

**HATTIE'S MISTAKE;
OR, MOTHERS
AND MOTHERS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649599592

Hattie's Mistake; Or, Mothers and Mothers by L. E. S.

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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L. C. S.

London:
WILLIAM HUNT AND COMPANY,
12, PATERNOSTER ROW.
1882.

1072 . 5

TO MY FATHER,

THE

REV. SAMUEL GARRATT,

HON. CANON OF NORWICH.

HATTIE'S MISTAKE;

OR,

MOTHERS *and* MOTHERS.

CHAPTER I.

"IN A MUDDLE."

SOMEHOW or other things would not go straight with Meg Morrison that bright, sunshiny day in August. Everything seemed to go just as she didn't mean it to. Baby cried at the very times she was most wanted to be quiet; the meat the butcher had brought was tough, and she knew Jim would grumble; the milk for the pudding boiled

over, and, besides the waste, gave her a great deal of extra work in making the stove bright and clean again; and, to crown all, it was washing day; and everybody knows what *that* means!

Poor Meg hurried about from one thing to the other, as it was getting late and Jim would soon be home; but her heart was heavy, and so her hands made little progress.

Instead of the merry song that sometimes accompanied her work, she was busy counting over her grievances.

"It's a hard life," she said to herself. "It's a hard life: I'm sure if I'd have known it, I'd never have gone and got married. Why, when I was at home, I was as merry and bright as any girl in the village, and I guess Jim liked me for that; but now I'm just about as cross and worried as a woman *can* be at times." And she stopped in the midst of her "tidying" to brush away a tear. "Jim

don't look at me as if he cared how I look now, not as he used to; and he used to make a good bit of my looks. Yes: it's a hard life, —just work, work, work, but not much thanks."

"Good morning, Mrs. Morrison; you look a bit down to-day: nothing wrong, I hope?" And a woman a good deal older than Meg came in unceremoniously through the open door, and seated herself on the nearest chair.

"Down! I should just think I *might* be. I'm that tired I don't know what to do, and it's getting on, and my husband will soon come home, and — Oh, dear! there's baby crying again!" And poor Meg caught up the baby and rocked it violently up and down in her arms.

"Yes, poor thing: it's right hard for you, it is; but we're all alike. Now, if you was to go and take a peep into *my* house, you'd see *I* was in a pretty muddle, just like you; but it

don't do to go and worry yourself about it. Take things easy, Mrs. Morrison : that's what *I* says and does. Take things easy and comfortable, and never mind what the men says."

Now it *did* occur to Meg that it was rather strange that if Mrs. Green *was* in such a muddle as she said, that she should be out of her house instead of in it, so she said, rather sharply,—

"Well, Mrs. Green, perhaps you'll go and see after *your* business, and leave me to *mine*; for things won't be over easy for me when my husband comes home, if he don't find his dinner ready."

"Oh, certainly, I'll go if I'm not wanted; but I came just to ask you if you'd like me to get you anything in town! I saw a bonnet last time I was there as would suit you wonderful, Mrs. Morrison."

Now Meg, it must be confessed, was very