

THE DINING-ROOM

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The Dining-Room by Mrs. Loftie

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MRS. LOFTIE

**THE
DINING-ROOM**

THE DINING-ROOM.



LAMBETH WARE.

Front.

THE DINING-ROOM.

By MRS. LOFTIE.

"The best ornament for a dining-room is a well-cooked dinner."



LONDON:
MACMILLAN AND CO.

1878.

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175 . f . 69 .





PREFACE.

THIS little book is not intended for people who can afford to employ skilled decorators, nor yet for those who can give costly entertainments.

It merely contains a few practical suggestions for inexperienced housekeepers of small income, who do not wish to make limited means an excuse for disorder and ugliness. It treats of the family dining-room as a place on which care and thought rather than money must be expended in order to produce even moderate comfort.

There is no special reference made to dinner parties, the author agreeing with Thackeray, that "the dinner at home ought to be the centre of the whole system of dinner-giving. Your usual style of meal, that is, plenteous, comfortable, and

in its perfection, should be that to which you welcome your friends, as it is that of which you partake yourself. . . . If I had my way, and my plans could be carried out, dinner-giving would increase as much on the one hand as dinner-giving snobbishness would diminish." Hospitality in its true sense has become a rare virtue among us. The last possible reason now for asking a man to dine would be that he wanted a dinner. If at every meal we all had a vacant place laid for the angel who might come in unawares, and were prepared to welcome an uninvited guest cordially to what we could afford for ourselves, we might well dispense with formal dinner parties. Certainly to invite more guests than our ordinary staff of servants can manage is to ensure the discomfort of all concerned.

It would be of course impossible in so small a space to discuss fully any of the questions started. The great object of these books is not to lay down hard and fast laws, but to lead people to think for themselves, and aim at having in their houses what is suitable, comfortable, and useful, as then they will also have what is beautiful in the highest and widest sense of the word.





CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.	
	PAGE
OF FEEDING ROOMS IN GENERAL	I
<i>The Salle-à-Manger.</i> —A Company Drawing-room.—A Room in which Dinner can be served and eaten.—Suburban Ground-floor Dining-rooms.—An extemporised Country Dining-room.—School-room Art.—Principles of Harmony, Proportion and Colour.—Fashion.—Knickknacks.—False Designs.—Comfort as well as Beauty.—An Æsthetic Dinner.	
CHAPTER II.	
THE DINING-ROOM	23
Fireplaces.—Punctuality at Meals.—Up stairs Cooking.—Breakfast.—Luncheon.—Sidetable Luncheons.—Light.—Lifts.—Dining-rooms in the Seventeenth Century.	
CHAPTER III.	
SIDEBOARDS, TABLES, AND CHAIRS	46
What do we Want?—"Baronial Sideboards."—Telescope Tables.—"Gothic" Tables.—Comfortable Chairs.	
CHAPTER IV.	
THE PARLOUR	71
Screens.—Overcrowding.—Discontent.—Cleanliness.—Book-cases.—At the Dining-room Door.—Passages.	