

Sometimes I would call thee mine;
 But sweeter far than *mine* or *thine*
 To listen unto Nature's song,
 Saying, To lovers all belong.

I love thee for my greenest days
 Rescued from Time at thy sweet gaze,
 For pictures brilliant as the Spring
 Brought back upon thy breathing wing.

I love thee for thy influence,
 Heart-honey, without impotence;
 He who would reach thy virgin blush,
 Like warrior bold, must dangers crush.

Chiefly I love thee for thyself,
 Wealth-giver, ignorant of pelf;
 Fain would I learn thy upright ways
 And heart thus redolent of praise.

HOUSE AND HOME PAPERS.

BY CHRISTOPHER CROWFIELD.

VIII.

ECONOMY.

"THE fact is," said Jennie, as she twirled a little hat on her hand, which she had been making over, with nobody knows what of bows and pompons, and other matters for which the women have curious names, — "the fact is, American women and girls must learn to economize; it is n't merely restricting one's self to American goods, it is general economy, that is required. Now here's this hat, — costs me only three dollars, all told; and Sophie Page bought an English one this morning at Madame Meyer's for which she gave fifteen. And I really don't think hers has more of an air than mine. I made this over, you see, with things I had in the house, bought nothing but the ribbon, and paid for altering and pressing, and there you see what a stylish hat I have!"

"Lovely! admirable!" said Miss Featherstone. "Upon my word, Jennie, you ought to marry a poor parson; you would be quite thrown away upon a rich man."

"Let me see," said I. "I want to admire intelligently. That is n't the hat you were wearing yesterday?"

"Oh, no, papa! This is just done. The one I wore yesterday was my waterfall-hat, with the green feather; this, you see, is an oriole."

"A what?"

"An oriole. Papa, how can you expect to learn about these things?"

"And that plain little black one, with the stiff crop of scarlet feathers sticking straight up?"

"That's my jockey, papa, with a plume *en militaire*."

"And did the waterfall and the jockey cost anything?"

"They were very, very cheap, papa,

considering. Miss Featherstone will remember that the waterfall was a great bargain, and I had the feather from last year; and as to the jockey, that was made out of my last year's white one, dyed over. You know, papa, I always take care of my things, and they last from year to year."

"I do assure you, Mr. Crowfield," said Miss Featherstone, "I never saw such little economists as your daughters; it is perfectly wonderful what they contrive to dress on. How they manage to do it I'm sure I can't see. I never could, I'm convinced."

"Yes," said Jennie, "I've bought but just one new hat. I only wish you could sit in church where we do, and see those Miss Fielders. Marianne and I have counted six new hats apiece of those girls',—*new*, you know, just out of the milliner's shop; and last Sunday they came out in such lovely puffed tulle bonnets! Were n't they lovely, Marianne? And next Sunday, I don't doubt, there'll be something else."

"Yes," said Miss Featherstone,—"their father, they say, has made a million dollars lately on Government contracts."

"For my part," said Jennie, "I think such extravagance, at such a time as this, is shameful."

"Do you know," said I, "that I'm quite sure the Misses Fielder think they are practising rigorous economy?"

"Papa! Now there you are with your paradoxes! How can you say so?"

"I should n't be afraid to bet a pair of gloves, now," said I, "that Miss Fielder thinks herself half ready for translation, because she has bought only six new hats and a tulle bonnet so far in the season. If it were not for her dear bleeding country, she would have had thirty-six, like the Misses Sibthorpe. If we were admitted to the secret councils of the Fielders, doubtless we should perceive what temptations they daily resist; how perfectly rubbishy and dreadful they suffer themselves to be, because they feel it important now, in this crisis, to practise economy; how they abuse the Sibthorpes,

who have a new hat every time they drive out, and never think of wearing one more than two or three times; how virtuous and self-denying they feel, when they think of the puffed tulle, for which they only gave eighteen dollars, when Madame Caradori showed them those lovely ones, like the Misses Sibthorpe's, for forty-five; and how they go home desecanting on virgin simplicity, and resolving that they will not allow themselves to be swept into the vortex of extravagance, whatever other people may do."

"Do you know," said Miss Featherstone, "I believe your papa is right? I was calling on the oldest Miss Fielder the other day, and she told me that she positively felt ashamed to go looking as she did, but that she really did feel the necessity of economy. 'Perhaps we might afford to spend more than some others,' she said; 'but it's so much better to give the money to the Sanitary Commission!'"

"Furthermore," said I, "I am going to put forth another paradox, and say that very likely there are some people looking on my girls, and commenting on them for extravagance in having three hats, even though made over, and contrived from last year's stock."

"They can't know anything about it, then," said Jennie, decisively; "for, certainly, nobody can be decent, and invest less in millinery than Marianne and I do."

"When I was a young lady," said my wife, "a well-dressed girl got her a new bonnet in the spring, and another in the fall;—that was the extent of her purchases in this line. A second-best bonnet, left of last year, did duty to relieve and preserve the best one. My father was accounted well-to-do, but I had no more, and wanted no more. I also bought myself, every spring, two pair of gloves, a dark and a light pair, and wore them through the summer, and another two through the winter; one or two pair of white kids, carefully cleaned, carried me through all my parties. Hats had not been heard of, and the great necessity which requires two or three new

ones every spring and fall had not arisen. Yet I was reckoned a well-appearing girl, who dressed liberally. Now, a young lady who has a waterfall-hat, an oriole-hat, and a jockey, must still be troubled with anxious cares for her spring and fall and summer and winter bonnets,—all the variety will not take the place of them. Gloves are bought by the dozen; and as to dresses, there seems to be no limit to the quantity of material and trimming that may be expended upon them. When I was a young lady, seventy-five dollars a year was considered by careful parents a liberal allowance for a daughter's wardrobe. I had a hundred, and was reckoned rich; and I sometimes used a part to make up the deficiencies in the allowance of Sarah Evans, my particular friend, whose father gave her only fifty. We all thought that a very scant pattern; yet she generally made a very pretty and genteel appearance, with the help of occasional presents from friends."

"How could a girl dress for fifty dollars?" said Marianne.

"She could get a white muslin and a white cambric, which, with different sortings of ribbons, served her for all dress-occasions. A silk, in those days, took only ten yards in the making, and one dark silk was considered a reasonable allowance to a lady's wardrobe. Once made, it stood for something,—always worn carefully, it lasted for years. One or two calico morning-dresses, and a merino for winter wear, completed the list. Then, as to collars, capes, cuffs, etc., we all did our own embroidering, and very pretty things we wore, too. Girls looked as pretty then as they do now, when four or five hundred dollars a year is insufficient to clothe them."

"But, mamma, you know our allowance is n't anything like that,—it is quite a slender one, though not so small as yours was," said Marianne. "Don't you think the customs of society make a difference? Do you think, as things are, we could go back and dress for the sum you did?"

"You cannot," said my wife, "with-

out a greater sacrifice of feeling than I wish to impose on you. Still, though I don't see how to help it, I cannot but think that the requirements of fashion are becoming needlessly extravagant, particularly in regard to the dress of women. It seems to me, it is making the support of families so burdensome that young men are discouraged from marriage. A young man, in a moderately good business, might cheerfully undertake the world with a wife who could make herself pretty and attractive for seventy-five dollars a year, when he might sigh in vain for one who positively could not get through, and be decent, on four hundred. Women, too, are getting to be so attached to the trappings and accessories of life, that they cannot think of marriage without an amount of fortune which few young men possess."

"You are talking in very low numbers about the dress of women," said Miss Featherstone. "I do assure you that it is the easiest thing in the world for a girl to make away with a thousand dollars a year, and not have so much to show for it either as Marianne and Jennie."

"To be sure," said I. "Only establish certain formulas of expectation, and it is the easiest thing in the world. For instance, in your mother's day girls talked of a pair of gloves,—now they talk of a pack; then it was a bonnet summer and winter,—now it is a bonnet spring, summer, autumn, and winter, and hats like monthly roses,—a new blossom every few weeks."

"And then," said my wife, "every device of the toilet is immediately taken up and varied and improved on, so as to impose an almost monthly necessity for novelty. The jackets of May are outshone by the jackets of June; the buttons of June are antiquated in July; the trimmings of July are *passées* by September; side-combs, back-combs, puffs, rats, and all sorts of such matters, are in a distracted race of improvement; every article of feminine toilet is on the move towards perfection. It seems to me that an infinity of money must be spent in these

trifles, by those who make the least pretension to keep in the fashion."

"Well, papa," said Jennie, "after all, it's just the way things always have been since the world began. You know the Bible says, 'Can a maid forget her ornaments?' It's clear she can't. You see, it's a law of Nature; and you remember all that long chapter in the Bible that we had read in church last Sunday, about the curls and veils and tinkling ornaments and crimping-pins, and all that. Women always have been too much given to dress, and they always will be."

"The thing is," said Marianne, "how can any woman, I, for example, know what is too much or too little? In mamma's day, it seems, a girl could keep her place in society, by hard economy, and spend only fifty dollars a year on her dress. Mamma found a hundred dollars ample. I have more than that, and find myself quite straitened to keep myself looking well. I don't want to live for dress, to give all my time and thoughts to it; I don't wish to be extravagant; and yet I wish to be lady-like; it annoys and makes me unhappy not to be fresh and neat and nice; shabbiness and seediness are my aversion. I don't see where the fault is. Can one individual resist the whole current of society? It certainly is not strictly necessary for us girls to have half the things we do. We might, I suppose, live without many of them; and, as mamma says, look just as well, because girls did before these things were invented. Now, I confess, I flatter myself, generally, that I am a pattern of good management and economy, because I get so much less than other girls I go with. I wish you could see Miss Thorne's fall dresses that she showed me last year when she was visiting here. She had six gowns, and no one of them could have cost less than seventy or eighty dollars, and some of them must have been even more expensive; and yet I don't doubt that this fall she will feel that she must have just as many more. She runs through and wears out these expensive

things, with all their velvet and thread lace, just as I wear my commonest ones; and at the end of the season they are really gone,—spotted, stained, frayed, the lace all pulled to pieces,—nothing left to save or make over. I feel as if Jennie and I were patterns of economy, when I see such things. I really don't know what economy is. What is it?"

"There is the same difficulty in my housekeeping," said my wife. "I think I am an economist. I mean to be one. All our expenses are on a modest scale, and yet I can see much that really is not strictly necessary; but if I compare myself with some of my neighbors, I feel as if I were hardly respectable. There is no subject on which all the world are censuring one another so much as this. Hardly any one but thinks her neighbors extravagant in some one or more particulars, and takes for granted that she herself is an economist."

"I'll venture to say," said I, "that there is n't a woman of my acquaintance that does not think she is an economist."

"Papa is turned against us women, like all the rest of them," said Jennie. "I wonder if it is n't just so with the men?"

"Yes," said Marianne, "it's the fashion to talk as if all the extravagance of the country was perpetrated by women. For my part, I think young men are just as extravagant. Look at the sums they spend for cigars and pipes,—an expense which has n't even the pretence of usefulness in any way; it's a purely selfish, nonsensical indulgence. When a girl spends money in making herself look pretty, she contributes something to the agreeableness of society; but a man's cigars and pipes are neither ornamental nor useful."

"Then look at their dress," said Jennie; "they are to the full as fussy and particular about it as girls; they have as many fine, invisible points of fashion, and their fashions change quite as often; and they have just as many knick-knacks, with their studs and their sleeve-buttons and waistcoat-buttons, their scarfs and scarf-pins, their watch-chains and seals and seal-rings, and no-

body knows what. Then they often waste and throw away more than women, because they are not good judges of material, nor saving in what they buy, and have no knowledge of how things should be cared for, altered, or mended. If their cap is a little too tight, they cut the lining with a penknife, or slit holes in a new shirt-collar, because it does not exactly fit to their mind. For my part, I think men are naturally twice as wasteful as women. A pretty thing, to be sure, to have all the waste of the country laid to us!"

"You are right, child," said I; "women are by nature, as compared with men, the care-taking and saving part of creation,—the authors and conservators of economy. As a general rule, man earns and woman saves and applies. The wastefulness of woman is commonly the fault of man."

"I don't see into that," said Bob Stephens.

"In this way. Economy is the science of proportion. Whether a particular purchase is extravagant depends mainly on the income it is taken from. Suppose a woman has a hundred and fifty a year for her dress, and gives fifty dollars for a bonnet; she gives a third of her income;—it is a horrible extravagance, while for the woman whose income is ten thousand it may be no extravagance at all. The poor clergyman's wife, when she gives five dollars for a bonnet, may be giving as much, in proportion to her income, as the woman who gives fifty. Now the difficulty with the greater part of women is, that the men who make the money and hold it give them no kind of standard by which to measure their expenses. Most women and girls are in this matter entirely at sea, without chart or compass. They don't know in the least what they have to spend. Husbands and fathers often pride themselves about not saying a word on business-matters to their wives and daughters. They don't wish them to understand them, or to inquire into them, or to make remarks or suggestions concerning them. 'I want you to have ev-

erything that is suitable and proper,' says Jones to his wife, 'but don't be extravagant.'

"'But, my dear,' says Mrs. Jones, 'what is suitable and proper depends very much on our means; if you could allow me any specific sum for dress and housekeeping, I could tell better.'

"'Nonsense, Susan! I can't do that,—it's too much trouble. Get what you need, and avoid foolish extravagances; that's all I ask.'

"By-and-by Mrs. Jones's bills are sent in, in an evil hour, when Jones has heavy notes to meet, and then comes a domestic storm.

"'I shall just be ruined, Madam, if that's the way you are going on. I can't afford to dress you and the girls in the style you have set up;—look at this milliner's bill!'

"'I assure you,' says Mrs. Jones, 'we have n't got any more than the Stebbinses,—nor so much.'

"'Don't you know that the Stebbinses are worth five times as much as ever I was?'

"No, Mrs. Jones did not know it;—how should she, when her husband makes it a rule never to speak of his business to her, and she has not the remotest idea of his income?

"Thus multitudes of good conscientious women and girls are extravagant from pure ignorance. The male provider allows bills to be run up in his name, and they have no earthly means of judging whether they are spending too much or too little, except the semi-annual hurricane which attends the coming in of these bills.

"The first essential in the practice of economy is a knowledge of one's income, and the man who refuses to accord to his wife and children this information has never any right to accuse them of extravagance, because he himself deprives them of that standard of comparison which is an indispensable requisite in economy. As early as possible in the education of children they should pass from that state of irresponsible waiting

to be provided for by parents, and be trusted with the spending of some fixed allowance, that they may learn prices and values, and have some notion of what money is actually worth and what it will bring. The simple fact of the possession of a fixed and definite income often suddenly transforms a giddy, extravagant girl into a care-taking, prudent little woman. Her allowance is her own; she begins to plan upon it,—to add, subtract, multiply, divide, and do numberless sums in her little head. She no longer buys everything she fancies; she deliberates, weighs, compares. And now there is room for self-denial and generosity to come in. She can do without this article; she can furbish up some older possession to do duty a little longer, and give this money to some friend poorer than she; and ten to one the girl whose bills last year were four or five hundred finds herself bringing through this year creditably on a hundred and fifty. To be sure, she goes without numerous things which she used to have. From the stand-point of a fixed income she sees that these are impossible, and no more wants them than the green cheese of the moon. She learns to make her own taste and skill take the place of expensive purchases. She refits her hats and bonnets, retrims her dresses, and in a thousand busy, earnest, happy little ways, sets herself to make the most of her small income.

"So the woman who has her definite allowance for housekeeping finds at once a hundred questions set at rest. Before, it was not clear to her why she should not 'go and do likewise' in relation to every purchase made by her next neighbor. Now, there is a clear logic of proportion. Certain things are evidently not to be thought of, though next neighbors do have them; and we must resign ourselves to find some other way of living."

"My dear," said my wife, "I think there is a peculiar temptation in a life organized as ours is in America. There are here no settled classes, with similar ratios

of income. Mixed together in the same society, going to the same parties, and blended in daily neighborly intercourse, are families of the most opposite extremes in point of fortune. In England there is a very well understood expression, that people should not dress or live above their station; in America none will admit that they have any particular station, or that they can live above it. The principle of democratic equality unites in society people of the most diverse positions and means.

"Here, for instance, is a family like Dr. Selden's, an old and highly respected one, with an income of only two or three thousand,—yet they are people universally sought for in society, and mingle in all the intercourse of life with merchant-millionnaires whose incomes are from ten to thirty thousand. Their sons and daughters go to the same schools, the same parties, and are thus constantly meeting upon terms of social equality.

"Now it seems to me that our danger does not lie in the great and evident expenses of our richer friends. We do not expect to have pineries, graperies, equipages, horses, diamonds,—we say openly and of course that we do not. Still, our expenses are constantly increased by the proximity of these things, unless we understand ourselves better than most people do. We don't, of course, expect to get a fifteen-hundred-dollar Cashmere, like Mrs. So-and-so, but we begin to look at hundred-dollar shawls and nibble about the hook. We don't expect sets of diamonds, but a diamond ring, a pair of solitaire diamond ear-rings, begins to be speculated about among the young people as among possibilities. We don't expect to carpet our house with Axminster and hang our windows with damask, but at least we must have Brussels and brocatelle,—it *would not do* not to. And so we go on getting hundreds of things that we don't need, that have no real value except that they soothe our self-love,—and for these inferior articles we pay a higher proportion of our income than our rich

neighbor does for his better ones. Nothing is uglier than low-priced Cashmere shawls; and yet a young man just entering business will spend an eighth of a year's income to put one on his wife, and when he has put it there it only serves as a constant source of disquiet,—for now that the door is opened, and Cashmere shawls are possible, she is consumed with envy at the superior ones constantly sported around her. So also with point-lace, velvet dresses, and hundreds of things of that sort, which belong to a certain rate of income, and are absurd below it."

"And yet, mamma, I heard Aunt Easygo say that velvet, point-lace, and Cashmere were the cheapest finery that could be bought, because they lasted a lifetime."

"Aunt Easygo speaks from an income of ten thousand a year; they may be cheap for her rate of living,—but for us, for example, by no magic of numbers can it be made to appear that it is cheaper to have the greatest bargain in the world in Cashmere, lace, and diamonds, than not to have them at all. I never had a diamond, never wore a piece of point-lace, never had a velvet dress, and have been perfectly happy, and just as much respected as if I had. Who ever thought of objecting to me for not having them? Nobody, as I ever heard."

"Certainly not, mamma," said Mari-
anne.

"The thing I have always said to you girls is, that you were not to expect to live like richer people, not to begin to try, not to think or inquire about certain rates of expenditure, or take the first step in certain directions. We have moved on all our life after a very antiquated and old-fashioned mode. We have had our little old-fashioned house, our little old-fashioned ways."

"Except the parlor-carpet, and what came of it, my dear," said I, mischievously.

"Yes, except the parlor-carpet," said my wife, with a conscious twinkle, "and the things that came of it; there

was a concession there, but one can't be wise always."

"We talked mamma into that," said Jennie.

"But one thing is certain," said my wife,— "that, though I have had an antiquated, plain house, and plain furniture, and plain dress, and not the beginning of a thing such as many of my neighbors have possessed, I have spent more money than many of them for real comforts. While I had young children, I kept more and better servants than many women who wore Cashmeres and diamonds. I thought it better to pay extra wages to a really good, trusty woman who lived with me from year to year, and relieved me of some of my heaviest family-cares, than to have ever so much lace locked away in my drawers. We always were able to go into the country to spend our summers, and to keep a good family-horse and carriage for daily driving,—by which means we afforded, as a family, very poor patronage to the medical profession. Then we built our house, and while we left out a great many expensive common-places that other people think they must have, we put in a profusion of bathing-accommodations such as very few people think of having. There never was a time when we did not feel able to afford to do what was necessary to preserve or to restore health; and for this I always drew on the surplus fund laid up by my very unfashionable housekeeping and dressing."

"Your mother has had," said I, "what is the great want in America, perfect independence of mind to go her own way without regard to the way others go. I think there is, for some reason, more false shame among Americans about economy than among Europeans. 'I cannot afford it' is more seldom heard among us. A young man beginning life, whose income may be from five to eight hundred a year, thinks it elegant and gallant to affect a careless air about money, especially among ladies,—to hand it out freely, and put back his change without counting it,—to wear a watch-chain and

studs and shirt-fronts like those of some young millionaire. None but the most expensive tailors, shoemakers, and hatters will do for him; and then he grumbles at the dearth of living, and declares that he cannot get along on his salary. The same is true of young girls, and of married men and women too, — the whole of them are ashamed of economy. The cares that wear out life and health in many households are of a nature that cannot be cast on God, or met by any promise from the Bible, — it is not care for ‘food convenient,’ or for comfortable raiment, but care to keep up false appearances, and to stretch a narrow income over the space that can be covered only by a wider one.

“The poor widow in her narrow lodgings, with her monthly rent staring her hourly in the face, and her bread and meat and candles and meal all to be paid for on delivery or not obtained at all, may find comfort in the good old Book, reading of that other widow whose wasting measure of oil and last failing handful of meal were of such account before her Father in heaven that a prophet was sent to recruit them; and when customers do not pay, or wages are cut down, she can enter into her chamber, and when she hath shut her door, present to her Father in heaven His sure promise that with the fowls of the air she shall be fed and with the lilies of the field she shall be clothed: but what promises are there for her who is racking her brains on the ways and means to provide as sumptuous an entertainment of oysters and Champagne at her next party as her richer neighbor, or to compass that great bargain which shall give her a point-lace set almost as handsome as that of Mrs. Cræsus, who has ten times her income?”

“But, papa,” said Marianne, with a twinge of that exacting sensitiveness by which the child is characterized, “I think I am an economist, thanks to you and mamma, so far as knowing just what my income is, and keeping within it; but that does not satisfy me, and it seems

that is n’t all of economy; — the question that haunts me is, Might I not make my little all do more and better than I do?”

“There,” said I, “you have hit the broader and deeper signification of economy, which is, in fact, the science of *comparative values*. In its highest sense, economy is a just judgment of the comparative value of things, — money only the means of enabling one to express that value. This is the reason why the whole matter is so full of difficulty, — why every one criticizes his neighbor in this regard. Human beings are so various, the necessities of each are so different, they are made comfortable or uncomfortable by such opposite means, that the spending of other people’s incomes must of necessity often look unwise from our stand-point. For this reason multitudes of people who cannot be accused of exceeding their incomes often seem to others to be spending them foolishly and extravagantly.”

“But is there no standard of value?” said Marianne.

“There are certain things upon which there is a pretty general agreement, verbally at least, among mankind. For instance, it is generally agreed that *health* is an indispensable good, — that money is well spent that secures it, and worse than ill spent that ruins it.

“With this standard in mind, how much money is wasted even by people who do not exceed their income! Here a man builds a house, and pays, in the first place, ten thousand more than he need, for a location in a fashionable part of the city, though the air will be closer and the chances of health less; he spends three or four thousand more on a stone front, on marble mantels imported from Italy, on plate-glass windows, plated hinges, and a thousand nice points of finish, and has perhaps but one bathroom for a whole household, and that so connected with his own apartment that nobody but himself and his wife can use it.

“Another man buys a lot in an open, airy situation, which fashion has not made

expensive, and builds without a stone front, marble mantels, or plate-glass windows, but has a perfect system of ventilation through his house, and bathing-rooms in every story, so that the children and guests may all, without inconvenience, enjoy the luxury of abundant water.

"The first spends for fashion and show, the second for health and comfort.

"Here is a man that will buy his wife a diamond bracelet and a lace shawl, and take her yearly to Washington to show off her beauty in ball-dresses, who yet will not let her pay wages which will command any but the poorest and most inefficient domestic service. The woman is worn out, her life made a desert by exhaustion consequent on a futile attempt to keep up a showy establishment with only half the hands needed for the purpose. Another family will give brilliant parties, have a gay season every year at the first hotels at Newport, and not be able to afford the wife a fire in her chamber in midwinter, or the servants enough food to keep them from constantly deserting. The damp, mouldy, dingy cellar-kitchen, the cold, windy, desolate attic, devoid of any comfort, where the domestics are doomed to pass their whole time, are witnesses to what such families consider economy. Economy in the view of some is undisguised slipshod slovenliness in the home-circle for the sake of fine clothes to be shown abroad; it is undisguised hard selfishness to servants and dependents, counting their every approach to comfort a needless waste,—grudging the Roman-Catholic cook her cup of tea at dinner on Friday, when she must not eat meat,—and murmuring that a cracked, second-hand looking-glass must be got for the servants' room: what business have they to want to know how they look?

"Some families will employ the cheapest physician, without regard to his ability to kill or cure; some will treat diseases in their incipency with quack medicines, bought cheap, hoping thereby to fend off the doctor's bill. Some women seem to be pursued by an evil demon

of economy, which, like an *ignis fatuus* in a bog, delights constantly to tumble them over into the mire of expense. They are dismayed at the quantity of sugar in the recipe for preserves, leave out a quarter, and the whole ferments and is spoiled. They cannot by any means be induced at any one time to buy enough silk to make a dress, and the dress finally, after many convulsions and alterations, must be thrown by altogether, as too scanty. They get poor needles, poor thread, poor sugar, poor raisins, poor tea, poor coal. One wonders, in looking at their blackened, smouldering grates, in a freezing day, what the fire is there at all for,—it certainly warms nobody. The only thing they seem likely to be lavish in is funeral expenses, which come in the wake of leaky shoes and imperfect clothing. These funeral expenses at last swallow all, since nobody can dispute an undertaker's bill. One pities these joyless beings. Economy, instead of a rational act of the judgment, is a morbid monomania, eating the pleasure out of life, and haunting them to the grave.

"Some people, again, think that nothing is economical but good eating. Their flour is of an extra brand, their meat the first cut; the delicacies of every season, in their dearest stages, come home to their table with an apologetic smile,—'It was scandalously dear, my love, but I thought we must just treat ourselves.' And yet these people cannot afford to buy books, and pictures they regard as an unthought-of extravagance. Trudging home with fifty dollars' worth of delicacies on his arm, Smith meets Jones, who is exulting with a bag of crackers under one arm and a choice little bit of an oil painting under the other, which he thinks a bargain at fifty dollars. 'I can't afford to buy pictures,' Smith says to his spouse, 'and I don't know how Jones and his wife manage.' Jones and his wife will live on bread and milk for a month, and she will turn her best gown the third time, but they will have their picture, and they are happy. Jones's picture re-

mains, and Smith's fifty dollars' worth of oysters and canned fruit to-morrow will be gone forever. Of all modes of spending money, the swallowing of expensive dainties brings the least return. There is one step lower than this,—the consuming of luxuries that are injurious to the health. If all the money spent on tobacco and liquors could be spent in books and pictures, I predict that nobody's health would be a whit less sound, and houses would be vastly more attractive. There is enough money spent in smoking, drinking, and over-eating to give every family in the community a good library, to hang everybody's parlor-walls with lovely pictures, to set up in every house a conservatory which should bloom all winter with choice flowers, to furnish every dwelling with ample bathing and warming accommodations, even down to the dwellings of the poor; and in the Millennium I believe this is the way things are to be.

"In these times of peril and suffering, if the inquiry arises, How shall there be retrenchment? I answer, First and foremost retrench things needless, doubtful, and positively hurtful, as rum, tobacco, and all the meerschaums of divers colors that do accompany the same. Second, retrench all eating not necessary to health and comfort. A French family would live in luxury on the leavings that are constantly coming from the tables of those who call themselves in middling circumstances. There are superstitions of the table that ought to be broken through. Why must you always have cake in your closet? why need you feel undone to entertain a guest with no cake on your tea-table? Do without it a year, and ask yourselves if you or your children, or any one else, have suffered materially in consequence.

"Why is it imperative that you should have two or three courses at every meal? Try the experiment of having but one, and that a very good one, and see if any great amount of suffering ensues. Why must social intercourse so largely consist in eating? In Paris there is a very pretty

custom. Each family has one evening in the week when it stays at home and receives friends. Tea, with a little bread and butter and cake, served in the most informal way, is the only refreshment. The rooms are full, busy, bright,—everything as easy and joyous as if a monstrous supper, with piles of jelly and mountains of cake, were waiting to give the company a nightmare at the close.

"Said a lady, pointing to a gentleman and his wife in a social circle of this kind, 'I ought to know them well,—I have seen them every week for twenty years.' It is certainly pleasant and confirmative of social enjoyment for friends to eat together; but a little enjoyed in this way answers the purpose as well as a great deal, and better too."

"Well, papa," said Marianne, "in the matter of dress now,—how much ought one to spend just to look as others do?"

"I will tell you what I saw the other night, girls, in the parlor of one of our hotels. Two middle-aged Quaker ladies came gliding in, with calm, cheerful faces, and lustrous dove-colored silks. By their conversation I found that they belonged to that class of women among the Friends who devote themselves to travelling on missions of benevolence. They had just completed a tour of all the hospitals for wounded soldiers in the country, where they had been carrying comforts, arranging, advising, and soothing by their cheerful, gentle presence. They were now engaged on another mission, to the lost and erring of their own sex; night after night, guarded by a policeman, they had ventured after midnight into the dance-houses where girls are being led to ruin, and with gentle words of tender, motherly counsel sought to win them from their fatal ways,—telling them where they might go the next day to find friends who would open to them an asylum and aid them to seek a better life.

"As I looked upon these women, dressed with such modest purity, I began secretly to think that the Apostle was not wrong, when he spoke of women

adorning themselves with the *ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit; for the habitual gentleness of their expression, the calmness and purity of the lines in their faces, the delicacy and simplicity of their apparel, seemed of themselves a rare and peculiar beauty. I could not help thinking that fashionable bonnets, flowing lace sleeves, and dresses elaborately trimmed could not have improved even their outward appearance. Doubtless, their simple wardrobe needed but a small trunk in travelling from place to place, and hindered but little their prayers and ministrations.

"Now, it is true, all women are not called to such a life as this; but might not all women take a leaf at least from their book? I submit the inquiry humbly. It seems to me that there are many who go monthly to the sacrament, and receive it with sincere devotion, and who give thanks each time sincerely that they are thus made 'members incorporate in the mystical body of Christ,' who have never

thought of this membership as meaning that they should share Christ's sacrifices for lost souls, or abridge themselves of one ornament or encounter one inconvenience for the sake of those wandering sheep for whom he died. Certainly there is a higher economy which we need to learn,—that which makes all things subservient to the spiritual and immortal, and that not merely to the good of our own souls and those of our family, but of all who are knit with us in the great bonds of human brotherhood.

"The Sisters of Charity and the Friends, each with their different costume of plainness and self-denial, and other noble-hearted women of no particular outward order, but kindred in spirit, have shown to womanhood, on the battle-field and in the hospital, a more excellent way,—a beauty and nobility before which all the common graces and ornaments of the sex fade, appear like dim candles by the pure, eternal stars."

THE HEART OF THE WAR.

PEACE in the clover-scented air,
 And stars within the dome;
 And underneath, in dim repose,
 A plain, New-England home.
 Within, a murmur of low tones
 And sighs from hearts oppressed,
 Merging in prayer, at last, that brings
 The balm of silent rest.

I've closed a hard day's work, Marty, —
 The evening chores are done;
 And you are weary with the house,
 And with the little one.
 But he is sleeping sweetly now,
 With all our pretty brood;
 So come and sit upon my knee,
 And it will do me good.