HOME DUTIES.

curl of interest and enjoyment that the last, Hester had words in her head every evening before retiring to bed; brief jottings of time and place, uninteresting enough to another eye, but full of swift, happy reminiscences for the little girl. She would sit before the open page, a tender happy smile lighting her face, as she lived once more in memory through the wonderful golden days.

The first drive through Brussels! Should she ever forget it, with her wondering admiration for the tall houses with their ornamental façades, the wide green boulevards, the magnificient buildings, her childish delight at the sight of so much that was strange and unusual; the dog-carriages, the hatless women, even the countless rows of green grass between the trees and the curious, outstanding mirrors which enabled the inmates of the houses to ascertain the exact nature of every summons to the door,—each one was a separate wonder, a separate delight.

That visit to the Wiertz Gallery too, when Gerald had made such fun of her horrified disapproval, and had beckoned her from one end of the room to the other, on purpose to give her startled nerves another shock by the sight of the ghastly horror which lurked behind a screen, to grins at her reaction with a lift of eyebrows and a life-like cunning. How well she remembered it! The ring of his bright, triumphant laughter; the expression of amused surprise on his face as he turned over a moment later to discover if she were "Really vexed?—Really frightened?" It had been well worth being frightened to be so tenderly consoled!

The next day they had driven out to Water- loo, and she had more than made up for her temporary silence by the mood of mischievous gaiety which made her for the time being the life and soul of the party. Had she ever laughed as much in the whole course of her life before as she had done during those few hours near the sea? She could not have believed it had she thought not. She hardly recognised herself indeed under this new guise. It seemed as if it must surely be someone else, and not quiet, reserved little Hester Norie who was making those sparkling speeches, those swift bright flashes of resentment?

"Why, what has happened to you, Mouse?" cried Mabel, in delighted amazement.

"What's all this?—Why are you so prink and demure! I've never been so sat up on by a girl in my life," said Gerald, stroking his moustache and smiling across at his sister with that fretful delight with which older people greet the unexpected repatriés of a child. Who could have believed that the pale, sad-faced little creature who had crept into the hotel sitting-room, in his sister's wake, a few days before, could have been capable of such a development?

There were other occasions upon which Hester had to gratify this wonder and incredulity as to her own identity. The afternoon, for instance, when, craning her neck to examine the exquisitely designed jewellery, which was displayed upon a white velvet background in the window of a celebrated magasin, she caught sight of a face reflected in a narrow strip of mirror, artificially designed so as to make her eyes glowing gems, and open out dazzling avenues of light before the enchanted eye—a young girl's face, so fresh and sweet, so unflawed by the normal colouring, that for a moment she could not, dared not, recognise it as her own. Was this the very Hester Norie, whose hollow eyes had often been a puzzle to friends? a past stream of windows on the wide glass windows of the city; a glance which left her an impression of a dowdy little figure, and a worn, insignificant face in which it would have been impossible to discover any traces of beauty. But this,—this new Hester! Oh, she was different—quite, quite different. Could it be possible that she was really,—?And then another face appeared, another own in the mirror; a man's face, handsome, smiling, tender-eyed, and a laughing voice cried in her ear, "Actually! She didn't recognise herself!" Hester and Mabel wonder, Brussels air has wrought already."

"It isn't Brussels," said Hester quickly, "It's happiness! It's because I am happy. So very, very happy!" and then in a moment the lips trembled, and the dark eyes grew moist and tearful, whereat Gerald gave a short, derisive laugh.

"And so you must needs begin to cry—just because I am happy! There's no need, surely, for you to be so sure!" Nevertheless let him tease as he might in words, he was very tender in his manner for the rest of the day, and Hester was conscious of his care in a hundred different ways.

In the evening they went all together to a wonderful old forest where a Hungarian band discoursed enchanting strains, and the people sat in hundreds at the tables set out beneath the trees, and Hester drank delicious, iced drinks through a straw tube, and gazed open-eyed at the unnecessary wonderings felt the over-dressed women with their hand-some, bepowdered faces; the soldiers in their different coloured regimentals, the merry family parties—father, mother, and children, enjoying themselves together, in happy, continental fashion.

As the little party made their way back to the hotel, winding in and out past the hundred and one small tables, Hester overheard a few significant words of comment; words of admi- ration, of "La Belle Anglaise." Mabel, of course? But no—a turn of the head revealed the fact that the looks of the speakers were bent, not upon Mabel, but upon herself, and the expression of admiration. Was it deepened in the dark, foreign-looking eyes as they met her own.

All unconsciously to herself, Hester straightened her slim figure, and threw the blue serge jacket an inch or two further apart so as to allow a fuller glimpse of the dainty white silk blouse—Mabel's gift of a few days before; her heart beat fast at this first intoxicating pang of youth, and she turned with a new tinge toward her and said, "It's getting late—you will be tired! You must take my arm!"

Oh it was good—it was good to be alive!

(To be continued.)
Thankful when it was over. On entering the drawing-room I was about to sit on a chair, when one of the girls seized hold of me with "Oh! don't sit on that chair, it is not safe." Vaguely wondering what I had done to deserve such care, I kept it in the room. I made my way to the couch, as being more capable of bearing my weight, and finding it more comfortable again. I don't help noticing this was covered with dust and feathers. I looked at the four bonnie bright girls and wondered if it would not be less "injury dig, it!" instead of doing that endless "dust very pretty, no doubt!" for bazaars, they went to dust the room, darn the tablecloth, and help with the light work of the house, that the two overworked men had not time to do. To clean the pans and the hall, and do their work properly instead of scrambling along in this manner. I was recalled from my short melancholy by an apology cried from a guest-room, who had sat on the chair and been precipitated into the fender by its total collapse. However, after these slight contretemps, we enjoyed our evening thoroughly, for they were clever witty children, and made me ache with laughing at their sharp remarks. Sometimes every evening one of the girls came up to my house.

"Oh! Mrs. Dash, I wish you would help me.

"Why, dear, what is the matter?"

"Well, shly, I am engaged to be married to Charlie Bradbury, and, as you know, he is not at all well off. I shall have to be very careful, and I know nothing about looking after a house so that the work is got through anyhow at our house we don't care how. So I want you to teach me."

"I was rather aghast at this.

"Tell me, dear, I shall be very happy to tell you anything I know. What shall I begin?"

Her glance wandered disconsolately round the room.

"You have everything so bright and clean. I don't even know how a room should be cleaned. Suppose you begin with that."

"Well, let me think. First open the windows to let the dust out. Fold up the tablecloth and rugs to be taken out into the yard to be brushed and shaken. Place all ornaments on the table and cover them with a dust-cloth and place them beside the window. Place a cup of water in each corner and sprinkle with sand to make the dust settle. The curtains in the windows are best made to go down well, and then hang them out of the way. Take the draperies and brush all the curtains and put them away into the hall. Cover the large pieces of furniture with dust-cloths and put the young girls and women to brush the whole floor."

"The curtains should be made of sacking with a red cross on the side next the floor, and brush all the runners and edges of the curtains and gather all the dirt into a bag. Then brush the dust off the toys and put blacklead on with a small two-penny brush, and not too much of it. Servants make a vast mistake in thinking a quantity of blacklead is necessary. Nine times out of ten it is quite unnecessary. The mirror should be cleaned with emery-cloth, using coarse first and fine afterwards. If the ladder, etc., be of brass, it should be brushed white and polished with a soft cloth, dry cloth, and polished with a wash-leather. After the glass is done the window should be polished. All mirrors and mirrors should be dusted, and cleaned doors of bookcases with a wash-leather squeezed out of cold water, rubbed up with a linen cloth, and polished with a dry leather. Clean windows and curtains, least important in the appearance of a house. Nothing looks more deplorable than dirty white curtains.

The window-sill should be washed with Sapolo. Then dust the cornice, pediment, over-door, over-mantled, gaselier, and picture, dusting the cornice carefully inside the cluster of flowers. Put the curtains, etc., inside the window. Fold the dust-sheets up, upon which the curtains, etc., arrange the ornaments, dusting as you go on, and not forgetting the legs of the tables and chairs, before it is too late, and wash them well with soft cloths, and it will improve the carpet if you rub it over last thing with a damp cloth. All brass frames should be cleaned with Needham's or other polishing powders. All washable curtains should be washed once a fortnight in warm soap and water, using a tooth-brush for reached flowers, etc. Keep a bottle of cornice and polish all the window-frames. When the furniture requires polish the following is a good receipt:

"Half a pint of cold soft water; one ounce of Castile soap in slices, put it in the water, and let it stand till dissolved. Half a pint of turpentine; one ounce of white wax; put both quantities of wax into the turpentine, let it stand till dissolved, stirring it occasionally. Then mix all well together and add one or two teaspoonsful of methylated spirits, and shake it well up.

"Leather chairs which are going shabby will be much improved with a coating of Revivering generally available in druggists. If the corners of the chairs are worn out, tips of a different coloured leather will improve them. The doors should be rubbed down with a damp wash-leather. The curtains will occasionally require to be taken down to be brushed and shaken. Every room in use should be cleaned in this way once a week, besides the daily dust-pans and brushes used.

"The bedrooms should have the mattresses brushed the day they are to be cleaned, the valances tucked up out of the dust, and of course the thickness of the tops of the beds. The tops of beds and wardrobes should always be covered with brown paper, which may be drawn off and cleaned of the dust which accumulates. Many people only have strips of carpet in their bedrooms to be taken up and shaken off, and the floors covered with coarse paper. The thick dust in the cornice and corners of the room should be dressed down with a soft brush, sometimes with a sponge, to which a clean duster has been plucked."

All curtains and wooden materials must be well brushed before putting them away during the summer, and rolled up in linen with bits of camphor spread about them. The stairs should be brushed daily, and once a week with tea-bags, the stair-rugs taken up and polished, and also all brass doors-handles and hot-water taps.

The steps should be washed daily and rubbed with soap and water and washed off afterwards. The hall, kitchen, back kitchen, pantry, and all kitchen-ten tables should be brushed and polished with a soft cloth, dry cloth, and polished with a wash-leather. After the grease is done the window should be polished. All mirrors and mirrors should be dusted, and cleaned doors of bookcases with a wash-leather squeezed out of cold water, rubbed up with a linen cloth, and polished with a dry leather. Clean windows and curtains, least important in the appearance of a house. Nothing looks more deplorable than dirty white curtains.

Stains on linen, place over a bowl of vinegar and rub salts of lemon on, let it stand a little, then wash. Stains on clothes, place over a bowl of vinegar and rub salts of lemon on, let it stand a little, then wash. Do not put out more silver than you require, as it gets scratched and knocked about, besides the inconvenience of having you idle and a nervous trouble to keep everything clean. Have a little silver crucible filled with it in the basket, and the servant count it every night before taking it to your room and see if you have kept an inventory of all the plate (working off that which is worn out) linens, china, glass, and as the latter wear out or get broken, replace them. Mend all your clothes before they get dirty. Sheets that are darned very near the middle should be cut in half and the selvages seem to match. Table-cloths that are past usage will often make into tray-cloths and sideboard-cloths, and lastly into dish-cloths and rubbers. Old blankets make good floor cloths. Have a plentiful supply of materials, and have them kept for their proper use. Look over the housemaid's box now and then and give her new clothes and brushes when required, and make her scrub her boxes about once a month, also the stair-cases. The stair-cases should be scoured with soap and salt and sand.

"Let me advise you when furnishing to get the best of everything. It is the cheapest in the end, and if Charles offers you a job, tell him he must wait for you, as there is little chance of getting it if you are married.

"While you have been here and old and only looks better every time it is used."

"It is a note on ever waxed or crapped. Cheap furniture is always tumbling to pieces or warping besides, it always looks cheap. Soap is best bought wholesale and cut up at home. Candles and many groceries are best bought wholesale. Have calico covers for your plates so that the plates are not always to be renewed soon or left dirty. Always keep an account book that you may be able to check your expenditure, and always keep your receipted bills. Have strong knives, forks, and spoons for the kitchen, and a set for company, as those in daily use invariably get chipped. The way you arrange your work will, of course, depend upon the number of servants you keep, only try to arrange equally each day's duties. The cook generally does the dining-room, doorsteps, hall, stoves, etc., perhaps, part of the other bedroom. The housemaid does the breakfast-room, drawing-room, and bedrooms and stairs. One large room or two small ones to be cleaned daily. The plate-glass is cleaned on different days. Thong a card up in my kitchen with each servant's work, and the days on which to do each thing. They cannot say they have forgotten it then, and it saves the trouble of constant telling. Keep a memorandum book in your pocket, and put down anything you wish to do or amend if you cannot do it at the moment, or else you will forget it.

Let your servants be in bed by ten and get
up at six. And if Charlie is wise he will see that the bedroom is always locked, and everything safe from fire after the servants go to bed. Now, I can't think of anything else at present, but ask your mother to allow you to come and stay with us for a fortnight, then I shall make you work hard all the time, and, as people say, the way to keep a man's affection is to keep him well (although I don't think it is quite wise), still I'm sure it is the best way for nice little dishes, and I will show you how to make them.

"You are so much, Mrs. Dash. I don't care how hard I work if I can only make up for lost time."

And how often this is the way! If girls have to work at household chores, they are under the impression it can be put off any moment; but it takes a clever woman with great experience to manage house in every detail thoroughly and economically. In my opinion,
a girl cannot begin too soon after she is in her teens to learn household management. If mothers would only teach girls anything and everything they ought to know to make their houses truly homelike to their husbands and children, that there may be no place like it, that wherever they are staying they may be thankful to get back home, it would save a great deal of sorrow when the mothers may not be there to help them. But they think, "Let her enjoy herself while she is young," or perhaps the girl is going in for house-work; there is no time for common every-day affairs. Nevertheless, the happiness of a whole household in the future, and her own honour and dignity, may depend upon the care of the comfort of her husband or every-day affairs, not on a knowledge of the dead languages. But there is time for both if only the girls will think about it. It is a notable fact that the busiest people have always the time to help others, simply because they know pretty well what they have to do and how long it will take them, and arrange their work accordingly. Methodical people will not only do more work, but the amount of work that unmethodical people will.

GRANNIE.

THE WARDS OF ST. MARGARET'S.

BY SISTER JOAN.

CHAPTER XXV.

VISITS TO OLD HAUNTS.

"I know how far high failure overlooks the bound of low successes."—Épic of Hades.

THE WARDS OF ST. MARGARET'S.

BY SISTER JOAN.

CHAPTER XXV.

VISITS TO OLD HAUNTS.

"I know how far high failure overlooks the bound of low successes."—Épic of Hades.

THE WARDS OF ST. MARGARET'S.