

to her grandfather demanded that she should lose no time in letting the mill-owner know that the fleeces were found. Now it was a very unusual thing for one of the hands to ask to speak to the master, with whom they never came in contact; but Alice determined to ask for an interview, feeling that in such an important and delicate matter it was best to go to headquarters; so on reaching her workshop she told the foreman she wished particularly to speak to the master when he came to the factory. Martin, guessing that her errand had something to do with Caleb, who, he thought, had probably repented of his resignation, promised to speak to the owner and make an appointment for her, on hearing which Alice went to her loom, feeling that the way was already paved to her unpleasant duty. At twelve o'clock, when the machinery was stopped, Martin told Alice she would find the master in his private room, whither, with a beating heart, Alice at once went.

"Well, my girl, and what can I do for you?" said the master, as Alice stood with clasped hands before him.

"If you please, sir, I have found the fleeces."

"What fleeces?"

"The German fleeces which were lost three months ago," said Alice, thinking what a short memory Mr. Turner had.

"Ah! to be sure; I had forgotten for the moment, though I never forget they cost me my best and oldest workman. But how do you know these are the lost fleeces?"

"Here is a piece, sir," said Alice, producing the specimen she had in her pocket.

"I can't identify it; Caleb Jordan is the only man who can do that."

"He has done so, sir. He is my grandfather, and as soon as I showed him this piece he exclaimed at once, 'It is the German fleece.' He does not know where I got it from. I have not told anyone yet."

"And where did you get it from?"

Alice told him as clearly as possible how and where she had seen the fleeces, adding how sorry she was to get Patrick Kelly into trouble, but that she could not see her grandfather fretting himself into his grave, as he was doing, and keep silent for a day.

"The girl is dying, you say? Humph, well Kelly must be arrested here," said Mr. Turner, speaking more to himself than to Alice.

"Arrested! Oh, please don't do that, sir, with Susie dying; besides, I am sure he never thought or meant to steal the fleeces. He owed me and grandfather a grudge, and hid them to get us into trouble; it was not stealing, sir," said Alice, blushing at her own boldness.

"It was uncommonly like it. However, I will see what can be done," said Mr. Turner, with an amused smile; "meanwhile, nothing can be done till I have seen your grandfather, so go home and send him to me, and, as perhaps you can be of some use to the girl Kelly, you need not return to-day. I'll speak to Martin," continued Mr. Turner, and Alice made a curtsey and retired.

When she got home Alice found Caleb so unwilling to obey the summons that she was obliged to tell him all she knew about the fleeces before she could induce him to go, though he went quickly enough when he learnt the truth. Caleb was closeted for an hour with his master, during which time they arranged that Mr. Turner should call ostensibly to see Susie, and should take an opportunity while there of seeing the fleeces; for, though he had no doubt of the truth of Alice's statement, he could not dismiss Kelly simply on her word. He had decided not to prosecute him, thinking, with Caleb and Alice, that his motive in taking the fleeces was not dishonesty, but purely spite, to throw suspicion on Caleb. Indeed, Mr. Turner's

great object seemed to be to get Caleb back; all the rest was comparatively of little consequence to him, beyond the pity he felt for the poor mother, who had, besides the trial of losing her daughter, the additional burden of her son's disgrace and dismissal to bear.

"Where does Kelly live?"

"Near me, sir, on the Common," replied Caleb.

"Well, then, I'll walk there with you at once. If it should get wind in the factory that you have been here Kelly may suspect something, and make off with the fleeces. In consideration of the girl's illness I shall give him a week's notice; I won't dismiss him at once, but I shall expect you back to-morrow morning, Caleb."

Caleb, who was only too anxious to be in harness again, made a feeble protest, but Mr. Turner saw clearly enough he meant to come, and, dismissing the subject of the fleeces, he turned the conversation to other matters. "Just wait outside till I come back," said Mr. Turner when they reached the cottage, where Alice was sitting reading to Susie. Mrs. Kelly was overwhelmed with confusion at the honour done her by a visit from Mr. Turner, who, being a very kind-hearted man, could not bring himself to tell her of the double object of his visit; so, after saying a few kind words to Susie, and giving her a sovereign to buy her some nourishing food, and telling her her wages should be continued as usual, he asked to speak to Alice alone in the next room.

"Now, where did you see the fleeces?" said Mr. Turner, in an undertone.

"In that cupboard," said Alice, pointing to the cupboard, to which Mr. Turner at once walked and opened the door.

But the matter was not so nearly settled as he fondly hoped, for, to his disappointment and Alice's dismay, the cupboard was empty.

"They were there last night, piled up to the very top," was all Alice could say.

"Come outside, we can't talk here. Now, I don't think your grand-daughter looks the kind of girl to deceive us, Caleb; but there are no fleeces in there. The cupboard is empty."

"Empty! empty! Alice, where did you get that piece of fleece from?"

"Where I told you, grandfather," said Alice, ready to cry with vexation and discomfort.

"I must speak to Mrs. Kelly. Evidently Kelly, hearing Alice had been here, feared detection, and has made off with the fleeces. You go in to the girl and send the mother out here," said Mr. Turner to Alice.

By dint of a few judicious questions Mr. Turner elicited Kelly had been in and out several times last evening, though what he was doing his mother did not know, unless it was letting the cold air into the house to kill his sister. He seemed to be busy, though, for she remembered he had wanted a pick-axe, and, when she asked him if he was going to break the ice in the duck-pond for his sister, had been very angry, and told her to mind her own business.

Mr. Turner and Caleb exchanged glances, and, dismissing the woman, Mr. Turner proposed they should go to the duck-pond, where they had very little doubt the fleeces would be found. Their suspicions were soon turned to certainty, for on reaching the pond they found the ice had been broken, and after a careful search Caleb discovered a few fragments of fleece sticking to the edges of the ice, but that not a shadow of doubt might remain Mr. Turner had the pond dragged that afternoon, when the lost German fleeces were brought up.

Patrick Kelly utterly denied all knowledge of the fleeces when taxed with having abstracted and hidden them; but, as there was not the least doubt as to his theft, Mr. Turner

gave him a week's notice, adding that but for his sister's sake he would have prosecuted him. As it was, Susie never heard of her brother's disgrace, for the bleeding returned, and she died before the week had expired. The end was very peaceful; she had suffered so much that she had no wish to live, and, to Alice's comfort, Susie told her that since she had known her intimately she did not fear death. This was the first time Alice learnt that her influence had been of any service to others, and it was a very great encouragement.

But though Alice was not aware that her example was becoming a power for good in the factory, other people were. There was a decided improvement in the conduct as well as in the outward appearance of the girls of Oafham Mills; their tone was raised, and an observant mind would have perceived how much even one girl among many can do by striving after a higher life. She may fall far short of her own ideal, as we all do; but if her standard be higher than that of the people around her, she will surely raise them to a higher level. This Alice was doing, and doing none the less well that she was unconscious of her own influence until one day, when, to her amazement, Jack Martin, the foreman, asked her to be his wife, telling her he had learnt to love her first for her beauty; but when he knew her better, for her real worth. At first Alice hesitated to leave her grandparents; but when Martin proposed to live in the Kellys' old house, quite close to Caleb and his wife, Alice waived her objections. But her marriage, though she no longer worked at the factory, did not lessen her influence over the girls, for she and Caleb were the means of establishing a dining-room for the women close to the factory, to which she acted as cook, the hands all paying a small sum for their dinner, which was at first supplemented by a donation from Mr. Turner; but soon the dining-room became self-supporting, and was a great boon to them all.

And as Jack Martin saw his pretty wife at the head of the table, reading aloud some instructive book to the girls she had done so much to improve, his heart beat with joy to think he had won such a prize in the lottery of life; and he told Alice that evening, what he had never acknowledged before, that it was jealousy which prompted the severe lecture he had given her the day she was late from dinner.

"Ah," said Alice, laughing, "it was the memory of that scolding which prompted me to start a dining-room."

But Jack Martin knew better.

[THE END.]

LETTERS OF INVITATION, ETC.

JUDGING from the epistles which I have seen, and the questions put by our girls as to letters of invitation, inquiries respecting servants' characters, and modes of address, such as various circumstances may require, a few brief rules may prove acceptable.

It is quite clear that amongst all those branches of education so highly cultivated by our young people in the present day, the subject under consideration, together with many others pertaining to good breeding, have been much, if not altogether, neglected.

You amongst my readers who are entering on the duties of a matron in your own house, or filling the place of a deceased mother in that of your father, should at once make yourself acquainted with the usages of your class in society, supposing you belong to its higher circles. As a commencement, let us consider the question of invitations to dinner parties.

The following is the style of printed card suitable for such an occasion:—

Captain and Mrs. Reynolds Request the honour of Mr. and Mrs. Featherston's and The Misses Featherston's Company at Dinner, Monday, the 29th of January, At 8 o'clock. 90, Hans Place,]	[The favour of an answer is requested.
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It must be quite understood, however, that while no limitation is made as to the number of daughters invited, in no case can more than two accept. If several be already "out," they must take turns with one another. When two sing together, their society may prove more desirable than their absence, otherwise it is in better taste for one only to accompany the parents.

Should there be a son, a separate card must be sent to him. You should also remember that with reference to dinners—and dinners only—the host's name is united with that of the hostess in giving the invitations; they are not supposed to give "At Homes," nor any other description of entertainment for afternoon or evening invitation. Observe, also, that as on a visiting card, so on a printed invitation, the sender's address must be printed at the left-hand corner, and that with the exception of the guests' names (for which two empty lines are left under the senders' names) and the date and figure denoting the hour, the whole is printed, ready for use.

But supposing the invitation to be altogether informal, as it would be for a dinner within the week, or for a luncheon, it would be unsuitable to send a printed card; a friendly note should be written, the terms of which must be determined by the degree of intimacy existing between your proposed guests and yourself.

Should the invitation be for any other description of entertainment than a dinner, whether for the afternoon or evening, large or small, the name of the hostess alone appears on the card as sending it, and the order of the inscription is somewhat changed. For instance, the name of the hostess must follow, instead of precede, those of her guests.

Mr. and Mrs. St. Clair And Party, Mrs. George McIvor, July 10th. 4 to 6.	[Music (or Garden Party), weather permitting.
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When the word "party" is substituted for the specification of daughters, and designed to include an invitation to guests on a visit, no separate card need be sent to a son, as that term would include him. It is quite permissible to use a private visiting card for afternoon and evening entertainments, filling it up in a delicate small hand according to the form above indicated.

All cards of invitation may be sent by post, enclosed in an envelope, although certainly not a visiting card, used as such only. If your proposed guest be an honourable, or such a prefix belong to yourself, it must never be written or printed on a visiting or invitation card, nor should a coat-of-arms, crest, or monogram appear upon one, for, although foreign, it is not an English custom.

The form of address, such as the individual styles himself on his own visiting card, should

be that inscribed on your card of invitation; thus, if your friend be "Honourable," the title must be dropped and only written on the outer envelope; were it a lady, direct to "the Hon. Mary C—," not "the Hon. Miss;," if she be a deceased peer's widow, style her "Mary, Lady W—," unless she be the mother of the heir, in which case her Christian name is dropped. Upon an invitation card the whole title (if above an honourable) should be written, as the Countess of A—," just as you would inscribe it on the envelope; whereas, were you writing a friendly note, you would say, "My dear Lady," and in speaking, also, of a peer or peeress (unless in the case of a duke or duchess) you would simply say "Lord, or Lady —."

The correct spelling of your guests' names cannot be too strictly insisted upon. It is a matter of no little importance to many, for very trifling differences serve to distinguish one family from another—a distinction of which the owner may have good cause to be tenacious. Do not imagine that any carelessness in your writing may be excused; it is positively ill-bred to scribble, to make blots or erasures, or to write omitted words between the lines. Only the closest intimacy could plead a sufficient excuse for such blemishes; as to illegible writing, it is inexcusable under any circumstances. Lastly, on no account send invitations to dinners or to entertainments on post-cards.

Let us now suppose that, from whatever cause, you are not exactly in a position to give what might be termed fashionable entertainments, and that to send printed invitation cards would be out of keeping with the sort of hospitality you give, or take. I will, therefore, presume that you have received a homely, informal invitation to dinner, or to spend the evening. Some of you may never yet have had to answer a note of this kind. Thus you might take a hint from the two specimens that follow, beginning half-way down the page.

"MY DEAR MRS. BLAKE,

"My sister unites with me in thanking you for your kind invitation to spend the evening with you on Thursday next, of which it will afford us much pleasure to avail ourselves.

"With our united best regards to Mr. Blake and yourself,

"Believe me,

"Sincerely yours,

"MARY GRAY.

"Saturday, Jan 19th, 1884."

Or else the form of the note might be changed a little, thus:—

"MY DEAR MRS. BLAKE,

"It is very good of you to invite my sister and me to join your family party at dinner on Thursday next at seven o'clock. We both unite in thanking you, and accept the invitation with much pleasure.

"Believe me,

"Very sincerely (or affectionately) yours,

"MARY GRAY."

Such notes may be worded in dozens of ways, and you should practise composing and transposing them in every variety of way.

Supposing that you must write to a stranger for the character of a servant, you might address her thus:—

"Miss (or Mrs.) Robinson presents her compliments to Mrs. Wood, and would feel much obliged to her for any information respecting the character of Jane Stone. Having applied for a situation as nurse, Miss Robinson wishes to know whether she be thoroughly trustworthy and experienced, clean, good-tempered, and a fair needlewoman. Also, how long she was in Mrs. Wood's service, and for what cause she left her."

Begin your letters and notes half-way down the page, and make no abbreviations, nor ever subscribe yourself to a friend, or person in your own position in life, "Yours truly," much less "Yours, etc."

Servants should address their mistress in speaking as "Ma'am," in writing as "Madam," "Respected Madam," "My Lady," or, under some circumstances, as "Dear Mistress," and subscribe themselves at the end of the letter, "I remain, dear Mistress" (or "Madam"), "your obedient servant," or "Yours respectfully." If desiring to be remembered to any member of the family, she may say, "Please to give my duty" (or "respects," or "respectful remembrances") "to my master" (or "the young ladies"). She should never address, nor speak of, her master or mistress by their surnames; nor use the prefix "Miss" to any grown-up member of the family in addressing her, although, if not her mistress, she must speak of her by her surname and title ("Lady," "Mrs.," or "Miss," as the case may be). To speak of a master or mistress, or address them in writing, or by word of mouth, as "Mr. Black" or "Mrs. White" would mark her at once as of a low class of servants, unacquainted with the manners of those who have lived in superior situations.

In giving her address at her employer's house, a servant should always write beneath her own name, "At James Black's, Esq." It is a very ignorant breach of propriety to omit the name of a master or mistress to whom the house belongs, and make it appear that it is her own. This will add another line to the address, so care must be taken to leave sufficient room for all, without beginning at the top of the envelope and making it look like a washing bill.

Having given a few words of friendly advice to domestic servants, who, however respectably connected and well educated for their position, may yet lack a little teaching on the subjects under consideration, I now offer a few words of advice to those young people engaged in shops or as milliners and dressmakers. Persons who associate with the nobility are naturally familiar with the style in which letters are to be addressed to them, but as circumstances may require some of our girls to write or send parcels of goods to them, who do not associate with them in private life, it may be desirable to give two or three rules for their guidance.

If the parcel or letter be addressed to the wife of a knight—as Sir John Brown—direct simply "Lady Brown"; and, as comparatively few wives of baronets take their proper title, "Dame"—unless in an exceptional case—address her also as "Lady Brown." But if you have to direct to the baronet, be careful not to omit the distinguishing adjunct after his name, usually abbreviated as "Bart." Again: if writing to a peer's daughter (as I before observed in reference to invitation cards), the father being a baron, address her as "The Honourable Mildred Boyle," not "The Honourable Miss B.," or if the father be a viscount, earl, or marquis, being styled "Lady" in her own right, address her as "The Lady Arabella Howard"; but if she be styled "Lady" in right of her husband's rank as a peer, you should drop her Christian name, and simply address her as "The Lady Lawrence." Supposing that you had to direct a parcel to a countess or viscountess, style them as "The Right Honourable the Countess (or Viscountess) W.," to a marchioness, "The Most Noble the —," and a duchess, "Her Grace the Duchess of —."

We must now warn you against directing to any lady with the prefix of her husband's professional rank; of the extreme vulgarity of this practice I cannot speak too decidedly. A man's professional standing confers no sort

of position of precedence on his wife whatsoever, be he a bishop, an admiral, general, judge, or anything else however honourable to himself. Amongst women no rank exists, whether married or single, save that which they inherit as a birthright, or to which they are entitled through marriage. Of course, in the *middle ranks of life*, when no person who has any legal precedence is present, it would be quite natural and seemly to give the chief place of honour to the wife of a man who held considerable professional rank; someone must sit by the host at dinner, or be led down to supper before the rest; and thus a little complimentary rank is naturally, though gratuitously, accorded them. But never either address or speak of any lady by her husband's professional title. Were it correct to do so in one case, it would be equally so in all others; and who would like to be addressed as "Mrs. Undertaker Jinks?" or "Mrs. Chief-Inspector of Nuisances?" But there

are exceptions to most rules, and even in this; because, if you have taken a doctor's degree, and earned for yourself such a prefix to your name, *à la bonne heure*, make use of it if you please; but were I to express an opinion on the subject, I should prefer styling myself Mrs. or Miss Elizabeth Warren, M.D., or D.C.L., than "Mrs. Dr. Warren."

Although most of my girl readers are anxious to become acquainted with the polite and friendly usages of society, such as those with a sketch of which I have just supplemented many previous articles of a kindred nature, there are some who make a jest of such rules. I therefore conclude with a word to these. So long as the world lasts there must be a right and a wrong way of doing everything—nothing is too insignificant to claim a thought that could set another person at ease, spare them a feeling of slight or wrong, or prevent a misunderstanding between you and them. The simplest usages of

society are all based on good, kindly, and delicate feeling. If you feel a contempt for them, you should exchange your surroundings for those of some half-civilised country; although be assured that even there you would find yourself bound by rules quite as rigid—rules, moreover, any infringement of which might possibly cost you your head! So you have little reason to complain of those which regulate the words and ways of the well educated and refined. Bear gratefully in mind that they were instituted for your own benefit, and to afford you, equally with society in general, a safeguard against all neglect, as well as against an undue and intrusive familiarity; and that safeguard of generally received opinion and custom precludes, moreover, the painful necessity of self-assertion, or of asking for explanations of the conduct of others, which prove at once antagonistic in character and essentially undignified also.

SOPHIA F. A. CAULFEILD.



POPPIE.

AUNT DIANA.

By ROSA NOUCHETTE CAREY, Author of "Nellie's Memories," "Not Like Other Girls," "Esther," etc.

CHAPTER X.

ROGER ENJOYS HIS BREAKFAST.

"HERE beginneth the first chapter of Alison's failures," whispered Alison, in a funny little voice, as she encountered Roger on her way downstairs on Monday morning, and she laughed merrily as she shook her key basket exultantly in his face. Roger opened his eyes very widely at this, then he stepped back a few paces and looked at her admiringly.

"How ever did you get possession of that thing?" he exclaimed. "Do you know, Ailie, my dear, that shabby little brown basket has been a bone of contention between Miss Leigh and Missie for the last month. Miss Leigh clings to it as her sole hope, and refuses to give it up. It has ended by Missie's neatly abstracting it at night. She has done it three or four times. Poor Miss Leigh! I verily believe this has been the last straw that has broken the camel's back. She has grown quite pale and thin over it."

"Yes, I know. Poppie told me all about it. Well," in an amused tone, "I have only paid Missie in her own coin.

Thanks to my good habits, I was dressed before she thought of waking, so I stole in, got my key basket, and wished Missie good morning at the same time. I am afraid she will come down dreadfully cross."

"As though that were anything new," returned Roger, contemptuously, as he took up the paper and retired with it to the window, while Alison busied herself with the coffee pot. She thought he was too much engrossed with his news to pay attention to her movements. She little knew the quiet looks that followed her as she flitted about the room, placing chairs, arranging the breakfast-table, giving little finishing touches. She even brought in a vase of flowers from the other room.

"I do not think any meal looks well without flowers," she said, cheerfully. "If I were ever so poor, I would go without things and buy a plant or a basket of ferns to set off my table. Ever since I have been at home I have missed flowers in the dining-room."

Roger's answer was an inexplicable sort of grunt. Flowers were not much in his line. He liked to see them "all a-growing and a-blowing," as he often said, but he hated to assist at what he termed "a wholesale slaughter of the innocents;" and it was a favourite theory of his that things were best in their places, and that he never could rid himself of the idea that plants had feelings as well as life, and that those feelings could be wounded. He always groaned over a dismembered rose-bush, and would insist that not even a turkscap enjoyed decapitation, and that a lily shed white blood when she was gathered from her stock. But, in spite of this Philistine fancy, a subtle sense of comfort stole into the young man's heart as he watched his sister's brisk movements. Alison's graceful young figure was such a contrast to poor Miss