

The illustration represents a kind of inn called in Spain a *venta*, which answers in many respects to the caravanseras of the East. The *venta* usually stands alone on the roadside, at a distance from any other habitation, and is intended rather as a resting-place for travellers, than as a house of entertainment, properly so called.

A German traveller, describing one of these inns, and by no means the worst he had met with, says that the interior consists simply of one apartment—a vast shed—the bare roof of which is supported by three square stone pillars. Daylight penetrates only through a few narrow slits in the wall, which so imperfectly supply the place of ordinary windows, that even at midday the eye must become familiarised with the obscurity, before it can distinguish surrounding objects. Travellers, their servants, and their animals, alike find a resting-place in this inclosure, and not unfrequently the common chamber has held nearly one hundred persons, and two or three times that number of mules and horses. The latter are fastened to the two sides of the wall, where they are heard rather than seen, for the little light admitted falls in the centre of the inclosure, and the sides are always in deep shadow. Near the door are ranged the wagons (*galeras*) of the travellers, and the luggage is piled here and there around the pillars. At the opposite end, on a small pavement, a fire is kept continually burning, the smoke of which escapes either through the windows or the roof, for there is no chimney.

The scene at the entrance door of the *venta* is almost always animated. Groups of travellers, in the picturesque costume which still prevails in the country districts, are resting themselves after the fatigues of the journey; and in Spain, it must be owned, resting is a very popular occupation. Wandering minstrels, who obtain a living by their guitar and singing, relate to attentive listeners lyric versions of popular traditions or romances, or sing the merry songs of Puix, or Felipe Vergon. Evidently, the outside of the *venta* is more agreeable than the inside, and hence the artist has chosen the outside for his illustration.

HOW TO MAKE BOTH ENDS MEET.

How is it that Prudentia, with a purse so shallow, conducts the affairs of her home department with such seeming ease and comfort? No painfully obvious "managing" is apparent. Her system entails no constant thrusting of her economy in one's face—no holding forth about the necessity of saving—and no parade of poverty, which, by-the-by, is just as vulgar as the boast of riches. *Parade of poverty!* Yes, we use the expression advisedly; for the proud at heart, who ape humility—the naturally mean, who would excuse their niggardliness—the designing, who would lure others into lavishness from which they may derive benefit without sharing the expense—each, from different motives, *parade their poverty*, by the constant ejaculations of "too poor!" "hard times!" "can't afford!" But these are words seldom syllabled by Prudentia's lips.

We have studied Prudentia—conned that fair human book in which her rules of life are written—and we think the mode by which she makes "the two ends" of that zone which girdles her resources "meet," without leaving a hiatus of debt, may possibly benefit some of her young sisters in the world's vast family. Doubtless there are a few among them who would gladly deserve the name we bestow upon her if they only knew the art by which it could be won.

In the first place, Prudentia, when she feels disposed to make a purchase, pauses, and asks herself the important question, "Is it actually needed?" "Can we do without it?" If the voice within replies, "It can be dispensed with," she is made aware that the article was desired to gratify taste, or promote comfort, or perhaps give pleasure, and not because it was urgently requisite. Before she relinquishes or appropriates the wished-for object, she puts another query to her inner self, "Is there anything positively necessary which must be foregone if I permit myself this gratification?" The answer to that second inquiry always decides whether it is wise, prudent, right, to allow herself (or others far dearer than herself) the proposed indulgence.

She never buys anything simply because it is "so cheap," and she "may want it some time or other." She expects every gold, or silver, or even copper coin within her tiny purse to bring its full value in exchange. Yet she often pays high prices for articles of good quality, because she knows they

will long outlast inferior materials, and are cheaper in the end.

She never wastes anything—never throws anything away. Articles that have done faithful service in one form are metamorphosed by her magical touches into some new shape. The ingenuity with which these changes are wrought out excites our wonder. Unfaded bits of an old carpet grow into footstools and bedside rugs; the well-worn dress re-appears in neat aprons; stockings, that had become useless as stockings, are cut down, and become quite fresh on tinier feet; chintz window-curtains, which, in their advanced age, cannot stand the revelations of too strong light, resume their good looks when produced as furniture covers; scraps, and odds and ends of all kinds, serve for pretty patch-work. But we forbear to swell the list of Prudentia's skilful transformations. After all, she is but obeying one of the great laws that rule the universe. Does not all creation wear new forms and assume new uses every hour that the world travels on its starry way? Does not the very humblest, withered leaf enrich the ground upon which it falls, and nourish the new flower springing from the bosom of the earth? When Prudentia can find no further employment for articles that have undergone various transmutations in her own household, they are carefully stored away for the needy, who never knock at her door in vain.

When she has anything to accomplish which seems very desirable, but which will cause a large outlay (we mean large for her), she first sits down, and, literally in accordance with the Scripture injunction, "counts the cost" before she attempts to rear the fabric.

She is in the highest degree scrupulous in regard to debt. She incurs no bill that can be reasonably avoided. When she permits herself to have an account, it is always under circumstances which actual necessity, rather than convenience, renders allowable. She keeps a memorandum of everything she spends and everything she owes. She bears each obligation incurred constantly in her mind, fixes the time and the mode of its discharge, and often cancels it before payment is solicited. She would not allow herself or the members of her household a luxury while a single creditor waited his due. She is by nature liberal as the sunshine; she experiences a supreme degree of internal delight in bestowing charity—promoting the comfort or pleasure of others—especially in giving presents; but even this bountiful and beautiful impulse she controls when she owes a debt for which no provision has been made. She says to herself, "This money is not mine—it belongs to my creditor. It would be a happiness to be able to use it or to give it away; but how can I use or give that which, strictly speaking, is not my own?"

Then, in her management within doors, how often her tact supplies the place of luxury! She plans her breakfasts, and dinners, and suppers with such forethought! She knows that an uncostly dish, skilfully prepared, will be as palatable as an expensive delicacy; and to insure that the former will prove an acceptable substitute for the latter, she superintends its cooking herself.

Then, as regards her own dress and the dresses of her children—their exquisitely fitting clothes, of well-assorted colours, though of simplest materials, are more graceful and becoming than the rustling silks and dashing satins of many a friend whose prospects in life are by no means as promising as her own. But we all know that taste and neatness of attire will at any time surpass richness.

Strangers look at her and exclaim: "It is perfectly wonderful how Prudentia gets on! And her house always looks so nice—pervaded by such an atmosphere of taste! And how comfortably she lives! How prettily she and her children are always dressed! Her husband's income must be small, and yet she does not seem to be always economising, and raking, and scraping, and managing, as some people who talk of nothing else. I wonder what her secret is?"

Her secret lies in deserving the name of Prudentia.

She is not afraid of work in any of its phases. All labour is sweetened by her pleasant thoughts and the remembrance of the bright smile that will flush over a beloved countenance, and beam lustreously out from a pair of dark, loving eyes, when her husband enters his cheerful home.

"A simple, earnest life that tireless toils,
Is music in God's ear."

And such music ascends to heaven every day out of the harmonious movements of Prudentia's existence.

Scientific Notes.

PARIS KID.—It is stated that four and a half million pairs of ladies' gloves annually made in Paris, and declared to be respectable kid-skin, are in reality made of the skins of rats.

AFRICAN COTTON.—The indirect support of slavery by the importation into this country of the produce of slave labour, led some to conceive that, were the culture of cotton introduced upon the west coast of Africa, whence slaves are almost exclusively exported—not only would commerce be thus supplied from an unobjectionable and, in many respects, more convenient and eligible, source, but, by raising the value of local labour, the selfish interests of the chiefs would be engaged to discountenance the slave-trade. With these views, Mr. Clegg, of Manchester, forwarded to certain missionary stations on the West Coast supplies of cotton-seed, and cleaning machinery, advanced the requisite funds, and engaged the missionaries to point out to the natives the advantages offered to their acceptance, and urge on them the expediency of availing themselves of these means of social improvement. In the last two years 150,000 pounds of cotton have yearly reached Manchester, the only drawback on the excellency of which has been its being ill-packed. It was superior to middling Orleans, and on the same day commanded a higher price. The chiefs are said to have engaged with ardour in this novel and innocent pursuit, having at length discovered that the worst use to which a man could be put is to sell him. Those who, a few years back, sold their subjects to the slave-dealers for £14 a piece, have lately been anxiously repurchasing those yet remaining in the barracoons at £12, having found the need of labourers for the production of cotton and palm oil. As the tiny acorn contains the germ of the oak, so, from this unostentatious action of a good man, may spring the future civilisation of barbaric Africa.

DRAUGHTS.—In ordinary states of the atmosphere winds promote evaporation, and currents of air, or draughts, are hurtful when they act partially on the human body, because they exhale the moisture specially from one point, impeding the circulation in the delicate capillary vessels of that part, and thereby giving rise to rheumatic affections. It may be observed that a person can look all day out of a window without inconvenience, the draught from which would injure were the back turned to it for an hour. The reason is, that while the neck and shoulders are shielded only by artificial coverings, the face is self-protected by the breath which is expired, heated and charged with moisture. Though it is difficult to distinguish between the heat produced respectively by the breathing and by the circulation, yet it is known that when either are quickened by exertion or disease, the temperature of the body increases in proportion from 95 deg. even to 140 deg., and that when they languish it sinks accordingly. Thus the heat of the breath is real, and the temperature of health considerably exceeds that of the air of temperate climes. The expired breath imparts its moisture to the cold air with which it comes in contact. The colder the air, the more observable this is; a man's own breath will sometimes cover his hair and beard with hoar-frost; but, whether visible or not, this heated moisture is always being exhaled, and it effectually guards the face against injury from currents of air. Its efficiency is greater than is generally conceived; for the head being bared in a keen wind, its attacks can be longest endured by facing it. Thus the danger of catching cold, like other dangers, is lessened by being boldly encountered.

THE RIDE.

The morning dew is on the grass,
A heaven is in the sky;
Sweet April courtesies while we pass—
My bonny steed and I.
I heed her not, the blue-eyed maid
That lifts my flowing hair,
Who flings her kisses in the glade—
Her sweetness on the air.

There's a quiet house on yonder hill,
A grassy slope with flowers between,
Just at the turn where the romping rill
Juts out across the green;
There's a maid that can as gaily trip
With step as light and free,
Who wears a sweetness on her lip,
And keeps it all for me.

The morning dew is on the grass,
A heaven is in the sky;
Oh, many a lad this wood may pass,
But none so blithe as I.
Sing out, ye birds, and fill the air,
A song for every mate;
And I've a love beyond compare,
A-waiting at the gate.