

“servants are not so good as they used to be.” This is surely an error. There cannot be a greater predisposition to misconduct in them now than formerly. It may be said, that there are more frequent instances of bad conduct; but this does not warrant the idea, that the servants of the present day have a degree of inborn viciousness from which those of times past were free. If all who rail at the negligences, the waste, the want of care, the dislike of work, and the liking for dress and for gadding, to which servants are as much addicted as their betters; if all such were themselves as free from fault as they would have their servants be, it would probably be found that the effect, what with precept and example combined, would be quite enough to banish this commonplace remark. The truth is, that the change which has taken place in the habits of the middle class, has produced a change, but a very natural change, in the habits of those of a more humble station. There exists now a greater degree of high living than formerly; and consequently, a want of frugality, a waste in all sorts of ways, formerly unknown. Persons of moderate income keep more company than persons of the same class used to keep; they imitate the late hours, and other fashionable habits which used to be reckoned among the privileges of their superiors in fortune, instead of wisely avoiding emulation in such things, and keeping to their own more simple, and less hazardous mode of life. What wonder, then, if we find the most humble copying those of the middling, when the middling are doing all they can to rival those of the highest rank.

Servants were formerly more the object of care with their employers than they have been of late. When ladies gave a considerable portion of their time to domestic duties, and prided themselves on their skill in household matters, they were not above maintaining a certain degree of friendly intercourse with their servants. This afforded opportunities for giving good counsel, and for superintending their conduct, and was a more efficient check upon them than “a good scolding now and then,” which many think better than “being always on the watch.”

In addressing myself to young persons, it may not be considered impertinent or foreign to the general purpose of this work, to offer a few remarks upon the subject of com-