

**WIVES AND
HOUSEWIVES: A
STORY FOR THE TIMES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649538652

Wives and Housewives: A Story for the Times by Mary Hooper

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

MARY HOOPER

**WIVES AND
HOUSEWIVES: A
STORY FOR THE TIMES**

WIVES
AND
HOUSEWIVES;

A Story for the Times.

BY
MARY HOOPER,

AUTHOR OF "LITTLE DINNERS," ETC., ETC., AND PROFESSOR OF DOMESTIC ECONOMY
AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE SCHOOL OF ARTS, SCIENCE, AND LITERATURE.



London:
HOULSTON AND SONS,
PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

MDCCCLXXV.

251. c. 263

“*Give us wealth, and the home shall exist.*” But that is a very imperfect and inglorious solution of the problem, and therefore no solution. ‘*Give us wealth.*’ You ask too much. Few have wealth ; but all must have a home. Men are not born rich ; and in getting wealth the man is generally sacrificed, and often is sacrificed without acquiring wealth at last.

“I think it plain that this voice of communities and ages, ‘*Give us wealth, and the good household shall exist,*’ is vicious, and leaves the whole difficulty untouched. It is better, certainly, in this form, ‘*Give us your labour, and the household begins.*’”—EMERSON.

WIVES AND HOUSEWIVES.

CHAPTER I.



Y dear, I think we really must give a dance next month. Lily has been to a dozen parties at least, and we have not returned one."

"A ball, and a grand dinner *à la Russe* next week. I shall be ruined!"

"Now, Fred, it's senseless to talk like that. Can we with any propriety go out and not ask people back?"

"Well, I suppose not: but I know inviting me out to dinner is like asking a postman to take a long walk. I am tired of cold cod, greasy mutton, and insipid *entrées*."

"Indeed! you are becoming vastly particular!"

"Not at all. I am always satisfied with a chop or cutlet at my own table; but when I come home worn and wearied from the City, I fail to find the pleasure of dressing and driving, often a long distance, in order to eat a bad dinner and drink wine which unfits me for work the next day."

"But how are we to keep up our circle if we do not go out?"

"Well, possibly we might judiciously narrow that circle."

"Oh, really," pettishly responded Mrs. Williams, "one is to give up one's friends and one's life's work, just as it is beginning to bear fruit, because you are sleepy in the evening."

"You are unjust, Anne. I wish to give up no real

friend, but only some of the acquaintances, and for whom I, at least, do not care. I have told you often of late that things are very bad in the City, and we spend too much money."

"I never in my life said I wished to do anything requiring your assistance that you did not try to make me miserable. I do not hear other people complain of bad times; and it must be only stinginess which causes you to raise such objections when I am simply asking for what is needful to keep up our proper appearance for the sake of the children."

"There, there," replied the vanquished husband, "don't worry me; do as you like, only let the affair be as little expense as possible."

"Of course I shall be careful about that; but Lily wants a new dress or two, and some other trifles. Will you write me a cheque?"

"For how much?"

"I cannot make less than fifty pounds do."

"It is quite impossible to give you so much now," he continued, with a sort of groan; "it is only ten days since you had a hundred for dress. You must make twenty do."

"Well, if I must, I must; but what are twenty pounds for two or three dresses and an opera cloak, and no end of little things. I feel anxious Lily should look her best, for I fancy Arthur Arkroyd is thinking of her."

"You don't say so! I hope you are mistaken."

"And why, pray?"

"He will expect a fortune with her, and I cannot give her anything."

"All you will have to do will be to inquire into *his* means. If he asks you anything about yours, say what you have to give will be left in your will."

"I am not sure but that it would be raising false expectations. I often wish, Anne, we had never left the Terrace,

but had lived quietly there till this day. If we had done so, I should have been a rich man now, and been able to give Lily and the other girls fortunes on their marriage."

"Nonsense! They have now a position in life they never could have attained had we continued to live in that narrow style."

"A style far beyond what was necessary for our parents; rather beyond, too, that in which your brother has grown rich, and in which I certainly found more comfort and happiness than that in which we now live."

Mrs. Williams sighed and said, "I have devoted all my energies, continually making great sacrifices of my own ease, towards maintaining a position equal to our neighbours, and this is all the reward I get!"

"If I blame you," Mr. Williams said, wearily, "I blame myself still more that I did not check the small beginnings. However, let us do what we can to moderate expenses now." So saying, he handed his wife the cheque, and she went to her daughter, whom she found in the morning-room intent on a novel.

"Now, Lily," she said, "I have coaxed papa to give the ball, and got a little cheque; so we will go into town at once and get your dresses."

"All right, mother. Cook has just been up for orders. I told her to have something nice for our dinner, and give the schoolroom the cold mutton."

"Dear me! I shall have Miss Smith grumbling again; they have had cold meat all the week, I think."

"How tiresome of her! I am sure it's very nice with pickles. I remarked to cook we had not had salmon for ages, and wasn't it in now? and she laughed, and said perhaps I would like lamb too!"

"Well, dear, one would be almost as costly as the other in January, and papa has just been grumbling so at expenses and the bad times, that we must only have such

luxuries when we have company. There, run and get dressed, and we will give the order at Roux for the dinner next week. I mean it all to be well done, just to show those Newmans we can manage an *à la Russe* as well as they. I shall let Roux do the thing entirely; it will be cheaper in the end."

"And save all the trouble," chimed in Lily, in a very preoccupied tone of voice.

"Come, come," said Mrs. Williams, "the morning is slipping away, and you are not dressing to go out."

"Do sit down a minute, mother. I have something very particular to tell you. You know Mr. Arkroyd took me down to supper last night, and among other things he asked me, could I live on five hundred a-year?"

"And what did you say?"

"That I had no notion; that I supposed it was awfully little; and he said he was frightened, and afraid I was extravagant. I did not wish him to think that, you know, because——"

"You like him, child."

"Well, yes, mother; very much. I think he is awfully nice. And, of course, if other people could live on five hundred a-year, we could. He is coming in to talk to you and papa to-night; and please mind, I would marry him if he had only five hundred shillings in the world!"

"I think, my dear, it is well you have parents inclined to be less romantic, and who certainly will not see you sacrificed. Five hundred a-year may seem a large sum to you, but in these days it is really a small income."

"Oh, mother, do not be dreadful. I do not care for riches, and I know Arthur would make me happy."

"Well, well, we shall hear what papa says."

Arthur Arkroyd was very much in love with pretty Lilian Williams, and when he formally proposed for her that evening, hesitated only just a little as he mentioned the