

Of course there would be a certain amount of outlay in commencing the business, but from six to ten pounds would supply all your stock-in-trade—appliances, paper of different kinds, boards, binders' cloth, etc. A full list of all such essential requisites, and nearly all of them with their several prices named, will be found in Vol. II. of the *GIRL'S OWN PAPER*, page 342. The whole process is likewise given (*see* also pages 426 and 810); and we may encourage those who desire to acquire the art at home by saying, that others, who have had no further instruction, have written to tell of their perfect success through the study of these directions. It would be well to obtain permission at a stationer's to hang up a framed notice, advertising your business and address, and to obtain trade orders from the stationer also. The work is by no means fatiguing, as there is no occasion for standing during much of the process.

Having suggested many home occupations

in this part of our present series, I may conclude it with an out-of-home variety of work, and one that may offer a living to women of both the upper, higher-middle, and the domestic servant classes.

The profession of "Lady Courier" is one that might prove successful to gentlewomen and other well-educated women of middle-age, or certainly not less than thirty years of age. But for this, at least three languages should be acquired—German, French, and Italian; also a thorough acquaintance with the money of each country, the hotels and their charges, the best places for breaking long journeys, etc. She should be active, willing to aid in packing, good-tempered, and not disposed to make difficulties, nor to find fault with accommodation, or food, so far as she is herself concerned.

"Maid Couriers" might be even more likely to find employment, and to the abovenamed duties she would have to add personal attend-

ance on her mistress in every department in which a lady's-maid should be qualified. But those who are already experienced in such domestic service, are very rarely acquainted with foreign languages, or with one only, and that but imperfectly. Thus, to any who aspire to holding a superior position, as "Courier-Maid," there will be much to learn.

I have now offered some suggestions, and information on training to be obtained at the Technical College for Women in Liverpool, in Plain Sewing and Cutting-out; I have spoken of Lace Mending, Pattern Working, of a new field for Wardrobe Women, of Cameo Sculpture, China Mending, Wood Carving and Wood Engraving, Bookbinding, of a Lady Courier and Maid Courier. Much remains to be said on the momentous subject of remunerative occupations for women, and perhaps not the least important amongst them will be found in the next part of this series.

(To be concluded.)

## À PROPOS DE BOTTES.



**N** the proper care of boots and shoes were better understood, it would cease to be a reproach to English women that they are so frequently *malchaussée*.

To be really well shod, three things must be considered

—what is neat, what is comfortable, and last, but not least, what is suitable for the occasion. Nothing looks so unbusiness like and absurd as to see a girl start for a muddy country walk in a pair of thin-soled patent leather boots or shoes; neither should we admire a pair of heavy-made blacking-leather ones at a town reception or a garden-party on a dry day.

It is not, in the long run, an extravagance to have several pairs of boots going at the same time. New ones should be bought before the old ones are quite worn out, as they are always the better for keeping, and can then be taken into wear gradually—a great consideration for tender feet, as a new boot is usually somewhat of a trial. Another great saving for the feet is not to wear the same pair of boots quite every day, as then pressure does not always occur on the same spot. If the boots have been wet, they should be allowed at least a clear day to dry, as nothing is more likely to crack leather than to place it near a hot fire when wet.

Repairs must be taken in hand without delay. The heels must go to be straightened at the first signs of wearing down, and the wear of the soles attended to with equal promptitude, remembering the old adage, "A stitch in time saves nine."

For general smartness as well as comfort, I think it is essential to possess one or two pairs of well-made, water-tight, blacking-leather boots for country walks and wet days, and one or two pairs of glacé kid or patent leather boots or shoes for town wear and smart occasions; and to those who travel much, and have to spend long days without the luxury of changing their boots, I strongly recommend russia leather, especially for summer wear—it is so soft and comfortable, easily kept clean, and shows the dust of travel far less than black leather.

The glacé kid, patent, and russia leather boots should never be allowed to share the fate of the ordinary leather ones, which go down to the boot-house to be blacked. When

away on a visit a vigilant eye should be kept on them, and a warning given that none but the blacking-leather ones are to go downstairs. I have experienced the anguish of seeing my best patent leather boots shorn of their pristine gloss owing to the ignorance and carelessness of other people's servants in sending them down to be "blacked." In fact, if you have not a maid of your own, I assure you it will repay you to take the trouble of doing your "dandy" boots yourself. A pair of old loose-fitting gloves kept for this operation will save the hands from getting soiled.

Now, with a piece of sponge, a small duster, and a chamois leather, let us take our first lesson.

I should say, in passing, that boots should be cleaned on *their trees*, and if you do not already possess such things, let me strongly advise you to have a pair made at once. They will cost about 10s. unpolished, about 12s. polished; and they will repay you over and over for the original outlay, by keeping your boots in shape, and making them last twice as long. The boots should be placed on the trees the moment they are taken off the feet.

To clean glacé or glove kid, sponge off the mud and quickly dry, and with a small piece of flannel or sponge rub on a little black Meltonian Cream or Alma Polish. There are various preparations, such as Parisian Polish, or Peerless Gloss, sold for this purpose, and there is no doubt they give the boot a beautiful gloss at the time; but my experience is that they soon cause the leather to crack and rot, whereas the Meltonian Cream preserves it and keeps it soft; and now that this excellent preparation is made in black, it fulfils every requirement.

Patent leather should be cleaned thus. Sponge it with warm (not hot) water, and while still warm rub in a little sweet oil or white Meltonian Cream, and finish with a leather. If oil is used, it must be *very* sparingly, and all rubbed out immediately after it has been rubbed in, or it will cause the leather to look dull and sodden. Meltonian Cream gives it perhaps more gloss, but oil, if used with great care, will probably keep the leather in better condition.

There is undoubtedly nothing so *chic* for a smart occasion as patent leather, and with proper care it lasts much longer than glacé kid, and with the help of varnish in its latter days, can be made to look well to the very end. When the patent leather refuses any longer to take a polish, and begins to show signs of cracking, apply varnish. This can be

bought from any bootmaker, or it can be made at home according to either of the two following excellent recipes:—1. One pint bottle of claret, four ounces of powdered gum arabic, and two ounces of logwood. Put the mixture in a saucepan, and let it simmer on the fire. Strain when cold. 2. Fifteen ounces of gum arabic, one quart of black ink, six ounces of sugar candy, half a pint of spirits of wine, and half a pint of port wine. Put the gum and sugar together in one pint of ink, and keep warm until dissolved, then add the other pint of ink and the port wine. Boil over the fire for five minutes, then let it get a little cool, and add the spirits of wine. Boil all up for one minute. Strain into bottles.

The varnish must be rubbed on with the cushion of the finger, and nothing but the finger will answer the purpose: do not attempt to save your finger by using a brush instead. Very little must be rubbed on, and it must be done very smoothly, till the whole surface is covered. The newly varnished boot must be kept free from dust, and not worn till the varnish is thoroughly dry. If you wish it to dry very quickly, a little methylated spirit can be rubbed on the boot before applying the varnish; but if done habitually this will soon cause the leather to crack. Every particle of varnish should be washed off with warm water each time before putting on fresh.

Other kinds of black leather will also take varnish, but not so well as patent. A boot once varnished must be always varnished; and as it is a rather troublesome operation, I do not advise commencing it till the boot is too shabby to wear otherwise.

There are special preparations sold for cleaning russia leather, but it will look better, and last longer, if cleaned with ordinary saddle soap. Brecknell, Turner and Sons' is about the best, and is sold in sixpenny tins. Sponge the mud off the boots, *rinse out* the sponge in clean water, and squeeze it nearly dry. Rub as much soap into it as it will contain, and then rub that into the leather, and leave it to dry in thoroughly before polishing with chamois leather. It is as well to soap the boots overnight, and to polish them the following morning. A little white Meltonian Cream rubbed on will be found a great addition before polishing with the leather. The more soap that is rubbed into brown leather, the softer, better, and more supple it will become. It should after a time turn a rich dark brown, and wear a polish you can almost see your face in.

EVELYN.