great amount of labour and time. The linen was sorted on Monday, and all except the fine, coloured, and flannel things were put to soak. The coarsest things were put in a separate pan, and all were covered with warm water, in which one or two tablespoonfuls of extract of soap powder had been dissolved. This was found to have great cleansing properties, without in any way injuring the clothes. If for any reason Anne was without this extract she would prepare some soap jelly (as being the best substitute), by shredding yellow soap into a jar, and pouring on it boiling water, in the proportion of a gallon to a pound of soap. This was set aside for the night, and on Tuesday morning was fit for use, as a jelly.

Anne had not been accustomed to laundry work before coming to Margaret, and at first, with the view of saving herself trouble, she would postpone the washing of the different things as long as possible, till they were very much soiled and very hard to cleanse. Then, the quickest way appeared to boil them all up in the copper together, by which the stains were fixed, instead of being removed. Experience presently taught her that it is really less trouble and much better for the clothes to wash them before they become extremely soiled, and also that stains such as tea, &c., must be loosened by washing in cold or lukewarm water, before attempting to boil them out.

After being washed in the machine, it was only the most dirty of the things which required boiling. These were put in cold water in the copper, which, gradually coming to the boil, drew out all the impurity that previous washings had failed to remove.

Again Anne was at first very free in her use of the blue bag, hoping thus to hide the traces of careless washing. When this last was improved, she was content with the blue water only tinged with colour, and each article was passed separately and quickly through it, thus preventing the blue from settling in the creases. The coloured things were twice washed, and once rinsed in water containing a teaspoonful or so of salt, to secure the colour.

Starching was a great stumbling-block at first, and Anne herself was obliged to own that there must be something radically wrong in her method, when one day Margaret found her standing dejectedly at her ironing-board, whereon lay various "fine things," some as stiff as boards, others limp, and others again in patches of alternate limpness and stiffness.

Margaret was thankful that Joanna had expounded to her the mysteries of starching, and proceeded to practically demonstrate the same to Anne.

"You must wash the starch out of all these, Anne, and I will soon show you how to manage them properly," she said. "See, you must mix the starch very smoothly in cold water, in which a little borax has been first dissolved. That gives the things a nice gloss, and prevents them sticking to the iron. Then you dip the laces and muslins in, and afterwards rinse them a little in a basin of clean, cold water. That is clear starching. When all such light things are done, you pour on to the cold starch a little really *boiling* water. That makes it into a sort of jelly, which is fit for everything else requiring stiffening.

"These also require a slight rinse in clean water afterwards. Some time I want you to try, instead of using borax, stirring the starch with a wax candle till a little of it is dissolved. *It is said to be* even better than the borax. Now, if you make your starch as I have shown, you will have no more difficulty, I think."

By rising half an hour earlier than usual on Tuesday morning, Anne was able to do the small household wash herself without extra help, and without the other work of the house getting into arrears. She "sprinkled and folded" on Tuesday evening, mangled on Wednesday, and ironed on Thursday, so that there was not a very great amount of extra work on either day. Margaret was particular that all clothes should be brought in from the garden early in the afternoon, before the arrival of possible callers; if they were not dry, the process was completed in the back kitchen, where hooks were placed for the lines.

Though all this caused some extra trouble and discomfort, still the saving of expense and superior whiteness and preservation of the things were so considerable as to render it quite worth while.

Apropos of the laundry, Margaret was particular not to keep any soiled linen in the bedroom baskets. Every morning their contents were removed to a large one kept in the box room, for the custom of having a full basket constantly in one's bedroom is neither wholesome nor clean.

Margaret had her own ideas, too, about ventilation, perhaps planted in her mind by the lectures on hygiene she had attended some years before at the old Monkstown home. She could perceive no reason why one's first impulse on entering a bedroom in the morning should be to throw open the window, with a sniff of disgust at the close and stuffy air. Unless the night be damp or foggy, the windows should remain always open, provided the doors are shut. But there is a popular prejudice against this best and harmless form of ventilation (for the idea of its giving one cold is a fallacy, as long as there is no draught); so the bedrooms of Roseneath Villa were all furnished with ventilators, whilst the fireplace registers were always open. On a fair night, however, Margaret raised her window a few inches, in addition, with the result of always having a sweet fresh air in the room.

Dorothy Snow, Margaret's old school friend, now lived with her parents in one of the suburbs of London; she frequently found her way over to the little house in Bayswater. She arrived shortly before luncheon one day some weeks after the expedition to Edinburgh.

"I cannot bear people who drop in unexpectedly, at luncheon time, can you?" she said, as she greeted her friend. "But as I've brought you two presents, perhaps you will excuse it this once. One of them is something to eat, or rather to drink, and I propose that we have some as an adjunct to our luncheon."

"Oh, what can it be? Nothing spirituous, I hope, for I am a teetotaler, you know," remarked Margaret.

"No, it is only some real Spanish chocolate which Uncle Will brought me, and if I might have a little earthenware pot at this fire, I could prepare it in the correct fashion, which I am sure you would highly approve of. It has a delicious faint, cinnamon flavour that one does not often get in England, I think."

Margaret was accustomed to her friend's impulses, and departed to get the necessary cooking appliances. Dorothy threw aside her hat and mantle, and began breaking up 2 oz. of the chocolate in a mortar; this she put in the pipkin, with a pint of cold water, and stirred it over the slow fire till it was the consistency of custard.

"There, that is ready, but it requires sweetening to my taste," said the impromptu cook, pouring the fragrant compound into two cups. "Now, if we were abroad, we should have

little biscuits fastened in rows on paper, and glasses of cold water with the chocolate; but feeling rather famished, I should prefer some of that nice-looking potted meat, please."

"Ah, I have just invested in a mincing machine and cannot think how I ever managed without it," said Margaret. "All scraps of meat of all kinds, and bacon and ham and everything of that sort, are minced up together, and seasoned with pepper and salt, then pressed into small glass pots, a very little liquefied butter poured on the top, and it is a capital dish for breakfast or luncheon. Fish is very nice in the same way, and for a hot dish of mince the machine is most useful. But, Do, I do not wish to appear grasping, only did you not say you had *two* tokens of affection for me?"

"Yes, here is the second; it is for the piano, and I hope you will always use it, for really you do not take half enough care of that instrument. Why, it stands against an outside wall, and I have often seen it open on a damp day, with a draught from the window or door blowing right on to it!"

"Poor dear thing, it never occurs to me how delicate it and the rest of its race are, and I do rather neglect it, I know. But what can this long strip be for?"

"It is made of wash-leather, embroidered, you see, and it is to lay on the keys, before closing the instrument. There is a piece allowed to hang down in front of the keys, as well as to be on the top, and it keeps out damp and dust, and prevents the ivory going yellow. As you have to keep your piano in a room that is inclined to be damp, it would be best to get a set of glasses, one to be placed under each corner or foot, and pull it a little way out from the wall, for damp is the very worst thing for it, and sudden changes of temperature are almost as bad."

At this moment Anne appeared at the door with a note for Margaret. It was a rather dirty and disreputable-looking missive, on the outside, at any rate, and Dorothy Snow watched with surprise how Margaret first flushed rosy red, and then turned very pale as she read it. They were still sitting at the luncheon-table, though Anne had begun to clear away the things.

"Who brought this note, Anne?" asked Margaret, with a suppressed eagerness in her tones.

"A poor-looking, ragged child, m'm, and I hope she won't come hanging about the place, m'm, for she answered me quite impudent when I asked her who she come from, and I'm sure her hands were that dirty, I thought twice before I took the note from her. Some of them beggars I expect, m'm, from the looks of her."

Dorothy was not without a fair share of the curiosity of her sex, but it seemed that Margaret was not inclined to gratify it on this occasion. Wondering at her friend's unaccustomed reticence, Dorothy soon took her leave.

It was not remarkable that Margaret was discomposed, for the dirty little missive was in Tom's handwriting, and signed with Tom's name.

He was in London, he said, and craved to see her; he would be at a certain spot at seven o'clock that evening, and if she had any sisterly feeling left for such a miserable fellow, he asked her to be there to meet him. "But do not tell a single soul that you have heard from me," the note went on. "If I find that you have even hinted it to Wilfred or any one, I shall make my way abroad, and you will never hear from me again."

This was decidedly awkward, and Margaret's delight at hearing from her brother was almost checked.

"Seven o'clock is our dinner hour, and how strange Wilfred will think my being out!" she mused. "Well, I must leave a note to explain, yet I dare not tell him the truth till I have Tom's permission. It is just like a boy to fix upon *the* most inconvenient time!"

She wrote a few lines to Wilfred, saying vaguely that a poor person had suddenly sent for her, and she did not like to refuse so urgent a call; she would explain fully on her return, which would be before long. Thinking how her husband would rejoice with her when he knew the truth, she set out, and seven o'clock found her at the trysting-place. But there was no Tom. She paced up and down for some minutes, and began to grow hot and uncomfortable, for perhaps that poor wretched tramp who had been there crouching against the wall all the time might be seized with a design upon her purse; she wished he would go away; at any rate, she could not wait much longer, for he was looking at her—nay, approaching her—and saying in faltering tones, "Don't you know me, Madge?"

Could this pale, gaunt creature, with shabby clothes and hollow eyes, be indeed her bright handsome brother? Yes, there was still the old, frank, straightforward look, though the face was pinched and thin.

"It's no wonder you don't know me," he said, quietly. "I've been ill, and six weeks roughing it does alter one; but, Madge, say you trust me; I can't bear it if *you* are against me."

She threw her arms round his neck and kissed his poor pale cheeks again and again. "My darling boy, I shall always trust you, as I always have done. But why did you leave us? We could soon have cleared you if you had only stayed."

"No chance of that," he answered, with decision. "I know the fellow who took the notes, and he put those three in my desk; but I could not prove it. Besides, Madge, I would not have done so if I could; he shall never be found out if I can prevent it. I can't tell you why, but I'd endure anything first. It was foolish to run away, and cowardly, I daresay, but you don't know what it was, Madge—I couldn't bear it," and his eyes filled with tears.

There was much to hear on both sides. He told how he had been living as best he could, selling one by one his few valuables, and earning a few pence as porter and errand boy. The little girl who had brought his note, the child of parents as poor as himself, was a staunch friend, he said. She had tended him during his illness, and was always eager to share with him her scanty meals.

Tom, on his side, learned Mr. Macander's view of the matter, and that his father remained abroad with the idea that he, Tom, might be making his way out to him.

The clock in a neighbouring church rang out eight.

"Oh, I must go home now," said Margaret, startled to find the time had flown so," but you must let me tell Wilfred, and then you shall come home to us till we decide what can be done."

Tom drew his arm from hers, and a hard look came over his face as he asked, "Does he believe me innocent; or does Joanna, or any *one* of them but you? No, Madge, you can't say they do," he went on, passionately, "and it's not likely I shall come begging and praying them to help me, whom they think a thief!"

Arguments were of no avail; nothing would induce him to alter his mind, and Margaret, bewildered as to the right course to take, and afraid of losing him, reluctantly promised to keep his secret. She pressed upon him all the little money she had with her, the tears raining down her cheeks as she parted from him. "Good-bye, dearest darling brother. How can I leave you like this!" Taking a wrap from her shoulders, she folded it about his neck, for he was shivering with cold, and with one last embrace she ran off home. No girl in London was so miserable as she, she thought, for her brother was almost starving, and she was going to deceive her husband.

(*To be continued.*)

GIRLS' OWN PETS.

By Gordon Stables, M.D., R.N.

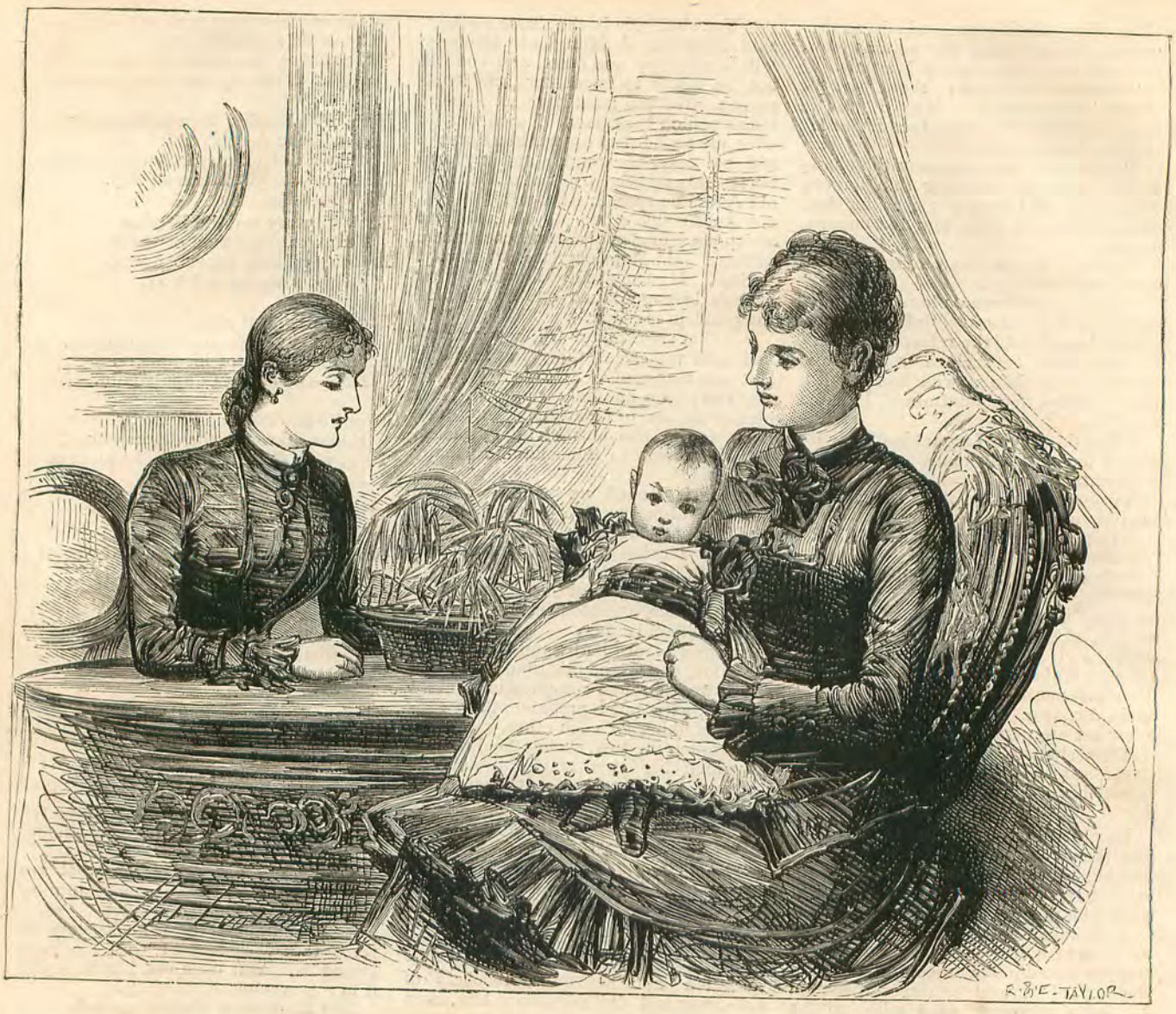
Section Third: The Mavis or Thrush—The Blackbird.

"All through the sultry hours of June,
From morning blithe to golden noon,
And till the star of evening climbs
The grey-blue East, a world too soon,
There sings a thrush amid the limes."

"Far ben thy dark green plantin's shade
The cushat croodles am'rouslie,
The mavis down thy bughted glade
Gars echo ring frae tree to tree,
Thou bonnie wood."

I THINK it no waste of our precious space to quote the above verses. They prove that, whether in Scotland or England, the mavis or thrush is one of the especial favourites of the pastoral poet and lyrist. And well the bird deserves to be. No sweeter song than his awakes the echoes of woodland or glen. It is shrill, piping, musical. Tannahill says he "gars (makes) echo *ring* frae tree to tree." That is precisely what the charming songster does do. It is a bold, clear ringing song that tells of the love and joy at the birdie's heart. If that joy could not find expression in song, the bird would pine and die, as it does when caught, caged, and improperly treated. When singing he likes to perch himself among the topmost branches; he likes to see well about him, and perhaps the beauties he sees around him tend to make him sing all the more blithely. But though seeing he is not so easily seen. I often come to the door of my garden study and say to myself, "Where can the bird be to-night?" This, however, is when the foliage is on orchard and oaks. But his voice sometimes sounds so close to my ear that I am quite surprised when I find him singing among the boughs of a somewhat distant tree. This is my mavis, my particular mavis. In summer he awakes me with his wild lilts, long ere it is time to get up, and he continues his song "till the star of evening climbs the grey-blue East," and sometimes for an hour or more after that. I think, indeed, that he likes the gloaming best, for by that witching time nearly all the other birds have retired, and there is nothing to interrupt him.

In winter my mavis sings whenever the weather is mild, and the grass is visible. But he does not think of turning up of a morning until the sun does, and he retires much earlier. I have known my mavis now nearly two years, and I think he knows me. But how, you may ask, do I know that it is the selfsame bird? I reply that not only do the members of my own family know this mavis, but those of some of my neighbours as well, and in this way: all thrushes have certain ex-



MARGARET TRENT, AND HOW SHE KEPT HOUSE.

By DORA HOPE.

THE position in which Margaret now found herself was a truly perplexing and unhappy one. The task of misleading Wilfred as to where she had been on the night of meeting Tom was only too easy; indeed, she half wished he had shown a little suspicion, and so have discovered the truth, without her having to directly break her promise to her brother. But no, the explanation that a poor person who had been very ill wished to see her was sufficient for Wilfred, knowing as he did how many friends and *protégés* his wife had in the poor districts at hand. So he only laughingly begged her to persuade her distressed parishioners to choose a more timely hour for their summonses in future, and then thought no more of the matter.

How she longed to tell him the truth! To be joining with him in grieving over the boy's silence, and making plans for tempting him home, whilst, on the other hand, she knew he was living miserably not many miles away—such a dual kind of existence was unbearable, and the deceit of it so utterly repugnant to her nature that she felt she could not go on with it. But then came the remembrance of Tom's resolute face and decided tone as he said, "and you will never hear from me again"; and, recalling his ever firm (a harsher judgment might have called it "obstinate") will, she dare not put him to the test.

Thus she went painfully on, with a very troubled heart. Mr. Colville, her father, remained abroad, always in the hope of meeting with his son in some of the places with which he had become familiar during past holidays; this idea seemed plausible enough to all the family, save Margaret. That Joanna was almost convinced of Tom's guilt was evident to her during a two or three days' visit which she paid to the Helliers at this time. Joanna had left home whilst her brothers were little more than children, and had had few opportunities of knowing their matured characters.

Besides this, it seemed to Margaret that baby Annie (as little Miss Hellier was generally called) monopolised a great deal more than a fair share of her mother's attention, and poor Tom's troubles were of much less importance than the premature premonitions of a tooth.

"She seems a little inclined to be fretful, Madge," said Joanna one day, when Margaret had been trying to talk guardedly about the subject which lay ever near her heart. "Do you know I really shouldn't be surprised if—oh, yes, Tom we were talking about; well, you know, boys are so easily tempted. I always thought that dear Tom was rather weak, and then his keeping silent does seem so very strange, doesn't it, baby darling?" and she fell to kissing and crooning to the little one in a way very aggravating to Margaret, who felt Tom's affair a crushing weight which nothing had power to lighten.

"I cannot understand how you can treat the matter so lightly, be so calm about it," she exclaimed. "Why, if I thought he had done this thing, I should hardly lift my head for shame! And as it is, to think about him, innocent and suffering, no doubt, somewhere or other—oh, it is heart-breaking!"

"Calm! my dear Madge. I was dreadfully upset about it, I can tell you, and I do feel it very much indeed, and we are doing all we can to find him even now, in concert with Wilfred and you and father, though as to pretending to think he didn't do it, I'm afraid there's no room for doubt about that. Do you know I sometimes see such a decided look of you about baby Annie's eyes, particularly when she smiles——" But Joanna was talking to space, for Margaret, with a white face, had gone from the room.

"Oh, don't go, Madge!" Joanna called after her. "I want to ask you a number of things. I will send baby up to nurse now if you like, and then we can have a little quiet time before Arthur comes home. How does the wonderful Anne go on?"

"Oh, we are very comfortable at present," said Margaret, mollified somewhat, coming back to her seat, and preparing for a chat. "I find I made one mistake when she came in not saying anything about perquisites, of which in consequence Anne takes a good many."

"And if that is once allowed, there is no end to the waste and pilfering, for pilfering it undoubtedly is, though no cook would admit it," rejoined Joanna. "The only thing to do is, at the beginning, to say you are willing to add something to the year's wages, but that *no* perquisites are allowed. If that is made quite clear, there is no more difficulty. I always tell them frankly that anything I get by selling, what in some houses is considered cook's perquisites, I give away in charity. That is a better use of the money than adding it to the already good wages of the servant, and they always agree with me if they are worth anything. The people who buy those sorts of things call quite openly and purchase whatever there may be for them, and there is no secret at all about it. But if you do not like that plan, you should, at any rate, have a clear understanding at first as to what Anne is to take and what she is not, for if the subject is avoided, the waste and extravagance that go on are immense."

"Anne is more wasteful with bread than anything; I cannot get her to be careful. When she has a great accumulation, she moistens a quantity with water, and throws it into the garden 'for the birds,' she says, but it really nourishes an army of stray cats, who are the pest of the neighbourhood."

Joanna laughed at her sister's woes. "You should look into the bread-pan every morning, and make Anne empty and wipe it out. Then pieces always come in well for puddings, apple charlotte, or the plain baked puddings with currants and candied peel. These, cold, turned out and sprinkled with white sugar, are really nice and look well too. But you ought not to have many pieces in your small family, and you will not have if you insist upon care being taken in cutting it."

"It seems to be the general custom about us to have a boy in for an hour every morning to clean the boots and knives, and do anything else he can to fill up the time. Very useful he is, too, but two shillings a week seems a good deal; still, as everyone does it, I am obliged to, too."

"Why do you not offer Anne a shilling a week to clean the knives and boots herself?" suggested Joanna; "it would save you half the expense, and I think she would agree to it readily. If she does, by the way, tell her to mix the blacking with beer instead of water, it is so much better; and another hint is that boots should be kept constantly cleaned even when not in frequent wear."

"Anne is very clean on the surface; she is perpetually cleaning the silver and her 'brights,' and giving a superficial polish to things which show, but she has several corners and cupboards which are what the boys used to call glory holes of dirt and rubbish, and into the contents of which I should be very sorry to pry."

"Oh, that is very bad, Madge; it is so unpleasant to feel that one's house is not thoroughly clean in every crack and crevice. You must make some excuse for having these places cleared out, for perhaps you would not like to offend her by telling her outright. As to the silver, it is very hard wear for it to be cleaned frequently; once a week is quite sufficient, so long as it is thoroughly washed every time of using in boiling water, *perfectly* dried with a soft cloth, and finally polished with a leather. By the way, I know of a capital method of improving electro from which most of the silver has departed. You take a pennyworth of powdered chalk, and twice the amount of mercury, and mix them to a paste with a drop of water in a saucer; and if you well rub the tarnished article with this it will soon be quite bright and white."

"Our electro does not require any doctoring just yet I hope, still it is useful to know of a simple thing like that," returned Margaret. "But, Joanna, to return to the former subject, I think it is rather an imposition to have to decide on a certain fixed 'day out' for servants, with which nothing may interfere, however inconvenient it may be to the mistress, don't you?"

"But *I* do not submit to such an arbitrary arrangement. It is, I think, only right that they should go to church once every Sunday, and I see that they do go to church, and not spend the time in walking about. This I always promise them, but beyond this I do not bind myself. I tell them they shall have a holiday as often as ever I can spare them, and if they have a special reason for wishing to go at a certain time, I shall try to make it convenient to let them do so."

"That must be far more pleasant; but is it not difficult to persuade the maids to think so?"

"If they demur at all, and I think them worth coaxing, I generally explain that they will find they have even more liberty in my service, as I wish them to be happy and contented; and after trying my plan a while if they are not satisfied, I say I shall try to make other arrangements. But they invariably do like my system, when they consent to try it, for it is really more pleasant for both mistress and maid."

"Yes, so I should think, but I could hardly venture to begin a new order of things with Anne, could I? That reminds me, Joanna, do you keep a hospital drawer?" asked Margaret.

"I don't know what you mean exactly; I have a little medicine chest, you know, with the ordinary staple medicines, but that is all."

"Well, I have started a hospital drawer; now and for once I am ahead of you!" rejoined Margaret, triumphantly. "Wilfred's dear old aunt, Mrs. Trent, with whom he used to live, came to see us the other day, and at luncheon she somehow managed to let her knife slip, with the result of a cut finger. Anne flew in one direction and I in another, in search of sticking plaster, for I knew I had some somewhere. We ransacked the house, and I think I never felt more ashamed, for not even a bit of soft rag could we find, and at last I had to tear up a pocket handkerchief, and by the time I came back to the room I found Mrs. Trent had already used her own as a bandage. I told her of my resolve to set apart a drawer for those sorts of things for the future, and she advised me to keep in it not only soft old linen, stout calico, and sticking plaster, but some cotton wool for burns, pieces of flannel and muslin for poultices, and some mustard leaves, so as to be ready for all emergencies."

"That is a wise precaution to take, certainly," said Joanna; "I must have one, too."

"Then she went on to tell me many uses to put old house linen to. Of course, she said, sheets can be made to last a long time by turning the ends to the middle, cutting away the worn parts, and darning them where thin. Towels can be turned in the same way for servants' use, and tablecloths, when past darning, will make nice tray cloths and fish napkins, fringed and made pretty by drawing threads a little above the fringe. But when they are *quite* done, even for this use, they may be cut to size, two or three thicknesses put together, stitched round, and they make lovely soft cloths for polishing plate and knives, rubbing the windows or crockery; in fact, all kitchen purposes."

"Yes, so they would; I have found from experience that old woollen socks and stockings, cut and stitched two or three together, make capital house flannel, and it is a shame to buy dusters when an old print or holland dress will furnish ever so many first-rate ones; in fact, much better than those expensive fluffy one you buy, which are beautiful in appearance, but no *use* at all."

Margaret quite enjoyed a talk like this; it was so like old times to be figuratively sitting at the feet of her clever sister again, and she thought to herself (and reproached herself for thinking) that Joanna was certainly *much* nicer when little tyrannical baby Annie was upstairs in the nursery.

For the time, too, she had ceased to be constantly oppressed by the miserable thought of the double part she was playing; but this returned in all its strength when she was again at home. Her only hope was that somehow the state of things could not last long. Some one must surely recognise Tom, she thought, though there was little chance of this, for he had no friends in London at all, save herself, Wilfred, and the Colvilles. Surely Tom could not intend to keep his whereabouts secret for many weeks, or in some way or other his presence must come round to Wilfred's ears—thus she reasoned with herself. She did not yet know how in the great metropolis everyone goes his own way, and cares nothing for his neighbour's business.

Meanwhile, she could not let Tom be in actual want. Yet not one penny could she take of Wilfred's, her husband whom she loved so, and yet whom she was deceiving so shamefully. But by strict self-denial she thought she might fairly help Tom somewhat.

For example, hitherto she had rather enjoyed having little dainty luncheons, with tiny experiments in the way of cookery, which, if successful, would be carried out on a larger scale for Wilfred's benefit at dinner. But now, when Anne had spread the table and retired (for Margaret waited on herself at this meal), she would survey the viands spread, and say to herself, perhaps, "I should *like* that little piece of chicken, and then some of this cold tart, but I will have instead a piece of bread-and-cheese (I wish I liked cheese, but it is very satisfying), then the chicken will do nicely for Wilfred's breakfast, and the tart will serve instead of a fresh pudding at dinner, and I shall thus save at least sixpence to go to help that poor dear. Oh, what a wicked, wicked thing I am——," and watering her bread-and-cheese with tears, she would struggle through the repast, and presently sally out to see the hardly less unhappy Tom. In taking the money from her he would always display considerable reluctance.

"I *hate* to take it, Madge, but I know it's really your own; I know you wouldn't bring Wilfred's, and I know you'll believe me when I vow to return it some time. I shall make a good start some day, and get really rich, and then *won't* I pay you back with interest for all your goodness to me!"

(To be continued.)

A MOUNTAIN MAIDEN.

By ELEANOR GRANT.

Oh! thou fair mountain maiden, Alpine climber,
Oh! thou who lovest what thy Lord hath made,
Look up, look up to regions still sublimer,
Look up to loveliness which cannot fade.

More beautiful than Leman's lake of azure,
When o'er its ripples sunbeams dance and play,
More beautiful than all terrestrial treasure
Is Heaven's encircling glory far away.

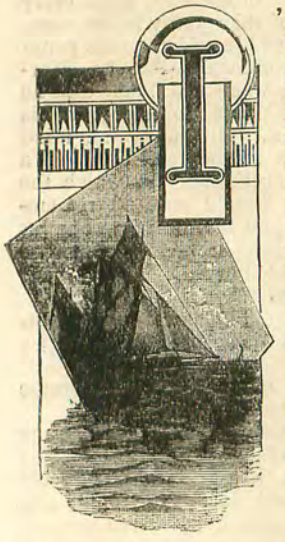
The joyous Alp before thy visage rising
Is foretaste only of thy Home above;
The flowing stream in which thou art rejoicing
Is but the emblem of His endless love.

Dear child of nature, as the Lord doth lead thee
Past earthly spots bestrewn with flow'rets bright,
A vision sweet shall gently come to greet thee
Of one dear country bathed in floods of light.

Oh! well may thou in raptured gaze admire
The objects of His power and His care;
One day thy guide shall bid thee "come up higher,"
And thou shalt view His highest hand-craft there.

MARGARET TRENT, AND HOW SHE KEPT HOUSE.

By DORA HOPE.



"I've always been accustomed, where I've lived previous, to have the chairwoman in for ten days at the least, and turn the house out o' windows, as the saying is, which there's some satisfaction in the spring cleaning then, which I've always understood ladies from the country was even *more* particular than town."

This was Anne's opinion, given quietly and respectfully enough, but still in a way which showed she thought she knew best, in this matter, at any rate. It was a very unwonted state of affairs, for here was the mistress anxious to curtail the amount of work, to the distress of the maid, who longed to plunge heart and soul into a "thorough good clean from top to bottom."

The house was not dirty, it is true, for each part of it was regularly and well cleaned; but the "spring clean" is an old and favourite institution, very difficult to oppose, and so Margaret found it this first May after her marriage.

In the end, she decided to have a helper in for three or four days, for there are certain things which *do* require looking to at this season, and which involve extra work, unless the ordinary affairs of the house be let go to rack and ruin.

Beginning at the top of the house and working downwards, taking two rooms at a time, the bedroom hangings were removed and sent to the cleaner's (for the eight months' wear had made them look rather dingy for bright summer weather). Those in Margaret's room were replaced by a set of cretonne ones which she and Anne had made themselves, finding it a very easy task and a great saving of expense.

The squares of carpet in the centres of the rooms were taken up (not having been fastened down in any way) and given an extra beating in the garden, all the windows being carefully closed at the time. In one of the carpets were unfortunately found traces of moth, so it was spread out upon the grass and well sprinkled in every part with finely-powdered camphor, which after a few hours was swept off with a stiff carpet brush. On another one an old ink-stain was brought to light, which, being of long standing, was difficult to eradicate; but perseveringly-repeated applications of milk, wiped off and renewed as soon as coloured with ink, were at length successful. It was necessary to be careful that the milk did not extend and leave a greasy mark beyond the stain. A few grease-spots found here and there upon the floors were removed by covering them with a hot paste of fuller's earth and scraps of soap boiled up; this was cleaned off, when dry, with sand and soft soap.

In no case did the paint particularly need freshening, but Anne was not to be dissuaded from wiping it down with a flannel dipped in a basin of warm water containing a teaspoonful of ammonia, and drying it immediately, which, she averred, was much less injurious to the paint than the use of soda.

The papered walls were dusted down with a duster tied over a broom-head, and the coloured or varnished ones washed, where they required it, with a soft cloth, and warm water and soap.

The pleasant part of the work was putting to rights again, for after winter curtains, quilts, blankets, and so on, had been cleaned, repaired, and folded away at the top of the linen press, there were the light summer ones to be brought out. The bedroom windows were all furnished with dainty Madras *muslin* short curtains, tied with a gold-coloured ribbon, neither of which soiled quickly, or at any rate, both are slow to *look* soiled. The summer quilts were rather a matter of pride to Margaret, being, as someone is reported to have said, "made out of her own head." They were tasteful combinations of Turkey-twill, dark blue, pink, or red, and the coarse furniture lace and insertion to be had so cheaply now. They were made in strips or squares of alternate twill and insertion, and one best one was of white cricketing-flannel, with a broad handsome border of foliage appliqué on. These all washed well, were inexpensive to make, and always looked bright, pretty, and uncommon.

Margaret's faith in the honesty of tradespeople was somewhat shaken by her residence in London. Perhaps being "fresh from the country," she was rather easily imposed upon, till experience put her on her guard.

One day a delightful young countryman came to the door; he had a fine colour in his cheeks, and wore a charming clean smock, and a big straw hat and hob-nailed boots—in fact, a model of a countryman. On his arm was a basket of country produce; he wheeled a truck piled with the same. Margaret was delighted with so refreshing a sight amongst the pale townspeople, and bought largely of him, without stopping to investigate his goods very closely, or to demur at the high price he asked.

Alas! the eggs proved to be very "French," the pots of nice old-fashioned plants were rootless, and the *new* potatoes turned out to be, when cooked, like balls of very hard wax!

"You know they were not new, but really very old indeed," remarked Aunt Annie, to whom Margaret told her tale and showed a sample of the delusive potatoes. "They are

"HE RETURNED RATHER EARLIER THAN USUAL."

probably those which were last year planted for seed, but did not sprout. They are found in the ground when planting the fresh ones this year, and are dug up and sold for new, which they do resemble, but the difference is soon seen if you try to scrape the skin off with your nail, which you know may be readily done with a really new one."

"One does not know what to do just now for potatoes, for the old ones are not good, and the new are so expensive," said Margaret.

"I find a dish of rice a good substitute sometimes, but it must be boiled to *perfection*. It ought to be soaked six or seven hours in salt cold water, and then put into a pan of boiling water and boiled for ten minutes. It should then be set by the fire in a colander for a few minutes, that each grain may be light and separate from the others, and with gravy this makes a very acceptable vegetable."

"But I do not always have gravy, and it cannot be nice alone," interrogated Margaret.

"With a little management you need never be without gravy, for there may always be a little stock in the house from the stock-pot. I have found that one of the nicest thickenings and flavourings is obtained by stewing an ounce of dessicated cocoa-nut with a pint of gravy for half an hour or more. If you have any rather dry cold meat, a little gravy, hot or cold, is such an improvement."

"Would it not be possible to use the larding-needle for meat as well as poultry? I have never done so, but often thought it might be a good thing."

"Yes, certainly it is; in fact, I think it generally unnecessary for poultry and game which are usually rich enough without. But with a joint which seems likely to be dry, it is a good plan to run a few strips of fat bacon in with the larding-needle."

"By the way, aunt, to turn to a very different subject, are you not often annoyed by visitations from stray cats through the drawing-room French windows? We have been very much so, and one night last week, on returning to the drawing-room after dinner (it was a warm evening and we had left the window open), there were actually two great big creatures settling a dispute by single combat under the sofa, and a third was looking on from my little arm-chair! Wilfred was in desperation, for, as he said, it will not be very pleasant to have to keep the windows closed all through the summer. So he has devised a sort of door of very open wire-work in a wooden frame. This is made to slide to, outside the window, so that when we quit the room, instead of shutting the window, we draw the wire door to, and the air can still come in, though more unpleasant intruders cannot. I think we shall take a malicious pleasure in watching the disappointed feline faces that will come peering in."

"Ah, that was a good thought of Wilfred's. Indeed, he seems never at a loss, but always ready and clever, and you are happy, dear Margaret, or *ought* to be, to have gained so good and capable a helpmeet."

Mrs. Colville laid some stress upon the "ought to be," for she, with more than one other, had remarked her altered manner of late; for indeed the life of deception the poor girl was leading was not without its effect upon her, and the old, bright, happy look had given place to one of anxiety and even misery at times. She thought she could bear it better if Tom would but tell her his reason for this secrecy, but it all seemed so needless. It was really *wrong* for him to be living thus, if it were merely to save the guilty one from detection—no, there must be something behind, though what, Margaret could not surmise. But having taken up this burden she resolved, wrongly or rightly, to bear it, though sometimes it seemed to be too hard to bear.

She always strove to be cheery and sprightly as ever when Wilfred was at home, but he saw through it all that she was, as he thought, weary of waiting for news of her lost brother, and he began to feel harshly towards the foolish, reckless boy who was causing such trouble to them all and such keen suffering to his wife. Tom's name was not very often mentioned now between them, for Wilfred could not disguise his feelings and opinion of Tom's conduct, and the expression of them seemed to hurt Margaret so much that he resolved to avoid the subject.

He was always devising little pleasures and outings for her, in the hope of diverting her thoughts and cheering her, and he rarely came home without some trifle to show how she had been in his thoughts all day.

One evening he returned rather earlier than usual, and asked her to dress for a concert that night for which he had secured tickets.

"Do not put on any earrings, Madge; I have brought you a pair that I should like you to wear to-night," he said. And when she came down in her pretty evening toilet he placed in her hands a pair of tiny, sparkling diamond stars. Her face lighted up, as what hitherto-diamondless girl's would not! But the smile soon faded away, her breast heaved, and her eyes were full of fast-coming tears.

"Don't you like them, darling?" he asked, as she remained silent. "I have had my eye on those for months, do you know; but only to-day, by scraping and screwing, have I felt I could be justified in buying them."

"Like them!" she cried. "Oh, Wilfred, they are perfect! I *love* them! But it's too much; you are too good to me. Oh, if only I deserved it, what a happy girl I should be! but I am a—a *wretch*, I am, indeed. And to think of your depriving yourself of things for *me!*" and it was only with a strong effort that she kept back the rising sobs that seemed to choke her.

Poor Wilfred was inclined to wish the jewels were back in their original resting-place, so different was their effect on Madge from what he had intended. He hoped they might act as a sort of wholesome tonic, and here was Margaret sighing over them, and saying she was not worthy of them, which was a piece of modesty hitherto quite unparalleled in his experience of female character. He made her take some restorative, whilst he was inwardly showering anathemas on poor Tom's head; but by the time they reached the concert room Margaret had regained her composure sufficiently to enjoy the music, and also, it may be surmised, to enjoy the wearing of the diamonds.

(*To be continued.*)

GIRLS' WORK AND WORK-SHOPS.

By RUTH LAMB.

CHAPTER VI.

SEWING MACHINISTS AND NEEDLEWORKERS.

HOW can sewing machinists live by making such things as these? is a mental question often asked, as we look at various articles exposed in the shop-windows or recommended to our notice by the assistants. We see underclothing adorned with almost endless rows of tucks and really fine machine stitching, and trimmed with effective needlework edgings and insertion. We make a mental calculation as to the price *we* should pay for materials alone, and are apt to conclude that no one could possibly make a livelihood by putting together underclothing sold at such low prices.

There seems almost no margin for machinists' wages, and we perhaps sigh as we think of the workers and shrink from purchasing, lest we should deserve the reproach contained in the oft-quoted "Song of the Shirt":—

> "It is not linen you're wearing out,
> But human creatures' lives."

There are still many workers with the needle who are as badly paid or, perhaps, even worse than their sister-stitchers were when Hood wrote his famous poem. But the introduction of the sewing-machine and the many ingenious improvements in and additions to it have made it possible to produce a great show of work at a small cost, and without the wearing labour attendant on hand-sewing. Not only so, but, if the workers are quick at learning, and industrious, they can, under certain circumstances, make good wages in regulation working hours.

In calculating the cost of producing the cheap articles alluded to, we must take several things into consideration, which perhaps do not strike us at first. The materials are purchased direct from the manufacturers, and thus warehouse and shop profits are saved. The needlework and cheap laces are all machine made, and it is only for very high-class work that hand-wrought trimmings are used. Labour and time are economized by a number of mechanical appliances, of which home-workers could hardly form an idea.

I have to-day visited a factory in which from eighty to a hundred girls are employed in making-up only two classes of articles—aprons and underskirts, though in almost countless variety and ever-changing designs.

The materials used are good washing prints and many cheap laces. Some aprons are tiny things trimmed round with braid edging for little children, others with gathered bibs and pockets and several yards of lace garniture—smart, tasteful things, suitable for wear at afternoon tea.

Similar materials were being used for cheap summer skirts, as also striped woollens, unions, and all-black or white fabrics. In black they are quilted, trimmed with kiltings, box pleatings, gatherings, flounces, with braid in many lines or scallops, and with embroidery done by the Bonnay machine. In short, picture a collection of all the sorts and sizes of skirts and aprons that you have seen displayed for sale in the materials enumerated, and you will get an idea of what is done in this purely girls' workshop.

Permitted to walk through the rooms and speak freely to the girls, I am struck with the way in which time is economized by the young workers. In every department there are effective but simple appliances for labour saving. The cutting out, for instance, is very quickly done. Patterns are laid on a length of material; the shapes are rapidly chalked or pencilled out. A number of other lengths are hung on a row of hooks at the side of the room, with the marked one at the top. They are shaken straight, the edges brought together, and then spread on a long table in which is a metal groove. The marks are in turn brought over this groove, and a single stroke of a sharp knife cuts through all the layers at once. Thus the shaping of eight sets is done as quickly, and the whole preparation effected with less of time and labour than one article would cost if done with scissors in the ordinary way.

Again, in cutting out the tens of thousands of strips which are in constant request for kiltings and flouncings, ordinary scissors would be all but useless, and tearing would stretch the material, besides taking up too much time. The stuff—several folds in thickness—is brought under a great knife, which slices off the strips, just as paper and the edges of books are cut to perfect evenness. The width is regulated by a movable gauge. The strips are joined and passed, if for kilting, to one of four machines, each of which is worked by treadling, and tended by a little girl who earns about five shillings a week. One of the machines does box pleating very beautifully.

A simple but ingenious addition has been invented and applied to the ordinary sewing-machine, by the mechanic of the establishment. By means of this flounces are gathered, drawn, and regulated at the same moment, and much time and labour saved. The brass eyelets are fixed in skirt-bands by another little machine. The material is placed over a low metal peg. By one movement of a lever the presser is brought down and a round bit cut out. Then a stud is placed on the peg, the hole in the stuff over that, and another movement brings the presser down again. This fixes the brass eyelet so firmly that it could scarcely be removed without tearing the material.

Now let us glance at the girl machinists—all young, bright, and intelligent-looking—neat in dress and cleanly in person—girls that it is a pleasure to look at. How rapidly the work passes through their deft, skilful fingers! It is surprising to learn that there is absolutely only one pair of hands employed in preparing work in this establishment, and these do nothing but place the sheets of wadding between stuff and lining for the quilted skirts. All the rest is done by the machinists as they sew.

These place the edges together, adjust the trimming, put in pleats, at corners and where fulness is needed, so very quickly that the interruption to the movement of the machine is often barely perceptible. The work is beautifully accurate, and bears testimony to the proficiency of the girls—picked hands, as I was told—of whom the employer speaks with much kindness.

With the exception of the kilters and the one fixer, all the hands are paid by piece.

"They can earn," says my guide, "very fair wages—from twelve to fifteen shillings a week, and, in a few cases, even up to a pound. Two or three—for special work—make more, and during the busy season are very profitably employed. If a girl earns no more than ten shillings a week we begin to consider whether she is worth keeping. We want workers who will do well for themselves, and, at the same time, for us. When we get hold of a real good hand, who earns high wages, we try to keep her, because here a girl gets just what her work is worth. So, if we are slack in her department we put her to something else in the meanwhile, rather than part with her. She learns to turn her hand to the other branch of work, and gets two things in her fingers in place of one. The hours are from eight to eight, with the usual intervals for meals. The young people like this better than starting earlier in the mornings. They attend to their work, for it is to their own interest to do so; and what little fixing they have—such as turning in edges of bands—they do as they sit chatting during the dinner hour, whilst the engine is stopped. You notice the size of the rooms, which are wide and lofty. The moment the girls go upstairs to dinner the windows are all opened, and the places get an hour's thorough ventilation."

The care taken in this respect no doubt contributes to the health of the young people. Nearly all stand during working hours, as the machines are worked by steam, and only stopped and started by a little movement of the foot on the treadle.

Next we go to a corner of a room where all the braiding is done. One girl puts the braid on in straight lines, and has just sent down a

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By DORA HOPE.

HY, Margaret, you have a new servant!" cried Elsie Colville one morning, closing the door behind her as she entered the room where her cousin was sitting. "I was beginning my usual affable salutation to Anne when I came in, and lo! it was a stranger. I was so amazed, for I thought you were settled for life."

"Oh, you have been away several weeks, you see, Elsie, or you would have heard that Anne was going," replied Margaret. "She was a good servant in many ways and I liked her, but she was so fond of her own way and so confident of always being in the right in everything, that it was one constant struggle, and that is not at all a fit state in a house. This girl, Dorcas, is very quiet and respectful, and does not resent being told things; it is quite a relief, for I used really to dread telling Anne to alter anything."

"Dorcas looks exceedingly nice and modest, and so neat and spotless, she is quite a pleasant sight; I'm sure she will do well. But I am afraid you have been worrying, Margaret dear, you look so pale and worn."

"Oh, no, I am perfectly well; I can bear a great deal of worry without being the worse for it," said Margaret, with a faint smile.

"How I wish we could hear something of Tom!" Elsie went on. "That would soon bring your roses back, *I know*. Do you know I saw someone so like my remembrance of him (for I have not seen Tom for years). It was yesterday at the station, quite a poor young fellow, but very respectable-looking, and he had just that proud, half-defiant bearing we used to notice in Tom. He was hanging about, evidently trying to earn a copper by helping with the luggage. I thought I would give him sixpence because of his likeness to my poor cousin, but what do you think? He would not take it! 'Thank you, miss, I am not a beggar,' he said, 'but if you'll allow me to carry your bag, I'll be thankful to earn it.' So I let him take it to the metropolitan station, and gave him a shilling for his independent spirit."

"How strange to see such a likeness!" said Margaret, quietly, wondering secretly if it had been the veritable Tom whom Elsie had encountered. "But I—I do not much like talking of him, Elsie, so tell me about your visit. Have you enjoyed it?"

"Very much indeed; they are only a small family but they are well off, so everything is beautiful about the house. There are always plenty of ferns and flowers, and the daughter attends entirely to them, instead of leaving it to the servants. She does not have great bunches of flowers, but generally a single bloom in each glass, and the effect is so much better; if they are scarce, a small lump of charcoal in the water preserves them a wonderfully long time. Lucy (that is the daughter's name) has the glasses washed almost every day in plain hot water and dried directly, but if they are discoloured, cold strong tea generally cleans them. There is a pot or two of ferns in every bedroom in the house."

"Very unhealthy," put in Margaret.

"Not at all," returned Elsie; "for they are lifted out last thing at night on to a table in the passage. Have you forgotten the science lessons we imbibed at school, which told us that only when the action of the sun's rays is withdrawn that the exhalation of the leaves is injurious?"

"Ah, yes, I only had, like many other people, a sort of general idea that plants ought not to be kept in bedrooms. But pray go on describing this model establishment, Elsie. How often does Miss Lucy water the ferns?"

"Twice a week all the ferns in the house are placed in a huge tub of water to have a good soaking, but the leaves are not wet, as ordinary watering with a can is apt to make them go brown. They are left to drain well before being taken back to their places," replied Elsie. "Then I must tell you about the table decorations. Even when the family are quite alone they have the dinner-table so prettily arranged. Sometimes there is a strip of red Turkey twill down the centre, with a large fern or a low pan of moss in the middle, and small ferns in tiny china pots here and there about. The twill is edged with leaves of different sorts, laid flat on the cloth; these are thrown pell mell into a basin of water after dinner, and so last for a good many days. Then, fancy, Margaret, they *always* have a *menu* of even the plainest dinner; and it really is rather nice to know what is coming next, if it is only a milk pudding."

"I'm afraid you are becoming quite a gourmande, Elsie!" said Margaret, laughing.

"I do not think so, but, you know, I always thought *menus* ostentatious, and that only gentlemen, at grand dinners, cared to have them on the table, but I am quite converted, and mean to introduce them at home every day, just two or three china ones which will wash. But how I have been rattling on, and hindering you, I daresay, so I will go. Now do not trouble about Tom, darling Margaret; I feel so *sure* we shall hear of him soon, and if we do not—well, I shall be inclined to say he is not worth worrying about."

"You will never say that, I know, Elsie, whatever happens," said Margaret. "Must you go? I will not ask you to stay, then, for I ought myself to be helping Dorcas; she is not quite settled down to her work yet."

Margaret had begun very methodically with her new maid, and had been particular to tell her all that she would have to do beforehand, that she might not find more work than she expected. The duties of each day were written down and given her, that there might be no mistakes and no forgetting.

As to dress, it was evident at a glance that the girl was by nature neat and quiet, and that there would be no danger of her spoiling her appearance by anything approaching gaudiness or show. Margaret, however, explained that plain print dresses were to be worn in the morning, and a small white apron put on under the large working one, so that, if the door had to be answered, she might remove the latter, and, pulling down her sleeves, present a nice tidy appearance. Margaret gave her two mob-caps, of the size and shape she liked her maids to wear, which might serve as a pattern for others. These, with a dark stuff dress and white apron, were for afternoons, and were *always* to be put on by lunchtime, at half-past one.

With regard to wages, Dorcas came first for a month on trial, at the end of which, being found suitable, she entered Margaret's service altogether, at a sufficient sum a year, with the promise of a present of five pounds at the end of three years, instead of the usual annual rise. This acts as an inducement to young servants, who, as a rule, are fond of changing situations merely for the sake of change.

Dorcas thought she could not do without beer, and Margaret's teetotal principles strongly objected to having intoxicants in the house. She therefore, for a time, gave money at the rate of £2 10s. a year in place of it. Finding that it was really spent on beer, which involved its being brought to the house by potmen, Margaret was anything but satisfied with the state of affairs, and finally arranged to allow Dorcas one glass a day, buying a dozen bottles or a small cask at a time. She was firm in limiting the quantity to one glass a day, thinking rightly that no strong young girl could possibly require more, but promising that, if her health had suffered at the end of two months, some other arrangement should be made; meanwhile trying to induce Dorcas to give it up altogether in favour of milk, cocoa, or anything of that sort.

Dorcas was frank enough to own at the first to being inclined to unpunctuality in rising of a morning. Margaret, pleased with her candour, and perhaps with a little fellow-feeling, did her best to help her in this difficulty by supplying an alarum in the maid's bedroom, and sending her off to bed as early as she could conveniently be spared in the evenings, for Margaret well knew that unpunctuality with breakfast and morning work upsets the whole day, and therefore can never be permitted in a house with any pretension to order or method.

One of the first extra duties for Dorcas was the pickling of a number of quite young walnuts, procured for the purpose before they grew "woody" or hard. She pricked them well with a steel fork and placed them, according to her instructions, in a strong brine, and left them there a week or more, changing the brine once or twice. They were then laid on dishes or trays in the sun till, in a day or two, they had become a good black, when they were put in dry jars and covered with hot vinegar, in which had been boiled whole black pepper, bruised ginger, allspice, salt and shalots, in the proportion of 1 oz. each to a quart. The jars were tied down with bladder and kept in a dry place for use in five or six weeks.

But Margaret had forgotten to mention one important item in the pricking.

"Oh, dear, ma'am, what to do with my hands I do not know, they are stained that dreadful, and I saw master looking at them quite disgusted-like when I was waiting at dinner last night, and no wonder, for my thumb's as black as black," said poor Dorcas, in great distress, putting her hands behind her, as though the sight of them were unbearable.

"Yes, they are bad indeed," said Margaret; "I quite forgot to give you a pair of old but sound dog-skin gloves I have been saving on purpose to be worn whilst pricking the walnuts. Here they are, you see, but it is too late now, so we must try and remove the stains. Pumice stone rubbed on the fingers will generally answer, and lemon juice is good also, and if these fail, I will get a small quantity of oil of vitriol, to be mixed with cold water and the hands washed in it without soap, though this must only be used as a last resource."

The idea of vitriol was so alarming to Dorcas that she resolved to try every other means

first, and she rubbed and rubbed the stains so zealously with pumice stone that indeed nothing further was necessary. She learnt a lesson from this little mishap, and would often beg her master's old gloves when discarded, to slip on before doing any particularly rough or dirty work.

It was Wilfred's custom to glance through the paper at the close of breakfast before starting to business in the morning; and one day, about this time, his eye fell on an announcement on the first sheet, which caused him to utter an exclamation of surprise not unmixed with pleasure.

"What is it, Wilfred?" asked Margaret, looking up from her knitting.

"Did you not call your brother Tom by some pet name, when you were all children together?" asked Wilfred.

"Yes; Atto he used to be called in the nursery, though I do not know how the name arose."

"Look there, then, there's a crumb of comfort for you at last, darling," and he passed her the paper, pointing to a few lines at the top of the "agony" column, which ran thus—

"From Atto, to any who care to hear.—I am well and comfortable; even happy, having a clear conscience. I cannot yet explain my behaviour, but will as soon as it is possible. My only regret is to have caused pain to some I truly love, and would have spared."

Margaret bent her head low over the paper that her husband might not see the conflicting expressions in her face. She had been lately urging Tom to communicate the fact of his well-being to his friends in some such way as this; he had hitherto refused to do so, though she tried to picture to him the misery his father and others must be suffering, not knowing whether he were alive or dead. Now she saw that his better nature had conquered, and he had taken one step in the right direction. Yet never did her own deceitfulness appear to her in blacker hue than at that moment. There sat Wilfred, eager and happy to think that at last she would be glad, looking and waiting for her to show her pleasure in her old enthusiastic way.

It was desperately hard work to get up a smile as she said, quietly enough—

"Yes, that must be from Tom; how glad they will all be!"

"This may affect your father's movements," Wilfred said, surprised at her apathy. "You remember he wrote to ask what we thought about his remaining any longer abroad. I see no reason why he should not come home now, do you, Madge?"

"No; I see no reason why he should not come home now," she repeated, slowly, not knowing what else to say.

Margaret was in truth a poor actress; by nature impulsive, eager, and enthusiastic, when she came to trying to play a part not her own, she was sadly at fault.

"But what should you wish me to say to your father? Would you prefer him to stay abroad still? for, after all, Tom does not say he is in England. Surely, Madge, dear," he went on, with just a shadow of impatience in his tone, as his wife sat silent—"surely, you are glad to get this message?"

"Of course so, Wilfred—we shall all be glad, very glad," she said, trying her utmost to speak gladly; "but as to father, I would rather you would decide that; indeed, I do not know what to think. Please do not ask me."

So Wilfred, taking her at her word, cut out the announcement and enclosed it in a note to Mr. Colville, advising him to please himself about returning to England, for it was impossible to say where Tom was, and he was as likely or unlikely to be found in one country as another.

(*To be continued.*)

"'WHAT TO DO WITH MY HANDS I DO NOT KNOW.'"

of fever. Hugh was little more than a baby: that was when I taught him the Lord's prayer."

Madge's voice was low and tender. Her work had fallen on her knee, and she was gazing out of the little window at the pure spring sky. Thoughts of Hugh had led her back to thoughts of many people and events which had passed through her life since that time. "Such a sorrowful life, poor thing!" said her lady customers when commending her faithful skill and moderate expectations to each other. But Madge's face was not sorrowful as she thought over it all. It was a face, as the poet has it—

"God-satisfied and earth-undone,"

And then she came softly back from those sacred memories and glorified hopes to the lowly duties of the present.

"Yes," she said. "I have stored away the old chintz hangings of the bed on which Hugh slept when he was a little child. I can easily get them out and put them up. He will remember the quaint flowers and bright butterflies in the pattern, for I used to tell him fairy stories about them, sitting beside him till he fell asleep, lest he should feel lonely in a strange house—a big wandering house, too, as our home of those days was."

A hand was on the latch of the outer door. Madge paused, and she and Faith looked eagerly at each other. There was a step in the hall. The two sprang to their feet.

Robert Finlay had returned. And he was alone.

(*To be continued.*)

MARGARET TRENT, AND HOW SHE KEPT HOUSE.

By DORA HOPE.

"You do not care for the idea of Normandy, then, Madge?" asked Wilfred one evening. It was a warm day, and they were sitting in the little garden, where Wilfred was engaged in the combination of a mysterious compound as a cool drink suited to the summer. He had a tumbler half full of crushed ice, to which he put a tablespoonful of milk, and another of fruit syrup, of which Margaret always had a little at hand, and while stirring the mixture, before filling the glass with soda-water, he had renewed the conversation, begun during dinner, about their summer holiday. Wilfred had a great fancy for cool, effervescing drinks, and invented endless varieties. The foundation was almost always crushed ice and soda-water, the flavourings varying according to fancy—cherry, lemon-peel, and powdered sugar was one favourite; a tablespoonful each of lemon-juice and raspberry-vinegar, another; but the varieties were quite too numerous to mention.

Their approaching summer holiday was a subject of so much interest, to Wilfred especially, that it was an almost constant topic of conversation.

"Normandy seems such a long way off," demurred Margaret.

"But that is just one of its advantages Surely you are not so wedded to the charms of London during the hot weather as to be anxious to remain near it, and we can reach Normandy so very easily."

"You would not, I suppose, if you like the idea of Normandy, care to go with some friend, and let me stay quietly at home? I would, really, almost as soon, for I do not require a change," very timidly suggested Margaret.

"What an idea, Madge! Why, you know it would be no pleasure to me without you, and you *do* need a change of air very much; why, you are not half the girl you were a year ago, and I believe it is all this London air that has done it, so the further away we go the better."

The fact was that Margaret felt very uneasy at the idea of leaving London and Tom for so long. It was true, she reasoned with herself, that he was behaving very wrongly, but not to see or hear anything of him for five long weeks—why, there was no knowing what desperate thing he might not do.

Wilfred could not but see how different her manner was from the eager delight with which she usually hailed any sort of outing. But was she not very different in so many ways lately? What had come over her he could not imagine—so quiet, so pale, and often such a wistful sad look on her face; her very cheerfulness seemed forced and unnatural. He began to feel considerably pained at the reserve, or distrust, as he sometimes thought, which kept her from telling him what troubled her. Was it possible that she felt she had made a blunder in marrying him, that the affection she thought she had for him had died out? No, the idea was too dreadful to be cherished for a moment, but the thought left its impress, and a faint, indefinable cloud seemed to have arisen between them; for Wilfred, loving her ardently as ever, determined not to tease her with demonstrations of the affection he half suspected she did not fully return, and Margaret, detecting, as she thought, a coolness in her husband's manner, guessed the cause, and fretted and moaned over it in his absence, but still felt bound by her promise to Tom to go on in the miserable course she had begun.

To return to the conversation in the garden. Margaret suddenly thought of a way by which she could accompany her husband with an easy mind. If only Tom had some regular employment, bringing in regular pay, however small, she would feel comparatively happy about him. She determined to get him some such situation, if possible. It would be difficult, very difficult, having to keep the matter so secret, but she was resolved to succeed, and on the strength of this plan agreed quite cheerfully to accompany Wilfred to Normandy or anywhere else, and set about making arrangements at once.

She soon decided that the servant was to have board wages, and she made out for her a list of the work she wished done during their absence. Some of the house-linen and curtains wanted repairing, and there was a good deal of cleaning required, but as she would have so long a time to do it in, Margaret entrusted her with several other pieces of work, too; amongst other things, there were some nasturtium pods in the garden which would probably be ready for pickling before their return; so Margaret told Dorcas to watch them carefully, and gather them when she saw that the seeds were full grown but still soft. She provided her with plenty of the best pickling vinegar, and told her each day, after she had picked all the pods she thought quite ready, to put them into a jar of this vinegar, cold, and without any spice, and tie them down tightly. This was all that was necessary, except to look at the jars frequently to see if the vinegar was getting absorbed by the pods, and to add more when required. Dorcas looked rather alarmed when the subject of pickling was first mentioned, but when she found that it only meant putting pods into a jar of vinegar and tying it down, she thought she could manage it.

Then Margaret told her she must be on the look-out, when shopping, for good bunches of herbs, for drying. Fennel, marjoram, thyme, mint, parsley, and summer and winter savoury are all in their prime, and should be gathered for drying during July and August; and Margaret did not wish to miss the best time for getting them, although she would be away herself. She warned Dorcas not to hang them up to dry in loose bunches, as the frequent custom is, but to spread them out on a sheet of paper and dry them in the oven, afterwards stripping off the leaves, and, after rubbing them fine, to put them away in large-mouthed glass bottles which she gave her, with labels to gum on each when full.

Margaret's next difficulty was to find some clean and honest person to stay in the house with Dorcas, as she thought it both unkind and unsafe to leave a young girl alone for so long. After some little trouble, she heard through one of the City missionaries of a poor needlewoman who would be very glad to keep her company and have a little change of scene and good food for herself; for as soon as Margaret heard she was really poor and in ill-health, she gave Dorcas double board wages, to provide for her companion as well as herself, and arranged to pay the rent of a small garret for her to store her furniture in, as otherwise she would have had to keep on her lodging as usual.

These matters being settled, Margaret was able to give a little more time to teaching Dorcas some of the things in which she still failed, though it must be confessed that there were one or two points on which the maid had enlightened the mistress. As an instance of the latter, one morning at breakfast Dorcas brought in the egg-stand with two boiled eggs, whereupon Margaret asked the reason, as she had not ordered any. Dorcas explained that they had been left unused at breakfast the day before, and so as she knew they were just as good boiled a second time, she had done so; and to Margaret's surprise they were, as Dorcas had said, quite as soft and nice as if it had been their first appearance. But though Dorcas was very clever in some ways, and observant, she was very awkward in others, though willing and anxious to learn.

One point on which she required perpetual instruction was laying the table; for the family in which she had been previously appeared to have lived in a primitive manner in this respect. Margaret was particularly dainty in all her table arrangements, and perhaps a little bit extravagant in insisting upon spotlessly clean linen, for that she considered the *most* important point. She always had pretty, neat mats under the hot dishes, and instead of starched serviettes, glazed to a crackling stiffness, hers were of soft linen fringed at the edge, and a design in the corners, worked in cross-stitch in red and blue ingrain cotton. The water decanters and salt-cellars were a chief bone of contention. If not carefully kept up to her work, Dorcas would bring in the salt-cellars half full of lumpy salt, and very stale water in the decanters, and the mustard-pot with the mustard smeared all up the inside of the glass. At last Margaret had to insist that all the salt-cellars should be emptied every day, and refilled. This had not been necessary with Anne, who always was very careful about those parts of her work which showed much, but with Dorcas it was the only way to ensure their being properly attended to. The decanters too were emptied every night, and filled with filtered water just before luncheon. The cause of the untidy mustard-pots was that Dorcas, with a view to saving trouble, made such a quantity of mustard at a time, that it lasted some weeks; but that was stopped by a strict rule that it was to be emptied and washed every Saturday, and the silver lid cleaned with the rest of the plate, before being re-filled with a small quantity of freshly-made mustard, Another of her careless tricks, which called forth a decided remonstrance from her mistress, was cleaning the perforated lid of the pepper pot without removing it, apparently quite unconscious of the fact that the same holes which allowed the pepper to come out were quite large enough to allow of the whiting going in.

But all these and many similar faults were only the results of carelessness or ignorance, and Margaret was thankful, in making preparations for leaving home, to think that she had an honest, clean, and respectable young woman to leave in the house. The only other precaution they thought it necessary to take was to send their silver to the bank before leaving, and this was more to prevent Dorcas having any anxiety than because they had any doubts of her honesty or carefulness.

Let us take a look at Tom in his new home, for the poor bare room he occupies is the only place he can call by that name.

It is the close of a mild and still day in June; he has returned weary and dejected, for he has found little or no work, and his pockets are empty. He throws himself down upon the only chair the room boasts of, without spirit to reach from the cupboard the very scanty food which is to serve him for supper and breakfast. He takes from his breast-pocket a photograph, wrapped in several folds of paper, and evidently a great treasure. The face he looks upon is that of a girl of seventeen or eighteen, very pale and thin, with lines of suffering upon it, apparently the face of an invalid. But the large grave eyes are calm, and there is a faint sweet smile upon the mouth which tells of content and peace.

"Oh, Laura, Laura, what must you think of me?" he murmurs, half audibly. "I know your heavenly charity will find some excuse to make for me, but in your heart you must condemn me. Oh, if you only knew. If you only knew——"

Footsteps were heard coming slowly up the narrow stairs, and the gruff voice of the landlady was calling—

"Yes, that's his room, miss; third floor back."

Tom had just time to hastily wrap up the photograph and replace it in his pocket, when a rap at the door proclaimed the unprecedented event of a visit for him. Bidding the stranger enter, in the growing dusk he thought his eyes deceived him when he saw his sister Margaret.

"Madge," he cried, in extreme surprise, "you dear girl to come, when you said you never would till I released you from your promise. And how bright you look too! Something good must have happened."

"Wilfred is out to-night," she said, "and I have good news, so that I felt obliged to break through my resolve and come. Tom, I have got you some work, settled work, at ten shillings a week, *and* your tea."

"Madge, you are an angel, you are indeed. How *did* you get it? Is it true? Oh, Madge, how shall I ever repay you for all your goodness to me?"

"Yes, indeed, it is true. I will tell you all about it," she said, laying her hand lovingly in his. "We were dining out a few nights ago, and a Mr. Barron was amongst the guests; he is head of a large firm, and very good and rich. He seems to have taken rather a fancy to Wilfred and me since we first got to know him, a few months ago, and he sat next to me at dinner, and happened to say something about the number of boys they employ. I said, 'I suppose they don't earn much.' 'Yes,' he said, 'they have ten shillings a week and their tea!' I thought of you at once, Tom."

"I am not precisely a boy," put in Tom, with some dignity.

"No, dear, but don't interrupt and I'll tell you. I said I knew the sharpest, cleverest boy in the whole world, who was nearly starving, and I should take it as the greatest possible personal kindness if he could give him anything to do. I said I had known him many years, for he was not quite a boy, being nearly twenty-one. Mr. Barron laughed at that, and asked what the boy had been in the habit of working at; so I said he had been a clerk, and since then he had done anything he could get, for through misfortune he had lost his clerkship and had no friends to recommend him. I said I knew it was imposing on his kindness to ask him to take anyone with no recommendation but mine, but I would positively vouch for his honesty, and would be surety for him. I know he thought me very troublesome, and probably very impertinent too, to press it so, but I did not mind anything if I could only help you, Tom."

"Madge, you are *too* good."

"Don't say that," she said, quickly. "I am a wicked, deceitful, miserable girl. I despise and hate myself, but, unlike most sinners, I am getting my punishment all the way along, for I have not had one happy hour since I first deceived my noble, generous husband. Oh! Tom, set me free, give me back my word," she entreated him. "You don't know Wilfred; he would be your best and truest friend, and help you in a thousand ways where I am powerless. Dear Tom, let me tell him."

Tom walked to the window, and a struggle was evidently going on in his mind. He soon returned to where Margaret stood with imploring eyes fixed upon them.

"Madge, I wish I had never come near you. I would sooner have starved, as I soon should have done, than have made you miserable. I never thought you would feel it that way. But it is too late now, the mischief is done, and the only thing is for me to go away again, and you must tell Mr. Barron your boy has turned out a disappointment, and run away, and as soon as I am clear away you can confess to Wilfred, and live happy ever after. Don't think I am saying anything against Wilfred, Madge," he added, seeing a pained look on her face, "but he would not believe me as you do; he could not unless I told him everything, and I will never do that. It is not that I do not trust him, but men such as he, who have never had any particular temptations or bad habits, are rather inclined to be hard on fellows who get into scrapes. So I will be off, Madge, and try fresh fields; perhaps people will be more ready to appreciate my talent somewhere else. You shall not be miserable for my sake any longer."

But Margaret would not listen to the idea, and assured him over and over again that the greatest misery she could have would be for him to go away. "I hardly thought you would consent," she said, wearily. "I hope you may never suffer for one false step as much as I am doing. But do not let us talk about it any more; I want to go on telling you about Mr. Barron. Do you know, Tom, he said he had a vacancy for a steady young man now, and you are to go on Monday morning, and they will see what you can do, but, at any rate, you are sure of ten shillings, and when they see how clever you are, no doubt you will get much more. So, dear boy, you will go, won't you; and oh! I do hope it will be the beginning of happier days."

"Bless you, Madge. You are the best sister a fellow ever had. Trust me a *little* longer, Madge, only a little while, and I believe things will all come straight, and then I don't mind who knows where I am. Try and forget your scapegrace brother while you are away, and try and get your colour back. Perhaps, who knows, by the time you come home I may have got my character back too."

And so, after a hurried farewell, for it was getting late, they parted, Tom following his sister home at a little distance, and unknown to her, to see that no harm befell her on the way.

spoonfuls of Harvey's sauce; strain and serve. If the vegetables are allowed to "sweat" in butter—that is, fry gently without discolouring—they will yield their flavour better.

The flavour of this brown sauce may be varied in accordance with not only the taste of the maker, but the contents of the store closet, care being taken always to make it suited to the meat it is to accompany. Thus a little celery may be substituted for the mushrooms, and a slice of turnip may be added, or lemon-peel, parsley, or a bunch of sweet herbs may be introduced. A slice of lean ham is a valuable flavouring ingredient. Some cooks think that good brown sauce cannot be made without ham, and there is a story told of a cook who, having to prepare a little supper for a prince, ordered fifty hams, only one of which was to go to table; the rest were to be used in making sauces. Chopped pickle or chopped oysters will also give piquancy to a sauce. Essence of anchovy, too, is a valuable flavourer. A very small quantity, not enough to suggest its own taste, may be put into other than fish sauces, because anchovy possesses the property of bringing out other flavours. Wine and made sauces, such as Harvey, ketchup, or Worcester sauce, are also frequently added, but these should be introduced very judiciously, because a really good sauce should taste of something else than ketchup.

Sometimes the sauce looks very well, but it is not sufficiently brown. Drab brown sauce should never be sent to table; it is enough to spoil anyone's appetite. There are various ways of supplying colour to brown sauce. Roux, or a mixture of flour and butter browned together over the fire, is employed, as are also burnt onions, browning, and even burnt sugar. To my mind the most convenient preparation which can be procured is the "Pastilles Carpentier." It is sold in tins, to be bought of any grocer, and will keep any length of time. A tin costing fivepence will supply colour for a great many dishes.

It will be understood, therefore, that what is called Espagnol (Spanish), or brown sauce is merely good stock well flavoured with vegetables, and made thick and brown.

White sauce is another celebrated French sauce; indeed, brown sauce and white sauce, or, in other words, Espagnol and Veloutée, may be said to be to the French what melted butter is to the English—the foundation of many others. Béchamel, Allemand or German, Dutch or Hollandais, poulette, oyster, celery, and many other sauces are made from white sauce. It consists of rich white stock delicately flavoured and mixed with cream, eggs, or whatever else is its distinctive ingredient.

White sauce is less frequently well-made than brown sauce, but the following recipe will, I think, be found excellent. *White Sauce.*—Prepare and chop small two ounces of lean ham; melt two ounces of butter in a stewpan, throw in the ham, and let it fry gently, not discolour. Sprinkle an ounce and a half of flour over, and beat till smooth. Add gradually a pint of white stock, two small carrots, and six button mushrooms, stir the sauce till it boils; draw the pan back, and simmer gently till thick. Remove the fat from the sauce as it rises, strain it through a "tammy," and add last of all a gill of cream and a few drops of lemon-juice.

Perhaps I had better say in explanation that superior sauces are best made perfectly smooth by being passed through a "tammy" or loose cloth especially manufactured for the purpose. The cloth should be laid over a basin, and the sauce poured upon it. The cloth should then be folded over to hold the sauce securely; one person should take it up at one end and another at the opposite end, and then the two operators should twist their ends different ways so as to squeeze the liquid through. The cream may be added afterwards.

White sauce is frequently used to *coat* fowls, &c., that is, it is made very thick, and then laid gently over to cover the meat entirely. Sauce to be used thus should be stiff, so that it will not run off the meat; therefore it is made either with stock that is so strong that it jellies when cold, or with stock in which a little gelatine has been dissolved.

Plain white sauce may be made with some of the liquor in which fowls or rabbits have been boiled, if a little carrot and onion, three or four peppercorns, and a small piece of mace or lemon peel be simmered in it till it is pleasantly flavoured. It should then be strained, skimmed, reduced—that is, boiled down quickly till the required quantity only remains—thickened, and mixed with cream. Sauce is made stronger and better by being well reduced. If you want to have good sauces, reduce them well.

Bread sauce is a very great favourite in English homes. To make it, prepare about an ounce and a half of bread-crumbs by rubbing stale bread through a wire sieve. Put these in a stewpan with half a pint of milk, add a little salt, and five or six peppercorns. Let the crumbs soak for a few minutes only, then put the stewpan on the fire, and stir the sauce till it boils. Remove the peppercorns, add a tablespoonful of cream, and serve. If liked, a small onion can be boiled with the bread-crumbs and removed with the peppercorns. Many people would consider it a great improvement. For variety's sake, a little nutmeg may be added to the sauce. When the sauce is wanted very good, the crumbs and onion, after being boiled in the milk, may be rubbed through a hair sieve.

It would, of course, be impossible in one article to give even an idea of the numerous sauces of everyday life. I have, therefore, contented myself with describing as clearly as I could how the "fundamental" sauces, those which are the foundation of others, are made. I have one more suggestion to offer with regard to them. It is, that when delicately-prepared sauces have to be kept hot for awhile, they should not be left to simmer in the saucepan, as this would spoil them, but that, instead, the vessel in which they are should be placed in another containing hot water to the depth of four or five inches. This hot water vessel will constitute an improvised *bain marie*. It may be put by the side of the fire, and here the sauce can be kept hot till wanted without fear of its flavour being injured by overheating.

PHILLIS BROWNE.

MARGARET TRENT, AND HOW SHE KEPT HOUSE.

By DORA HOPE.

WHEN Margaret first came to live in London there were two or three things she was afraid would happen to her. The one most firmly impressed upon her mind was a fear lest she should be poisoned through drinking bad water. She was firmly convinced that people who lived in towns never had any pure water, and she had read so much about the thousands of living creatures which inhabit a single drop, that she made herself quite nervous, and was determined that whatever else might be neglected, the filtering of the water should be carefully attended to. Accordingly, one of her first purchases after they were settled down in their new house had been a filter. This had answered very well at first, and would have done well always had she continued to attend to it herself, but after she left it to the care of the servant it was very often forgotten, and when water was wanted for the table, or for the bedroom water-bottles, the filter would be empty. As her husband quite agreed with her as to its importance, and knew what very serious diseases are caused by drinking it when impure, he had a filter fitted into the cistern, so that no water could be used in the house without passing through it. This filter was hired by the year from one of the best makers, who cleaned it when necessary, and kept it in good order. Margaret was careful to keep the cistern clean by emptying it frequently, letting one of the taps run at night till the water had all run out, and turning it on again for a short time in the morning when the water was coming in, so preventing any sediment from collecting at the bottom of the cistern. To ensure the water used at table being perfectly pure, it was run again through the ordinary filter.

Another of Margaret's "fads," as Wilfred laughingly called them, though in truth he quite agreed with her, was, that having been accustomed to a country life, and always having a plentiful supply of fruit and vegetables, they would never be healthy unless they had what a certain class of Americans call "green-sass" at about every meal. Accordingly, besides the usual supply of fresh or stewed fruit, there were always on the table either lettuces, watercress, fresh tomatoes, or something of that nature for breakfast and luncheon, and either the same or a nicely mixed salad for dinner.

They were both rather fastidious about the mixing of these salads, and they were not very successful at first, till Margaret found that the only way to get good oil, the most important item in the whole salad, was to go to a large shop where there was a very quick sale, as in any poor shops where the sale of oil was slow and it was consequently kept some time in stock, it had almost invariably a *slight unpleasant* taste. Then she found, too, that she could buy all those varieties of small herbs, which are such an improvement to French salads, by ordering them through a good greengrocer. One pennyworth of each of as many varieties of salad herbs as could be got was her usual order, and this quantity was sufficient for several dressings. As for the other ingredients, she used just whatever was convenient, and so had a constant variety. She always kept a large jar containing about a gallon of water, with a pound and a half of salt in it, into which to dip the lettuce and other leaves, to cleanse them from insects, letting them lie for some time in fresh water afterwards. Her

one rule in the mixing was the Spanish advice to salad dressers, "Be a miser with the vinegar, a spendthrift with the oil, and a prudent man with the salt."

Fresh tomatoes, which formed a very favourite dish with them both, were dressed by each according to taste, usually with brown sugar, oil, mustard, and a little vinegar. Margaret generally ate them plain, without any dressing, but Wilfred preferred to cut them open and spread this mixture inside.

The first year after Margaret was married mushrooms were unusually plentiful, so she laid in a stock and dried them for winter use, thinking they would preserve their flavour better, and so be more useful than those bought in tins. The operation of drying was very simple. They were peeled, the stems cut off, arranged on baking tins, and dried slowly in the oven. When done they were put away in tins in a dry cupboard, and when wanted for use put into cold gravy, and gently simmered till tender. The stalks and skins helped to make mushroom ketchup.

"My dear cousin," said Will Colville, one Sunday, when, having walked home with Wilfred and Margaret from church, they had asked him in to dinner with them, "I am quite aware that it is the height of ill-breeding to make remarks about one's entertainment, but I should like to ask how you reconcile a sumptuous repast like this with your conscientious scruples about Sunday labour?"

"Oh, Will, excuse me, but your remark only confirms my opinion that the lords of the creation are very much out of their element when they approach domestic topics."

"But it was only the other day I heard you speak in a tone of the most righteous indignation of those villains who have elaborate dinners on Sundays, so that the poor servants have no chance of going to church and that sort of thing; and yet here is a repast which must certainly have kept your maids at home this morning, if it did not involve their sitting up a good part of last night into the bargain."

"Well, Will, I am glad you have mentioned it, since my inconsistency weighs on your mind; but what shall you say when I tell you that the whole establishment went out this morning, and that the dinner cooked itself during church time?"

The fact was, Margaret always carefully arranged her Sunday meals, so as to give the smallest possible amount of trouble. When the breakfast things were removed in the morning, the crumbs were carefully cleared off, and the table laid again for dinner. In the hot weather they very often had cold meat—a small joint of beef or lamb, cooked on Saturday, and left to get cold, uncut; but when they preferred hot meat, some kind was fixed upon which required no attention after it was once put down to the fire. For instance, a beefsteak and kidney pudding was made and put into the saucepan, and, as Dorcas expressed it, "set a-gallopin'." A steamer, for potatoes, was set on the top of the saucepan, and the potatoes put in it last thing before starting for church. With a good fire the pudding would keep boiling till they returned, and the dinner was as well cooked as if Dorcas had been there to attend to it.

Or a small shoulder of mutton, or piece of beef, with a good deal of fat, was put on the meat-stand in a baking tin, and a batter pudding, like a rather thick Yorkshire pudding, in the tin under it, so that the meat could drip on to the pudding. A few potatoes were peeled and left in cold water, ready to put on the fire to boil the moment Dorcas came in from church. In fact, there was no difficulty at all about arranging the dinner, so that all could go out, when once they had made up their minds to try it, for either boiled, baked, or roast could be easily managed. One of their most successful dinners was a sirloin of beef, put in the meat screen before the fire, with the potatoes and other vegetables prepared for boiling and ready to put on directly the servant came in. The puddings were easily arranged. Either one of the numerous boiled varieties or a baked milk pudding were generally provided hot, with cold pastry, jelly, custard, *blanc mange*, or anything else which could be made on Saturday.

As cream is very dear in London, Margaret used, as a substitute for it, when they were alone, to pour over fruit and puddings a little sweetened milk, with a teaspoonful of arrow-root, and a very little grated bitter almond mixed with it. This was just warmed over the fire and then left to get cold. It is much cheaper than custard, and makes a pleasant change.

On a lovely still day at the close of August, a number of friends of the Colvilles were embarking in small boats at Richmond for a picnic in honour of Elsie's twenty-first birthday. After an easy row of rather more than a hour, they arrived one after another at the spot chosen for a landing-place. There were Joanna and her husband, who had made arrangements to be in London for this important occasion, Dorothy Snow, who was always ready for an expedition of the kind, and was no mean oarswoman. Wilfred had declared it was impossible for him to be absent from business just then, when arrears of work left during his summer holiday had to be made up.

"It is no sort of use, Wilfred, your saying it is impossible to come," cried Elsie, who had a great liking for her cousin-in-law. "I shall come and interview the firm, and plead with them myself if you cannot touch their hearts."

Wilfred looked alarmed at this prospect, and promised to do his best, and was successful; for here he was, this bright afternoon, in a neat little craft with a small section of the party, pulling with long even strokes, which soon placed his boat ahead of the others.

The pleasant meal, a sort of tea-dinner, unlike some *al fresco* entertainments, was free from caterpillars, and also from vexatious omissions in the way of implements or viands. They took cold tea with them, and heated it in a kettle hung on a bent iron rod, which was driven firmly into the ground. A fire was made with a few of those squares, or wheels, of resinous wood, commonly called fire-lighters, and the whole affair passed off merrily.

When the repast was done, and the crockery packed away into the boats again, they set off for a ramble through the charming country which lay along the river bank.

By some accident Margaret missed the others, and wandered on alone till she should fall in with them again. As she strolled on through the silent glades the thought came into her mind that upon just such another occasion, four years ago, Wilfred had confessed his love to her. The little wood in which she walked ran down to the river side, and an old and crumbling wall was now its only boundary. Leaning her folded arms on the lichened stones, Margaret looked out across the water, her mind full of troubled thoughts. She had determined when they were married that, whatever griefs might lie before them, nothing should ever disturb their perfect confidence in one another, and now she had been deliberately deceiving him. Could it be right, she thought, to keep a promise which caused so much unhappiness to herself and, she feared, to her husband too? She leaned her head upon her hands, and gave herself up to sad reflections, which presently brought tears to her eyes.

Just at this moment she heard a voice calling, "Madge, Madge," and Wilfred stood beside her. He had soon missed her from the others, and though no one else had noticed her absence, had started off in search of her.

"Madge, my darling, what is the matter?" he cried, breaking through the bushes, as soon as he saw her, and running to her side.

"Nothing, nothing at all, indeed, Wilfred," she said, hastily wiping her eyes, and beginning to move away along the path by which she had come.

"Margaret, I entreat you to tell me what troubles you," he said, solemnly. "Things cannot go on as they have done lately; it is more than I can stand."

She said nothing, but stood looking out across the water.

"Something *is* the matter. Do you think I have not noticed how different you have been lately? What have I done that you should not trust me? Do you remember a day like this four years ago, Madge, and what happened then?" he went on, softly.

"Yes," she said, "I was thinking about it then."

"And that made you cry? Then I suppose that what I consider the happiest day in my life you look back upon as the most unhappy? It is a pity you did not know your own mind before it was too late to alter it," he said, bitterly; "it would have saved us both a world of trouble."

"Oh! no, no, Wilfred," she cried, imploringly, seizing his arm. "Do not say that, I beg of you. Do believe that I love you with all my heart, dear Wilfred, a thousand times better than I did then."

"Then, Madge, if that is true, why can you not trust me? It is no good pretending there is nothing the matter with you when everybody can see how miserable you look."

"But, Wilfred, it is not my own secret. If it was about myself I would tell you in a moment; but I have promised not to, and he will not let me off; and it is that that makes me so unhappy, to think I have been deceiving you for ever so long. I will never, never keep a secret from you again, Wilfred, for no one knows how miserable it has made me, but I cannot break my promise. Please, dear Wilfred, do not ask me any more."

"Certainly not," he replied coldly. "I do not wish to pry into your secrets, but I was not aware before that it was customary for wives to have confidants about whom their husbands might know nothing."

And they walked on in silence towards the boats, where the party were gradually reassembling. In contrast to Margaret's increasing distress was Tom's prosperity. He occupied a very low position at first, but his quiet industry and sharp cleverness soon won the notice and approbation of his employer, and he was speedily promoted. He lost his pale looks, and began to hold up his head and look his fellows boldly in the face. Still, with a stubborn pride, he avoided those districts where he was likely to meet Wilfred or his cousins, the Colvilles, and still held his sister to her promise. He would not for the world have knowingly injured her, whom, with one exception, he cared for more than any other human being; but he was absorbed in his own troubles, and for the time thought nothing of how his conduct affected any one else, quite forgetful of the fact that our lives are so interwoven with other people's, that the actions of even the most solitary man must more or less affect the happiness of others.

Mr. Colville still wandered about abroad, searching untiringly in every town which he thought might have offered any possible attraction to his lost son; while the warm-hearted and impulsive Dick wrote constantly, suggesting all manner of impossible ways of finding him, and enclosing affectionate, school-boy-like epistles to be given to Tom if he had been found.

(*To be continued.*)

MARGARET TRENT, AND HOW SHE KEPT HOUSE.

By DORA HOPE

MR. COLVILLE at length made up his mind to return to England, for some months at least. Tired of wandering about on the Continent on a fruitless and almost hopeless search for his son, he thought a visit home would be agreeable, and expedient also, for it was evident there was nothing to be gained by a prolonged stay abroad. Thus it came to pass that the autumn found him settled for a time with Margaret and her husband.

"Don't it seem rather early, ma'am, to be taking down summer things, only September? Though it's cold enough for Christmas," asked Dorcas, shortly before Mr. Colville's expected arrival. Her mistress was making arrangements for his reception by putting up winter curtains, and looking out thicker blankets for his room.

"It is rather early, but being quite cold enough, I do not see the use of delaying it, especially as my father will not like to be disturbed when once he is settled in the room."

Amongst other preparations for Mr. Colville, the one and only feather bed the house contained had to be moved into his room. Margaret had theories which she had often tried to instil into her father's mind about the great superiority of sleeping on a mattress. She assured him that a very soft bed was enervating, and that there was no form of bed so comfortable, and at the same time so restful, as a spring mattress, with one of soft horsehair over it; the next best being a wool mattress over a hair one. But as she knew her arguments had not in the least altered his opinion, she was only too glad to provide anything that could possibly conduce to his comfort. She would have given him a bed of rose-leaves if she had thought he would like it.

Her next care was that the bed should be thoroughly aired. The room had been unoccupied rather longer than usual, so instead of only putting hot bottles in the bed, which she always did the day before she expected a visitor, she had it placed before the kitchen fire and left there for some hours, and repeatedly turned, till there was no possibility of damp.

The winter bankets, too, having been put away for some months, were hung up in the kitchen for a whole day before being put on the bed. Clean sheets were never used without airing, so they needed no special precautions.

Dorcas had been rather inclined to be cross on the day all these preparations were in progress; not that she objected to the work, for she was a willing girl and really attached to her young mistress, but she had made up her mind on that day to clean her "brights," as she called the tin cooking utensils displayed in the kitchen. These brights were rather an affliction to Margaret, who, much as she liked the kitchen to be kept clean and nice, objected to its being considered of *first* importance, and the other rooms only secondary. Her patience had been tried several times when she had wanted any work done, and Dorcas had objected on the ground that she had just begun to clean her kitchen, or her brights. The previous servant had left them in a very dirty condition, and Margaret was delighted, after Dorcas had been there a few days, to see her set to work to clean them, first washing them with soap and water, and then rubbing them with oil, and afterwards with whiting, till they not only regained but almost exceeded their original brightness. But after this Margaret protested that they did not require perpetual polishing, and she had to insist at last that Dorcas should content herself with polishing them with a soft cloth every week, and only give them an extra cleaning with the oil and whiting occasionally.

When Joanna came to visit Margaret a short time previously, she had brought her a present of a hamper of apples, the only fruit their garden produced in any abundance, and told her they must be used quickly, as they were not a kind to keep well; accordingly she had cooked them in a great variety of ways. Amongst others some were peeled and cored, and, when baked, served in a glass dish with custard poured over them. Or they were made into dumplings, the core being taken out without dividing the apple, and the cavity filled with marmalade. These dumplings were generally boiled in coarsely knitted cloths, so that when turned out they were covered with a pattern. Another favourite dish was apple fritters made thus:—The apples were pared and cored as for dumplings, then sliced the full size round the apple, and the slices dipped into batter and fried a light brown, and served on a napkin sprinkled with white sugar. The batter they used on ordinary occasions was a very inexpensive one; the ingredients being half a pint of milk, two tablespoonfuls of flour, half a teaspoonful of baking powder, and, as the old cookery books say, "a discretionary quantity" of salt. On special occasions Margaret added an egg, but it was very nice without this addition.

As Margaret was coming out of the room, after putting the finishing touches preparatory to Mr. Colville's arrival, her dress swept over the mat at the door, and turned it up. "Oh, Dorcas," she said, as she stooped to straighten it, "you have not sewn on those weights I gave you!"

"Yes I have, m'm, all but that one as I hadn't time to finish. Look here, m'm, at these others—they're as firm as a rock, no dress can't sweep 'em away now," and lifting one up she showed Margaret how she had firmly stitched on to the under side of the mat, at each corner, a leaden weight, covered with black material. They were heavy enough to make the mats lie quite firmly on the ground, and so prevented the turning over which so annoyed Margaret.

Mr. Colville's return to England was in many ways a comfort to Margaret. Miserably unhappy as she was at the cloud which had arisen between herself and Wilfred, she seemed to cling with redoubled affection to her own beloved father, though she knew she was deceiving him cruelly too. "But then he doesn't know or suspect how wicked I am. Wilfred does, and despises me for it," she would moan to herself, after listening with pain and bitter self-reproachings to the ever recurring consultations about Tom, which was indeed the one topic of conversation during the first part of Mr. Colville's visit, for he seemed to have no interest in anything else. It smote him to the heart to note the change in his daughter, who used to be the sunshine of the house, and was now so pale, so apathetic, and so melancholy. He thought that besides Tom she had perhaps been fretting for her father. She had always been such a loving daughter to him, and the sudden severing of all home ties had perhaps been too much for her, even though she was most tenderly cared for by the best of husbands. The father's heart yearned over his child, who looked so like her mother had done when her earthly days were drawing to a close, and he resolved to remain in England, and not to go out of reach of his children again.

Margaret felt, too, besides the gladness of having her father near her again, that with him there, something or other must soon bring to light the secret which weighed her down so sorely. In his searches through London, which he prosecuted most vigorously and untiringly, she thought he must surely come across Tom, or some trace of him which would lead to his discovery. She never saw Tom now. She went to his rooms for the last time the day before Mr. Colville arrived, and finding him in, told him of her resolve to see him no more, for the present at least.

"You do not want my help now, Tom," she said, looking round the comfortably furnished apartment which his improved circumstances enabled him to occupy. "You are getting on well, and do not need me, and I will not be any more deceitful than I can help, so after father's return (he comes to-morrow), I do not want to see you any more. I shall know where you are, and if you should be in need of anything, or come to your senses you can let me know." She spoke coldly and firmly, but her manner softened before coming away, and she took a most affectionate leave of her brother, for, with her, love was often stronger than reason. When it came to a struggle between affection and judgment, the former generally conquered, and overpowered the resolutions made in her cooler moments.

"It *must* come to an end soon," she said to herself desperately, as she reached home. "It is very certain that I cannot bear it much longer, and unless something happens quickly, I shall die."

Poor girl! she sometimes thought it would be a good thing if she were to be really dying, for then she could have courage to confess all her folly, and Wilfred would surely forgive her then, though she knew how utterly he despised any underhand dealings, and Tom could not mind her telling his secret so as to enable her to die in peace.

Margaret was right. Something did happen soon which was the beginning of the end to their troubles. One morning after Mr. Colville had spent a few days with them, she received a letter with the Edinburgh postmark, and directed in a strange handwriting, delicately small and neat. Turning to the signature she read "Laura Lea." This too was unfamiliar, and full of wonder she began to read. The letter ran as follows:—

"Madam,—I apologise for the liberty I take in addressing myself to you, being a complete stranger; but when you hear my message you will, I think, pardon the intrusion.

"Though you have probably never heard my name, yours is very familiar to me, and many times have I heard you spoken of, always with the greatest affection and admiration, by your brother, Mr. Tom Colville, and it is in connection with him and the sad

trouble which befel him and you a few months ago that I now write.

"I must tell you that I am an orphan, and have been for some time in delicate health. I have lived with and been supported by my only brother, who, whatever his faults, has always been full of goodness and tender kindness to me. This unhappy brother of mine, it wrings my heart to tell you, has fallen into temptation (for my sake, as I firmly believe), and has appropriated to our use money which belonged to his employers. He has been found out, and now lies in prison, awaiting his trial.

"But this is not all. How can I tell you the dreadful truth! But you, who have a brother whom you love, will believe the shame and misery it is to me to write this, to write it to you who have suffered for my brother's sin. He confesses to me now that when Mr. Colville was suspected of a similar crime some months ago, he, my own brother, was the guilty one. I must force myself to tell you all. He placed the bank notes in Mr. Colville's desk, and thus caused suspicion to fall on him, the innocent, while we, the guilty ones, have been holding up our heads as honourable people. Oh! why did he not stay and face the trial? He *must* have been cleared! Everyone knew how honourable he was, how incapable of such an act.

"If you know where Mr. Colville is, will you let him know that he is cleared of this horrible imputation, and that we, his friends, who never received anything but unceasing kindness at his hands, are the miserable ones who have caused all his trouble and shame.

"I cannot say a word of sorrow or regret. Words are too poor and weak to express my shame and grief. I only pray you not to think too harshly of us (for I feel the guilt and disgrace equally with my brother, since I have been, as I believe, the unconscious cause of it). My brother is so young, his temptations have been very great, and he could not bear to see me lacking any comfort which my weak health seemed to need."

Margaret read no further, but rose to her feet and leaned heavily on the back of her chair.

"Wilfred, father," she said, huskily, looking from one to the other, and holding the letter towards them. "It is all cleared up. He didn't do it. He must be fetched at once—in Beevor-street. I've known it all the time, the thought that——" She stopped suddenly, as though her strength had failed; the reaction was too great, and she dropped fainting to the ground.

They laid her tenderly on the sofa and in vain applied all the restoratives that the house boasted; save for the faint breathing there was no gleam of returning consciousness.

The doctor who was summoned immediately looked grave, and asked if there had been any anxiety or suspense to trouble the patient for some time past, and receiving an affirmative answer, he went on to say that he feared there might be an attack of brain fever, the result of a long strain upon the mind.

Happily their worst fears were not realised. Margaret's constitution was a strong one, and she threw off the attack far sooner than they had dared to hope. Joanna, who had come to London immediately on receiving a telegram from Wilfred, nursed her tenderly, reproaching herself greatly all the while that she had been too much absorbed in her own happiness to notice how much her sister had been suffering.

For some days Margaret's serious illness monopolised all their thoughts, and Tom was for the time forgotten, but with the news that she was out of danger came the remembrance of the letter that had come on that sad morning, and Margaret's few words, which were the only clue to Tom's whereabouts, for though she was much better, the doctor had entreated them, as they valued her life, to avoid any allusion to the subject which had distressed her so much.

Beevor-street was ransacked from end to end, but only with the discovery that Tom had moved some weeks before. Then another trace was found and lost, and their hearts grew sick with hope deferred. It was not till Margaret was so far recovered as to be carried downstairs to her bright sunny little drawing-room that Tom was actually found, and brought triumphantly home.

It was clear that the boy at first felt himself something of a hero, for he came into the room erect and proud, with nothing of the air of a repentant prodigal in his bearing.

"My boy, my boy, how could you do it? How could you mistrust all of us so?" asked the father, mournfully.

"Why, father, haven't you guessed the reason? I am not ashamed to own it. I love Laura, and hope to make her my wife some day, and to shield her from a week's suffering I could go through it all again. Of course I knew all along who had taken the money, but the only way I could clear myself was by convicting her brother, and I would have gone to gaol to save her that; but as I had the chance to escape without throwing the blame on to anybody, I thought I might as well. I always intended to come to tell you I was all right as soon as possible, but I soon found out that none of you but Madge believed in me; and I was not going to demean myself by telling a long tale to clear my character to my own family if they had made up their minds I was a common thief. I do not regret anything I have done, since it has saved Laura all these months of trouble."

"You don't regret it, you heartless fellow!" broke in Wilfred, furiously. "You have no sorrow for your father's grey hairs and bowed form? You have no sorrow for having brought your sister, the truest sister that ever lived, to death's door? Look at her, and think of the trouble she must have gone through to bring her to that state, and if you can bear that, knowing that it is all your doing, without regret—well, I have done with you for ever."

"No, Wilfred, do not lay it all on Tom. It was my own fault too; I ought never to have consented to deceive my husband and my dear father," said Margaret, in her faint voice, "and he *is* sorry, and God knows how long and how bitterly I have repented my share in it; and," she went on, taking Tom's hand and drawing him towards her, "we both do beg you all to forgive us, if—if you can. Tom, darling, say you are sorry—indeed, we have both been very wrong, and I know you feel that we have."

Tom, who had hardly heeded what Margaret had said, but since Wilfred had spoken had been looking, with sorrow and astonishment in his face, from his father to his sister, as though a veil had dropped from his eyes and he saw for the first time the consequences of his act, now fell on his knees by the sofa and throwing his arms round his sister, cried in a voice husky and broken with emotion, "Oh! Madge, Madge, how blind I have been! I thought I was doing something so brave and noble, and here I have been killing you. Can you forgive me?"

Margaret's loving smile reassured him as she whispered, "Do not think of me, dear; I have brought it on myself; it is father and Wilfred who have cause to feel angry; you do not know what trouble they have been in about you."

"Father, I am very sorry; I see now how wrong I have been; I thought you did not trust me, and that it was only proper pride to keep away from you till my character was cleared. I did not know—I did not think—you would care so much. Was it really worry about me that——"

"That made my hair turn grey? Well, I suppose it was, my boy; but no matter, I can laugh at my grey hairs now I have my son back safe and well," and the tears stood in the father's eyes as he looked lovingly at his lost son.

"And Wilfred, can *you* forgive me?"

It cost the lad something to say this, but he did it bravely, and the hearty handshake he received in reply testified to the sincerity of the reconciliation.

It was arranged that not a word of Tom's clearance should be reported to the authorities at Edinburgh till after the trial of the unfortunate young Lea, for the knowledge that this was not his first offence would probably tell against him in the verdict.

It was not till the close of the eventful day of Tom's return that Wilfred and Margaret were really alone, and he came and sat by her couch.

"Oh, Wilfred," she cried, "why did you let me get better? Why did I not die? I know I wanted to."

"You did? Why, my darling, are you so miserable with me as that?"

"Oh, no, no, only in my miserable self," she cried; "it is only that you can never trust me again, and I could not bear to live and feel that you could have no confidence in me."

"Is that positively *all*, Madge?" and he raised her thin pale face and looked earnestly into her eyes. "Is that the *only* cause of your being unhappy?"

"You know it is. If I thought you could ever forgive me, and feel really the same to me as before, I believe nothing could ever trouble me again; for no power on earth shall ever tempt me again to have a thought secret from you."

"Dearest, it was cruel pain at first to know you so completely mistrusted me, but I know now you felt yourself bound by your promise, and if there is anything to forgive—why, darling, it is entirely forgiven and forgotten, as I hope for pardon myself. Only trust in me with as perfect faith as I shall trust in you, and with God's blessing nothing can shake our happiness in the future."

Tom elected to stay on in his present position, for he had made a good start and was going on well. It may as well be said here that when he ventured to try his fortune with the gentle Laura, he soon won her love, for, in her eyes, anyone who had acted as Tom had done, and spared her poor brother for so long from disgrace, must be worthy of all admiration and esteem. Nor was she allowed to remain friendless when left without her brother, for Mr. Colville, finding that his son's love for her was deep and sincere, though it had led him to act thoughtlessly, made arrangements for her to live for a time with a widowed sister of his, who was lonely and wanted a companion; and till that arrangement could be carried out, Wilfred, anxious to make some amends for his hasty condemnation of Tom, invited her to pay them a visit, making it appear a favour to themselves that she should come and keep Margaret company during her convalescence.

Thus ended Margaret's first and last deception. Her mistake brought its own punishment, as wrong-doing always must, sooner or later; but having learnt the lesson it taught her, that there can be no happiness without perfect openness and sincerity, she and Wilfred live on, happy in one another's love while Tom, sincerely regretting the selfish pride which induced him to keep his father so long in ignorance of his whereabouts, and caused all his friends so much needless sorrow, is untiring in his efforts to please his father, and, as far as he can, to repay him for his care and trouble.

THE END.