

[From the Dollar Weekly Star.]  
A CHAPTER FOR WIVES.

"Well," said I, one fine morning last week, "I have the prospect of a leisure afternoon—a somewhat unusual thing with me—and, all being well, I will do a little needful shopping; call and pass an hour with my old friend Mrs. Ashburton, whom, on account of the distance, I have neglected of late, and then drop in and take a friendly cup of tea with my niece, Clara Whitford."

Having completed my household arrangements, I accordingly set out after an early dinner, and the shopping done made my first call. Mrs. Ashburton's warm welcome, pleasing talk and cheerful fireside would have proved strong temptations to induce me to accept her invitation to stay for the evening, had I not felt anxious to see my niece, whose residence was much nearer my own.

On arriving at Clara's door, I was not a little surprised to see no light in the front part of the house, "I am afraid they are not at home," thought I, with a regretful mental glance backward to the pretty home picture I had just left. But I was mistaken. A servant came in answer to my ring at the door-bell, and ushered me into the dining-room, lit the gas, and then went to summon her mistress. I had ample time to look about me before Clara made her appearance, and could not help admiring the perfect order and good taste which prevailed in the apartment and its furniture. I was the more pleased to notice this as my niece, when married, did not promise to become very notable as a housewife.

I was beginning to tire of waiting—my brisk walk over. I felt chilly in the fireless room—when Clara entered, fastening a little article of dress evidently just assumed. Her greeting was most cordial, and yet there was a shade of regret in her tone when our first salutations over, she said: "Why, my dear aunt, you did not let me know you were coming, and I should have been better prepared to receive you."

"Surely, Clara," I replied, "no preparation is needed before you can bestow a cup of tea on so near a relative as I am. Pray do not make my friendly call into a ceremonious visit or I shall be tempted to run away again in place of waiting till after tea, and begging Mr. Whitford's escort home."

"Pray dear aunt, do not think of such a thing. I will light this fire in a moment, and the room will be warm and comfortable."

So saying, Clara was about applying a light between the bars of the grate when I stopped her.

"You must have a fire somewhere, my dear," I said, "and where you were sitting when I arrived, will, I am sure, suit me best. If I am to disturb any of your arrangements I will leave you forthwith."

"Then, if so, aunt, you will have to excuse my taking you into the nursery."

"Anywhere to a warm fireside, Clara, but is Whitford from home?"

"No, aunt, he is here," replied my niece, her color rising as she spoke.

I laughingly congratulated her on her husband's liking for the company of her first-born; but perceiving no evidence of pleasure on her countenance, I asked if the baby was well.

"Oh, yes, quite so, thank you, aunt. To say the truth, it was my doing that we are in the nursery to-night, and Frederick is not too well pleased about it, but it saves so much trouble, and the other rooms have just been cleaned and put in order. But do not say a word," she added as she opened the nursery door.

My nephew advanced and shook me warmly by the hand, and then, turning to Clara, said, "I hope, my dear, 'I hope, my dear, you do not intend to make your aunt a nursery guest. If you do, I shall not wonder if her visits become still more rare.'"

I hastened to assure him that I had been brought there at my own request, and begged no difference might be made; but quietly ringing the bell, he desired the servant to light the dining-room fire, and bring word when it was well burnt. Clara bit her lip, and looked red and uncomfortable, while I, feeling still more so, occupied myself in admiring the baby. I could, however, distinguish easily enough, two or three little articles which convinced me that a tea equipage had just been removed; and certainly this was not what I should have expected to see at Clara's home, knowing the comfortable and even affluent income of her husband. I felt sorry that my unceremonious visit should have produced such an alteration in the arrangements; for I could tell by the production of sundry keys, etc., that many articles not in common

use were to be brought out and the evening meal deferred on my account. Besides, I felt grieved at Mr. Whitford's ill conceived vexation, not displayed towards me, but his wife.

At length we were summoned to a dining-room; and truly a wonderful change had been effected there. A bright fire illumined every corner, an elegant tea equipage was on the table; in short, everything looked—as I had hoped at first to find it—in accordance with the position of its owners. Moreover, the pleasant aspect of affairs banished the clouds from Mr. Whitford's face and so agreeably did the time pass, that I quite regretted when obliged to bid my niece "good night."

"Good night, dear aunt," said Clara, kissing me affectionately, "do come again but do let me know when to expect you."

"And then," added Mr. Whitford after the door was closed, "everything will be ready; the dining room fire will be lighted before your arrival. Dear aunt, what do you think of Clara's new notions of domestic economy? When we were first married she was rather ignorant of household matters;—now we are so exceedingly orderly and careful that every-thing is too good to use. The drawing-room first became so; then the dining-room under-went a thorough renovation, and the nursery resorted to for temporary convenience during the repairs, has become our regular abode, the other only being used on state occasions, probably our next remove will be into the kitchen. I go into other houses and find that their masters can introduce a friend at any time with the certainty of causing no embarrassment. In my home on the contrary, the call of a relative even, produces quite a revolution: for plate, china, in fact everything presentable, is laid up in lavender like the rooms. I wish you would say something to Clara on the subject, as I know you possess great influence in that quarter."

"Have you named the matter, Frederick?" I asked.

"Oh, yes, a thousand times, I think; but I cannot effect any change. I trust you will be more successful."

"I will try, at any rate," said I, as I took leave of my nephew-in-law.

Having thought over the matter, I arranged my plan of operation. I decided it would be better to try the effect of an opposite picture on Clara's mind, before giving utterance to any remonstrance, for I well knew that young housewives do not generally relish the pointed interruption of their elders. I therefore called on Clara—having previously given her due notice of my intention—to accompany me in a long ramble and I contrived to be near Mrs. Ashburton's just as tea-time was approaching, and we were thoroughly tired.

"Clara," said I "what is to prevent our obtaining rest and refreshment? I can insure you both, and besides, you are not quite a stranger to Mrs. Ashburton."

"Oh, dear aunt, I could not think of such a thing, we should be sure to cause inconvenience."

"You shall judge for yourself, Clara," I answered, "and if you think so half an hour hence, we will journey homeward."

The moment we were admitted, I frankly told my friend that I had come expressly to claim her oft-tendered hospitality for my niece and self, and we were tired but still had a long walk before us.

"How glad I am my house lay in your route!" replied she. "Tea is just coming in, and my husband will be here directly."

In a few moments he arrived, and we were all seated, prepared to join in the evening meal.

I noticed Clara's glances at the perfect order which surrounded us, and the elegant but simple preparations for the repast. Besides these, it was impossible not to see the thorough comfort diffused around us.

"My niece," said I to Mrs. Ashburton, "was afraid of causing you inconvenience by coming unawares, and taking two places at your tea-table by storm."

A cheery laugh from Mr. Ashburton, and a bright smile from his wife followed my words. "Mrs. Whitford," said the gentleman, "I am the most fortunate fellow in the world, for nothing ever causes my wife inconvenience, you understand me, I dare say—I mean none of those domestic invasions which are usually expected to cause a bustle. She has a peculiar theory of her own, which she most thoroughly reduces to practice, consequently we are always able to welcome a friend however unexpected he may be."

Clara blushed, and stammered a few words in reply; and perceiving her confusion, I changed the conversation.

On our way home, after spending a delightful evening, my niece was unusually silent, but at length she asked if I could tell her what theory Mr. Ashburton alluded to when he said—"Here she hesitated."

"I understand you, Clara," I answered, "and I can explain it in a few words. Mrs. Ashburton says that being sure of the daily presence of one guest at her table whom she wishes to honor above all others, she always prepares for that one, and is of course ready for any visitor at any time."

"But I saw no guests beside ourselves aunt."

"Did you not? And yet the person I allude to was there."

"Where?—whom do you mean? You are jesting."

"Indeed, my dear Clara, I am not. The one whom Mrs. Ashburton considers worthy of all honor is her husband. She says, and I think justly, that she should deem her marriage vow but illy kept if she made all attractive in the eye of a stranger, and grudged doing so for him whom she has promised to love, honor and obey—her husband and the father of her children."

Clara did not reply; but when we parted her moistened cheek that touched mine convinced me the lesson was taken home, and I have no doubt that when I next visit my niece, I shall find her opinion is changed as regards the guest most deserving of honor.

### PUNCH AND THE BLESSED BABY.

The London *Punch* has the following:

PRINCE BABY'S COURT CIRCULAR.—The great satisfaction which was given to the members of England by the faithful narrations about Prince Baby which were supplied during the recent tour of Prince Baby's parents, and the delight which was felt in reading, in a subsequent court circular, that he had been out for an airing, has induced his friend and godfather, Mr. Punch, to make arrangements for the regular preparation of a court circular that shall be devoted only to Prince Baby. The following is the chronicle of the past week:

Sunday—H. R. H., very good indeed. Slightly incensed after church at being interrupted in sucking the velvet on mamma's prayer-book; but instantly pacified. Grabbed at a wine-glass and threw it down, but only laughed at the pieces, and wanted another.

Monday—H. R. H. did not cry during the whole day. Observing from the window his royal parents going out for a ride, distinctly remarked "Tar-tar," innocently unconscious that they were out of hearing.

Tuesday—H. R. H.'s usual amiability was disturbed by a special petition, on the part of his head nurse, that he would put the coral into his mouth, instead of Shem, Ham, and Japhet, whom he endeavored to introduce there all at once. He was graciously pleased, however, to substitute the elephants for the family of Noah.

Wednesday—H. R. H. evinced a great desire to eat his toes. During a ride in the afternoon he distinctly pointed at a horse, and made a remark, which the head nurse is inclined to believe was "See" but which the second nurse considers to have been "Gee!"

Thursday—H. R. H., very sleepy; but the medical attendants did not think that the symptoms were in the least alarming, though his remonstrances on being moved certainly were. He was pleased to break a *sevres* cup in the forenoon, and to laugh very much at the crash.

Friday—H. R. H. much displeased at a bib being inserted under his double chin, and he spat out his nutriment with much vigor. Afterwards a sudden clutch at his royal mother's Dagmar brooch, hurt his hand, but he was delighted when the naughty brooch was well whipped.

Saturday—H. R. H. in the highest spirits, and kicked vehemently. An attempt to swallow his red sock was happily frustrated, and his royal father's watch went into his mouth instead. He enjoyed his evening's bath exceedingly, and utterly refused to allow himself to be removed from the water. At length an Angela kitten effected a diversion, and H. R. H. concluded the week by going to sleep with the affectionate kitten's tail in his hand.

### Varieties.

—As a lady of great personal beauty was walking along a narrow lane, she perceived, just behind her, a hawker of earthenware, driving an ass with two panniers laden with his stock in trade.

To give the animal and his master room to pass, the lady suddenly stepped aside, which so frightened the donkey that he ran away, and had not proceeded far, when he fell, and a great part of the crockery was broken. The lady, in her turn, became alarmed lest the man should load her with abuse, if not offer to insult her; but he merely exclaimed, "Never mind ma'am; Balaam's ass was frightened by an angel."

—A worthy couple in Detroit had a pair of twins baptized the other day, and in order that they might tell one from the other, tied a piece of ribbon around the arm of one, which a stupid servant-girl removed after the baptismal ceremony, and now they cannot tell "which is which."

—Mrs. Olive West of Wells, Me., completed her 75th year on the 7th inst. On that day she prepared breakfast for five persons, and spun nine skeins of woolen yarn, seven knots to the skein and eight skeins to the pound. Eight skeins is considered a smart day's work for any woman.

—Too many men no more carry their religion into their business than they would wear a life preserver in the parlor.

—Woman—the only endurable aristocrat—elects without ballot, governs without law, and decides without appeal.

—Chas. Mason, of New Haven, Ct. sold a Merino buck at the recent State Fair, for \$3,000.

—The income of the four Rothschilds of Europe, is estimated at \$9,000,000 a year—a thousand dollars an hour.

—The learned Buxtorf, whoever he may be, informs us that the name Eve is derived from a root signifying talk.

—A boy in Quincy, Mass., two years old, can "say his letters," spell three or four words, and do a "sum" in Arithmetic.

—Geranium leaves.—it is not generally known that the leaves of geranium are an excellent application for cuts, where the skin is rubbed off, and other wounds of the kind. One or two leaves must be bruised and applied on linen to the part, and the wound will become cicatrised in a short time.—*Miss Fry*.

—Fatigue jackets buttoned and double-breasted, are among late feminine fashions.

—The greatest genius is never so great, as when it is chastised and subdued by the highest reason.

—There is glory in Nature's star-eyes through the night, but there are tears in her flowery eyes in the morning.

—Manly spirit, as it is generally called, is often little else than the froth and foam of hard-mouthed insolence.

—Those men who are of the noblest dispositions, think themselves the happiest, when others share their happiness with them.

—Nothing can be more foolish than an idea which some parents have, that it is not respectable to set their children to work.

—The readiest and best way to find out what future duty will be, is to do present duty.

—Madrid is about to erect a monument to Columbus. The municipality has voted 800,000 reals; the committee has subscribed a part, and the rest will be paid for by the State. The place selected is in the street De los Recoletos, opposite the Mint.

—A famous swimming match recently took place in the British Channel, between Mr. Hetschell, of the French navy, and Capt. Saunders, an Englishman. The course was five measured miles at sea, with rather a high sea running. The Frenchman took the lead at first, and kept it up for a long time; but was ultimately passed by Captain Saunders. The distance was accomplished by the winner in one hour and fifty-six minutes and twenty-eight seconds.

—"You had better ask for manners than for money," said a finely-dressed gentleman to a beggar-boy who had asked for alms. "I asked for what I thought you had most of," was the boy's reply.

"I wonder where those clouds are going?" sighed Flora, pensively, as she pointed with her delicate finger to the delicate masses that floated in the sky. "I think they are going to thunder," said her brother.

—A cotemporary discovers that some of our military officers have four aids—promenade, serenade, lemonade and gasconade.