

DOMESTIC SERVICE FOR GENTLEWOMEN.

"Rappelle-toi, mon enfant, que la femme est faite pour souffrir; l'homme pour être souffert."—FEUILLET, *Le Mariage dans le Monde*.



HERE has been so much discussion as to the class of women to whom I recommend domestic service as an advantageous employment, that I feel no apology is needed for stating once more that I recommend it to the class who would formerly have been nursery governesses, but who cannot now obtain situations as such in consequence of certificates of proficiency in teaching being required, which

they are unable to furnish. The misconception as to the work which these ladies could undertake would be amusing, were it not sad to find the utter want of sympathy of many rich ladies with their poor sisters.

Surely many a wealthy lady could look around her home and imagine the duties which she, if poor but with good health, could herself perform. Here is an unerring guide for such as are disposed to mitigate the silent suffering, which though lying often almost at our doors, yet can only be guessed, not known, for the reason that it is silent.

In order to make my meaning more plain, I venture to suggest that no employer should seek a lady-help to be a general servant, as the rougher work must in all cases be done by an ordinary servant. For this purpose young girls from the country will be found more likely to answer than London servants.

As it is probable that lady-helps may occupy rooms used before by ordinary servants, employers are requested to have such rooms and bedding thoroughly cleansed; as, failing this, it could be no surprise if the ladies left at once. It is necessary that every lady-help should have a bed-room to herself, unless, by special arrangement, she consented to use a separate bed in the same room with another lady.

I should be very sorry to hear of any lady engaging herself to scour floors, to black-lead grates, to clean "pots and pans," to carry pails, water, or coal, or to varnish any shoes except her own; and I hope to have the sympathy of employers in feeling that these are duties no lady ought to undertake.

The objection to black-leading grates does not apply with equal force to kindling a fire, or to "taking up the ashes," should this be found convenient. In chamois leather gloves no detriment to the hands is likely to ensue—and happy is the woman, of whatsoever grade, who has never been obliged to perform these duties in the interest of some dear invalid, who would have been distracted by noise and dust.

No lady-help should be required to take her meals with ordinary servants, but should carry them herself to her own bed-room, failing any other room being ap-

pointed for her. It is desirable that no lady should enter a family where less than two "helps" are employed, when they would be almost sure to have some small room at their disposal. A nice clean kitchen would be comfortable enough if no other servants were kept, and if the rough work were done by a char-woman attending occasionally for the purpose, who would, of course, among other duties, include "cleaning the doorsteps."

I allowed my helps to take newspapers and magazines to their rooms for reading, providing that they were returned, or were at hand when called for. I also allowed the use of a piano at such times as did not interfere with the comfort of the family. It was very pleasant, when I used to go into their sitting-room occasionally of an evening, to find four at work, making or mending their clothes, while the fifth read aloud; or sometimes two would devote themselves to the amusement of the rest, by playing or singing duets.

That domestic service did not cause the neglect of accomplishments will be evident when I state that, since leaving, one of my helps is good enough occasionally to send me a newspaper, showing how her songs are "enthusiastically encored" at concerts in the neighbourhood of her father's house; and it will doubtless interest some persons to know that each of my helps is still in the situation she took on leaving Cyfarthfa.

The cook, kitchen-maid, and lady's-maid had each £20; dairy-maid and housemaid had £15 per annum. Each was allowed £5 for beer-money, and each salary was raised £5 at the end of the first year. Travelling expenses were allowed, second-class.

It is exceedingly desirable that no engagement should be made without an interview; and, possibly, some ladies might not object to allowing the helps to see beforehand the rooms that they would occupy, and the space they would be expected to keep clean, as regards sweeping, dusting, cleaning brass door-handles, and washing marble mantel-pieces. Brass door-handles seem generally left to themselves in England, but in Wales they are great objects of pride, when shining like burnished gold.

Probably no employer would object to her helps receiving their friends on Sunday afternoon, and giving them tea; and to allowing such as could be spared to go with them to church, chapel, or for a walk; their friends leaving them at the door of the house on their return. A good exchange from the "follower" of kitchen notoriety!

It has been frequently asked, "Are these lady-helps at any time to mix on terms of equality with the families whom they serve?" This is a matter which must be left absolutely to be determined by the feeling of the employer and the employed, for there could be no

greater mistake than to make intercourse, which should arise spontaneously with the growth of friendship, a matter of barter.

Some ladies would doubtless prefer serving in families where no men-servants are kept; while to others the duties of a parlour-maid would be more embarrassing than any others which could fall to their lot.

Some employers would feel more *géné* from being waited on at dinner by lady-helps, than where circumstances allowed of their duties being performed out of sight. Those who are familiar with parts of the Continent where the daughters of the host wait on their father's guest would not feel this awkwardness. On the other hand, it is probable that the divinity which doth hedge a true gentlewoman, would be felt even by her fellow-servants of the masculine gender.

The lady-helps should always be more in number than the servants under them, as it is only the roughest work, which ladies could not undertake, that would fall to the share of the servants.

Some misconception as to the work ladies might be expected to undertake has arisen from my having had a lady-cook and a lady-kitchen-maid. The cook managed the soups, fish, and savoury dishes; the kitchen-maid undertook all sweets, and gave assistance with the entrées. Both were waited on by the scullery-maid, who scoured floors and tables, cleaned "pots and pans," and lighted fires. This woman also scoured the dairy floor when required, and scalded all dairy utensils oncé a week—the young lady dairy-maid scalding them on the other days, and always making butter by eight a.m.

It will be observed that I allowed my lady-helps each £5 per annum in lieu of beer, which some may consider an excessive allowance. Would it be considered too much for the butler, supposing he were allowed? Are his duties so hard and tiring as the poor scullery-girl's, on whom devolves frequently the stoning of a large amount of flooring and the scouring of innumerable "pots and pans"?

Because a girl's *physique* is less robust than a man's, is that a reason for limiting her sustenance? *Ergo*, the woman-servant who does harder work than the man-servant requires no less beer than he does.

Could I have offered to my ladies a less sum of money than I would offer to ordinary servants?—for although ladies they were poor. My reply to myself was, "No"—hence the £5.

Above all things, in engaging helps, does it seem needful that ladies should "do unto others as they would that others should do unto them," were their positions reversed; and if householders and helps were both guided by that Divine rule of conduct, the benefit would be mutual, and friendships would be formed such as are now impossible, owing to the entire divergence of thought and of interest between the employer and the employed.

Ah, gentlemen!—you who write such hard things of my scheme, and say how impossible it is that ladies should stoop to such degradation as entering domestic service—try to imagine what a hard thing it must be to starve! Know, too, that there is an excess

of nearly a million women in Great Britain for whom marriage is consequently impossible, and to thousands of whom any degradation is preferable to that one which no law says shall be poorly paid.

Would that I could touch some of your hearts! for although you think that in your own interests it is well to encourage an abundance of starving women, much as starving dogs are encouraged in the East—for their services—yet you have hearts; and although you fancy that you see in all efforts to render women independent of men, a limitation of the pleasures of men—yet think, when justice is done to women, how sturdy a race of heroes will arise! Men with strong bodies and strong minds, seeing what is injustice so clearly, that they will no longer decree as you do, that no woman who does not belong soul and body to some man shall live. Some men would rather see women starve than live, unless every bit of bread be put into their mouths by men.

What is the reason of the tremendous opposition made to allowing such women as have the necessary talent and taste to become doctors? It is disguised under the pretty sentiment that "the work of a doctor is too hard;" that "a woman must not see immodest sights;" that "her native purity (poor starving wretch) may not be infringed by her doing the disgusting work of the dissecting-room," &c. &c., *ad nauseam*. There is no decree that female nurses may not attend at all hospitals; that if particularly horrible operations are to be performed, the nurses are to be exempted from seeing them; that if any very wearisome labour be involved in attendance on a patient, no woman-nurse shall do it. A nurse's work is often more fatiguing and more unpleasant than a doctor's, and it is without the joy that excitement and a sense of responsibility bring to the doctor.

The secret of the opposition is this: a physician's work is, as a rule, well paid; therefore, say men, "Let's keep it for ourselves;" a nurse's work is hard and more poorly paid—"we'll give it to the women."

What have these remarks to do with domestic service for gentlewomen? Only this: honest work must be found for those women who desire it, and domestic service is one road whereon they may find it. There is now a frightful scarcity of good servants, and there are thousands of needy gentlewomen suffering the agony of genteel poverty, which, like the

— "grief that does not speak,
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart, and bids it break."

Entirely agreeing with those who advocate lady-nurses, I yet hope that further thought may induce many to see the desirability, both in the interest of employer and employed, of other positions in domestic service being filled by poor gentlewomen.

The *arcana* of the kitchen, at present so carefully guarded from the intrusive eye, could show frightful examples of "scamping."

With the constantly increasing number of contrivances to economise labour, why should not cookery become one of the fine arts, having its votaries among a class who will not only bring to its use dainty fingers,

but also common-sense and conscience? Speaking of conscience reminds me of a circumstance, the recollection of which may probably amuse.

A bottle of brandy brought from the town for my cook's private use was lost. She asked the messenger who ought to have delivered it, why he had not brought it straight to the kitchen.

"Because Mrs. Crawshay was in the kitchen at the moment, and I didn't think you'd have liked her to know of it."

The reply was doubtless startling—

"I never do anything of which I do not wish Mrs. Crawshay to know—she is quite aware that I take brandy-and-water instead of beer."

Fancy a kitchen where all was straightforward and honest!

In the heat of summer my ladies found immense comfort in their gas-stove, which did away with the necessity for a fire in the kitchen, unless some very large joint, such as a haunch of venison, had to be roasted. The stove was also most useful for baking rolls for breakfast, not needing the time that a brick oven does for heating.

There seems a strong feeling that the place of house-keeper is well suited to a lady. No one considers her isolation. "It would be such a bore to have her with us at all." Isolation and the "worry of the servants" will, before long, make the lady-housekeeper sigh for a staff of upper servants of her own class, and I do not expect there will be any dearth of active, kindly young women ready to come forward, in whose vocabulary the words refinement and gratitude both have places.

So much for the manner in which it seems probable

a portion of the public will be brought to see the desirability of adopting lady-helps.

The question of how a supply of efficient helps will be provided, seems likely to be answered by large families of daughters determining to be their own helps, by devoting two hours each, or perhaps only one hour each, per diem to household work; and finding that no one suffers thereby except the poor doctor, whose fees will, from the moment this plan is adopted, gradually dwindle.

The medical profession, of all professions, seems least to fear any abrogation of its income through greater knowledge on the part of the public. How is this? Is it from its greater philanthropy, or from its unwavering faith in the folly and stolidity of the human race?

It is strange how furiously aggrieved many people are at my scheme for supplementing some of the shortcomings of ordinary servants by superior intelligence and greater purity of purpose. Are they afraid that I shall abolish ordinary servants more quickly than they will abolish themselves? or that, whether people like the system of lady-helps or not, they will be obliged to employ them? Vain fears both! Domestic servants will continue to find occupation until from sheer demoralisation they cease to be.

People who object to lady-helps will no more be obliged to employ them than women who do not want to vote will be obliged to vote, when the time comes that women shall be allowed to have a share, if they wish for it, in making the laws which they are bound to obey, and in opposing those, the working of which is now so unjust and so injurious to women.

R. M. CRAWSHAY.

HOW TO BECOME A BARRISTER.



THE profession of barristers enjoy great privileges—that is to say, rights conferred on them by law—and they also practically enjoy other advantages from the prestige attached to their name. Chief among their privileges may be reckoned the fact that they have the exclusive right of advocating another person's

cause in all the divisions of the Supreme Court, which correspond to the ancient Courts of Chancery, Queen's Bench, Exchequer, Common Pleas, Probate and Divorce, and Admiralty, and the Assize Courts. Then they practically enjoy advantage in the County Courts and other subordinate courts, when they are employed in them; their arguments are sure to receive strict attention from the judge, and acquire extra weight from the position of the speaker; the judge appears to be willing to receive instruction at their hands, he peruses carefully the cases they cite, and shrinks from challenging the correctness of any principle of law which they enunciate. The contest

is a very unequal one unless a barrister is also employed on the other side. Then some judges give a pre-audience to cases in which counsel are employed—counsel being the more dignified name for the profession of barristers. And, as a final tribute to the superiority of the barrister over ordinary mortals frequenting the law courts, may be noticed the deferential manner in which the crowd yield to the right and left to make way for every wearer of a wig and gown.

Another privilege of barristers is this: the advice of a barrister throws an ægis over any solicitor who consults him, to protect him from being responsible for any mistake he may make. A solicitor who acts upon his own view of the law, and involves his client in loss, may be exposed to an action for negligence in his conduct of the business; but if the solicitor has acted under the advice of counsel, at once all responsibility is taken off his shoulders. Nor is the barrister liable for the correctness of the advice he gives. He is considered in theory as a learned man, giving advice to those who ask it, out of mere benevolence. What he states is his opinion—that is all which is asked for, that is all which is given. His clients, then, if they have sufficient faith in his learning, may act upon it at their