She took the slight little figure in her arms unresisted. To all appearance Effie might have been dead, so white her face, so fixed her eyes, but the limbs were flexible. Lady Lorrimer laid her on her side on the broad window-sill, unloosed her dress, and for at least five minutes rubbed her spine firmly and briskly up and down. Presently she was very relieved to find Effie breathing once more, though faintly and irregularly, and to see her eyes moving again.

Then she called to Simmons, waiting in the dining-room patiently all this time.

"Miss Marshall is feeling faint," she said. "Call her maid and my Rosalie;" and when the maids arrived, and found Effie herself again, but weak and hysterical, she ordered her to be carried up to bed and dosed with beef-tea.

Then she went into the dining-room herself, and made a very good breakfast.

END OF CHAPTER THE TENTH.

## ABOARD A THAMES STEAMER.

BY F. M. HOLMES.

TING-a-ting-ting! Full speed ahead! And away glides the pretty little steamer on the broad bosom of old Father Thames, almost as gracefully as a bird on the wing.

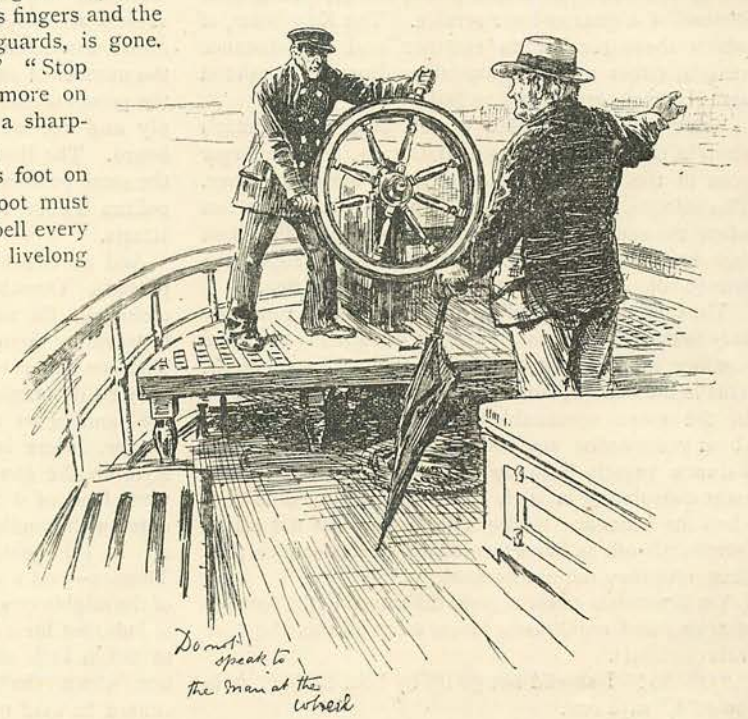
We pass that picturesque, but slow-moving, old hay barge in a trice: it looks like a floating stack washed out of its native field in a flood; Cleopatra's Needle rises in the bright panorama on the north bank, and a moment more we shoot past it to Charing Cross; but ting! the little engines go slow; ting, ting! they stop dead; ting, ting, ting! they whirl backwards, and we are sidling up to a pier, something like a shy boy to his first love at a rustic flower-show! The paddle-wheels churn up the dirty water into white foam—like soap-suds, as a delighted child described it to his mother—and hallo! here we are at the next pier.

Then, ting-a-ting-ting! again, and off we glide, with all the other tings to follow. The young monkey of a call-boy, with one eye for the captain's fingers and the other for possible purchasers of hat-guards, is gone. His shrill shouts of "Ease her!" "Stop her!" "Go ahead!" are heard no more on most of the Thames steamers, and a sharp-toned gong-bell has taken his place.

The bell is worked by the captain's foot on the little bridge. How tired that foot must become, continually ting-tinging that bell every other minute or so throughout the livelong day! Yet in its shiny boot—all the river captains' boots are so shiny—the foot remains for ever on the push-knob of the bell, ever ready to ting-ting its master's instructions to the engine-room beneath.

And often he has the wheel on the bridge also wherewith to steer his steamer. All the good man's muscles seem engaged except those of the poor left leg. His right has become the call-boy with the bell, his hands grasp the spokes of the wheel, his keen eyes interrogate the river in front, but the poor left leg has nothing to do. Would it not be well to get up a society to employ that poor left leg? We have now a society for almost everything under the sun—the exaggeration of the healthy spirit of co-operation. The river captain cannot even pace the bridge with his shiny boots—provokingly shiny if the streets are muddy in London—for he is chained by the invisible ties of duty to his wheel and his bell, except in the case of a few of the older boats. Some of these yet remain with wheel mounted at the stern, but the present energetic owners are fast renewing their fleet, and placing larger and every way more commodious vessels on the beloved and grimy Thames.

Marvellously well does the keen-eyed captain navigate his fast little craft. The river rushes through the bridge-piers like a mill-race; huge unwieldly barges will get in the way, like timid passengers in crowded



streets ; but who ever hears of an accident to a penny steamer on the flowing Thames? Quiet, able, self-possessed, the captain knows his work, and does it. He has his swift little steamer under perfect control, and up and down the river he glides from Battersea to famed London Bridge, with sometimes three hundred to four hundred persons aboard—the cabman and 'busman combined of London's silent highway.

From Hampton down to Southend you can travel in the river steamers—in the summer-time. In fact, you can go farther, right round the north coast to Clacton and to Harwich. In the winter the points are from Battersea to Greenwich. There is one service from Battersea to London Bridge—nearly the whole way for a familiar brown penny ; there is another little fleet plying down the Pool below London Bridge to Greenwich. Then in the summer there are the up-river boats to Kew and long-distance boats to Hampton, and down the river to Gravesend, Southend, Clacton, and Harwich.

But the points from Battersea to London Bridge and down the Pool to Greenwich are the boundaries of the penny boats that add so much to London's much-needed means of locomotion. And as a far greater number of persons are likely to travel in the spring and summer than in the darker and chillier months of winter—though even then the cabins of the new boats are snug and comfortable—the service is materially altered.

Thus in winter only eight "penny" boats ply up and down between Battersea and London Bridge, instead of fourteen, as in the summer months. These eight maintain a quarter-hour service instead of ten minutes, as in the summer. The Greenwich boats are also reduced in numbers from nine to six, and give a half-hour instead of a quarter-hour service. The Kew boats, of which there are six in summer, and long-distance vessels, either up to Hampton or down to Southend and Harwich, are all put to bed.

Some of these enviable vessels take their winter's sleep in the owners' docks at Battersea, and the larger ones in the Victoria Graving Dock down the river. The saloons, that have carried so many happy parties when the sun is hot and the days are long, lie silent and deserted now, while winter winds roar round the funnels and lash up the waters of the North Sea.

Thus in the depth of winter the owners run daily only fourteen steamers altogether, or as many as in the summer months ply on one of their "lines" alone. This is the busiest, from Battersea to London Bridge. In the more seasonable weather, on the contrary, about twenty-nine are run daily, excluding the long-distance vessels both up and down the river. The great consolation in such a variable business is that when the boats are taking holiday they are not eating their heads off, as horses would do. Like dormice, they sleep, and they require no food.

Yet if weather cause a great difference in the receipts of trams and omnibuses, much more is this the case with the boats.

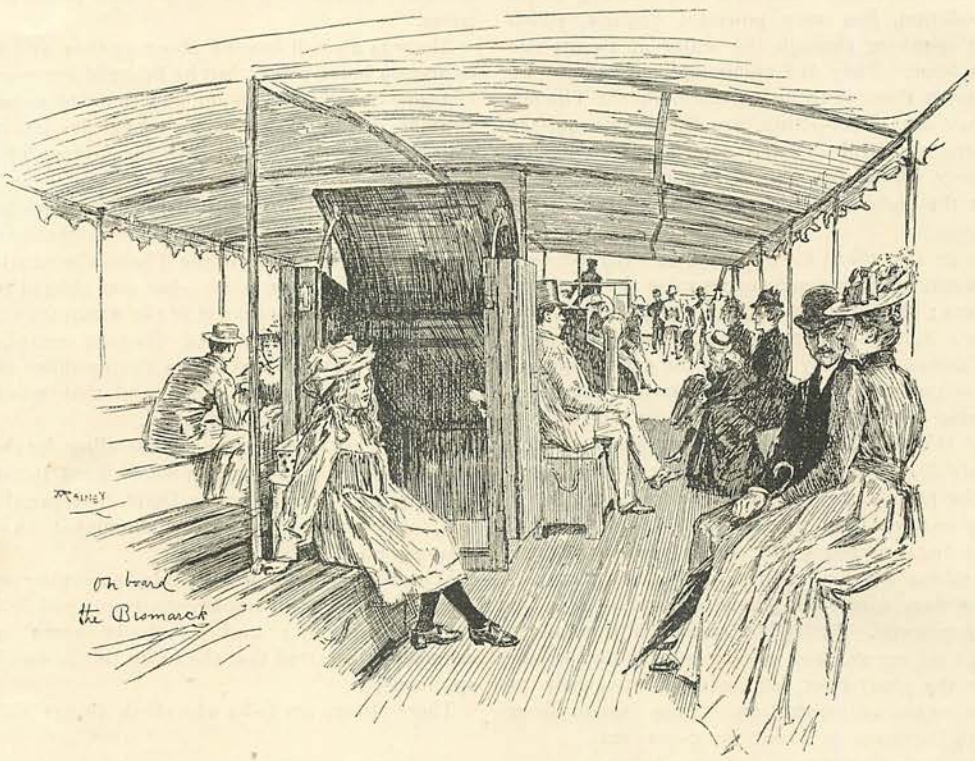
"Oh no! I should not go up by boat to-day ; it is too cold," says one.

And if the adventurous youth persists in his audacious enterprise, he will probably find the decks nearly deserted. The decks, yes ; but if he step below he will find—if the boat be one of the newer vessels—a commodious cabin, perhaps even a glowing stove, and probably a solemn company sitting round the sides. Mothers with their babies, men reading papers, and this afternoon a boy with his head and shoulders thrust through one of the open port-hole windows, and hugely enjoying the view of the Thames from this novel point of vantage. Wherever there are active young monkeys of boys there is generally something interesting going on, even if it may not accord with the strictest ideas of kid glove propriety.

Once upon a time there was a Greenwich and Woolwich Steam Packet Company ; once upon a time there was a "Citizen" line of penny steamers ; and once upon a time a further fleet belonging to yet a third ownership. Now, after various vicissitudes, the whole of the Thames boats—with a few exceptions—belong to the vigorous Victoria Steamboat Association, which is undoubtedly fast improving the service. The Association, of which Mr. Arnold E. Williams is the managing director, pursued a wise policy some three or four years ago of introducing new and improved vessels, giving comfortable accommodation at cheap fares for what may be called the business and regular traffic through the heart of London, as well as improved service for the long-distance journeys. It has now a fine fleet, suitable for different parts of the river, of forty-six vessels, and has put on the river ten new steamers and also imported the *Lord of the Isles* in the space of about three years.

The penny boats have crews of six or seven men, including captain, fireman, and engineman. The vessels are inspected by the Board of Trade, who award a certificate stating the strength of the crew and the number of passengers the craft may carry ; further, the points of the river between which the boat may ply and the number of life-belts it must keep on board. The Board of Trade, therefore, occupies much the same position to the river steamers as the Metropolitan Police to the trams and omnibuses of the streets.

And at times these boats carry vast numbers of persons. Omniboats, someone called them; and if not melodious, the name is appropriate. All classes seem to travel by them. Look around on this fine afternoon. The sun shines on the glossy silk hat of a prosperous young City man—a lawyer, let us say, from the Temple—and lights up the dingy raiment of a soiled labourer. Here is a lady in furs marching in stately style up the gangway ; she will not be far from the worn face of a thin working woman or of a bulky dame with bundles. Here is a clergyman taking the air in the boat, and looking at London from the Thames—and a very good way, too, to see some part of the mighty city. Here, again, is a lady with a couple of lads, out for a holiday ; she is very good, but, truth to tell, a little mixed in her remarks. Her information about the obelisk called Cleopatra's Needle cannot be said to be exactly accurate. She descants




immensely on the fine blocks of St. Thomas's Hospital, but turns her back in great scorn on the more beautiful and at least equally interesting Houses of Parliament; while we fear she is hopelessly at sea when opposite the Shot Tower, or the clever arrangements for the speedy unlading of large quantities of coal at Lord Londonderry's wharves. Never mind: many other persons are doubtless in equal ignorance; she is good at heart, if shaky in Thames knowledge.

How the sun glints and flashes on the towers of the Parliament Houses as we glide along! Do not tell me that London is not beautiful. It has not the beauty of the wild moor or of the sublime mountain, but it has a fascination all its own. Sometimes the vista of the river and the superb masses of fine buildings around it are softened and veiled in a golden haze that touches the whole with ethereal splendour. Memories of a far-away past cluster round these banks, and blend with the most modern inventions of to-day. Old Roman coins in numbers have been dredged up from the mud of the Thames; the new colossal Tower Bridge spans the great river, hard by the old Norman Tower, whence it takes its name; the ancient Abbey of Westminster looks down on New Scotland Yard; and the noble Embankment, with its pleasant gardens, fronts Somerset House and the old York Watergate. The past and the present meet and mingle round the classic river, which cleaves the metropolis in twain.

Old Swan is the busiest pier. It is the centre of the Association's system, and the "London" which the men shout out on piers above and below. A country cousin would be astonished to hear the lusty cries of "Now for London!" when he is, say, on Charing Cross or Temple Pier.

"Why, am I not in London now?" he would ask in astonishment.

Yes, he is in London; but the London of the watermen is short for London Bridge, which seems the centre for the river folk, even as Charing Cross, or the Bank, or the General Post Office is for others. Everything on the river is above or below bridge—*the* bridge being famous London Bridge. "Surrey side," too, is the pier on the Surrey side of the same ancient bridge. In Thames lingo Surrey side does not mean, as the uninitiated might suppose, the Surrey bank.

So at London—*i.e.*, Old Swan Pier by London Bridge, you are at the heart and centre of all things on the river. Here starts the *Cardinal Wolsey* for its delightful up-river excursions past lovely Kew and Richmond, and here also, start the down-river boats to Greenwich, and further yet, to Gravesend and Southend, Clacton and Harwich. Yes, the truly lordly *Lord of the Isles* starts from here as well as the pretty little penny steamers to the next pier and up to Chelsea.

The *Lord of the Isles* came hither from the Clyde, and startled Londoners by offering to take them round into the North Sea to Harwich and back, a distance of two hundred miles, in one day and for five shillings. Cheap enough travelling, surely! But even this fine boat is now eclipsed. The *Koh-i-noor* is even finer

still. This splendid new vessel, built entirely of steel, most luxuriously furnished and offering ample accommodation, has very powerful engines, which send her spanking through the water at twenty-two miles an hour. They are compound, of course—we have not yet risen to triple expansion on the Thames—but they are direct-acting, are fitted with surface condensers, and will develop some 3,500 indicated horse-power, which will send the superb vessel along at about the same speed as the Greyhounds of the Atlantic.

And large also she is for the Thames—310 feet long and 32 feet beam ; twelve furnaces raise the steam in four boilers ; electric bells ring in every quarter, and the electric light glows throughout. Her appearance on the Thames markedly indicates the great improvement now proceeding in the river boats. For if the down-traffic has its *Koh-i-noor*, and the up-river its *Cardinal Wolsey*, the ordinary penny steamers can boast their *Bismarck* and their *Empress Frederick*.

It is the proud assertion of the Association that it can carry no fewer than 250,000 persons in one day. The long-distance boats are chiefly for excursions ; but the others are for business as well as pleasure. And this fleet also—the penny steamers—is being gradually renewed. Pretty little vessels of from about 40 to 100 tons register are gliding swiftly and swan-like over the great river, and adding immensely to London's means of locomotion. They steam from London to Battersea in about three-quarters of an hour, including stopping at near a score of piers, putting down and taking up passengers. Look at the *Bismarck*, for instance, or the *Kaiser*, or the *Shah*, built by Samuda on Thames Bank. With their white sides gleaming over the dark water, their many-windowed cabins, their spacious decks and comfortable seats, their commodious accommodation below, their almost smokeless funnels, and their swift and steady motion, they now offer some of the pleasantest travelling in London, and do much to roll away the reproach of poor steamers plying on the classic Thames.

But if the penny boats are built on the river, the *Koh-i-noor* comes from that crack centre of British ship-building — the Clyde. And from Glasgow came the first steam-vessel that ever plied on the Thames. She came in that epoch - making year of Water-loo—1815—and she was brought by a Mr. George Dodd, who, however, seems only to have found poverty for his pains.

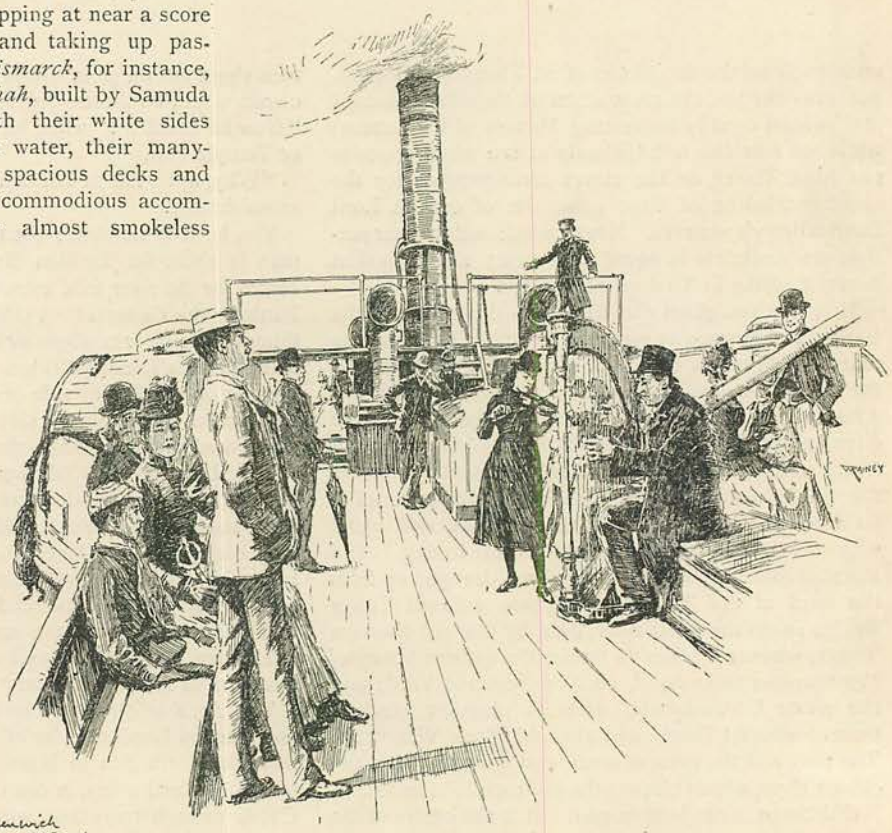
She was a small boat of about 75 tons and fourteen or sixteen horse-power, but he brought her round from Glasgow by sails and steam, experiencing some rough weather in the Irish Sea, and her nine-feet paddle-wheels began to churn up the waters of Father Thames.

But Dodd's laurels are disputed. Some folks say that a Mr. Lawrence, who had put a steamer on the Severn, brought her up to the Thames by canal—could such a thing be done now?—but was obliged to desist from his purpose by reason of the watermen's opposition. Then a man named Dawson established a steamer in 1813 to cover the twenty miles or so between Gravesend and London, and that was the first plying for public accommodation.

So there are three persons contending for the laurel crown, and we cannot tell on whose hard British head to place it. The unfortunate Dodd, however, if not the first, was undoubtedly very prominent in putting steamers on the Thames.

With what wonder we can imagine gaping cockneys would watch the smoke-vomiting, paddle-beating creatures go by ; and no doubt some croakers vehemently asserted that the nasty things would burst up directly !

There always are folks who think things will burst



The Greenwich Boat

up. Occasionally they do, if only to keep the woeful prophets in countenance. And so it happened here. In July, 1817, one of the early steamers on the Thames—the *Regent* (how that name takes us back to the days of the Regency) was accidentally burnt, off Whitstable. But that did not stop the onward march of the movement. About this time there were two—the *Richmond* and the *London*—plying between London and Twickenham, and they are reported to have carried 10,000 passengers in four months. Then there was the *Sons of Commerce*, designed by Dodd to run down the Pool to Gravesend. She—if *Sons of Commerce* can be "she"—actually ran from London to Margate in eleven hours, thirty-five minutes, and made a speed of about ten miles an hour. In 1866 there was the *Majestic* plying between London and Margate, and possibly disturbing the minds of the owners of the old Margate hoys; for the Kentish watering-place seems to have been beloved of Londoners even then. The *Majestic*, too, had been seen puffing along towing vessels of 700 tons behind it.

The ingenious Dodd actually contrived an apparatus for lowering the chimneys when passing under the bridges. Was it the telescopic invention, or the delightfully ingenious system even now in use on some boats, of simply turning down the funnel by a hinge, and impartially distributing the heated air and any smoke and blacks that may be flying about on the crowd of passengers? Carbon, they say, is good for indigestion, but we doubt if this is an efficient method of applying the charm.

The appearance of these new-fangled concerns called steamers alarmed the old Thames watermen. They deemed the puffing paddled-wheeled monsters an invasion of their sacred rights. Forthwith they opposed the boats. Trades-unions and trade opposition existed even then, you see. Their opposition was great, but ineffectual. Who can stand against steam? Electricity, perhaps; but even that great giant cannot yet dispense with its assistance. And so at length the watermen made peace with the enemy; but they have their revenge. Only Thames watermen can be employed on Thames steamers; the men adapted themselves to circumstances, and the paddle-boats which diminished their old trade have given them new employment.

But their numbers are sadly reduced. Time was when there were 40,000 members on the Watermen's Roll. The Thames then was the great highway, and the watermen—*i.e.*, the men who rowed boats on the river to convey passengers—used to ply up and down and ferry across, and were a very important body of men. They date from 1556, and still form an incorporated Company of the City of London. But first coaches came, and then bridges, and steamboats, and metropolitan railways, and the Watermen's Company sadly dwindled. Yet they hold a monopoly still, and except for certain ferries, no person can ply for hire in a boat on the Thames but a member of the Watermen's Company, between Staines and Yantlet Creek.

John Taylor, the water-poet, bitterly complained of the coaches. "I do not inveigh," he wrote, "against any coaches that belong to persons of worth or quality, but only against the caterpillar swarm of hirelings. They have undone my poor trade whereof I am a member." What would he say to the "caterpillar swarm of hirelings" to-day, and the usefulness thereof?


He would find other changes also. The Thames Conservancy Board now rules the river, controls its bed, its shores, and its navigation from Cricklade, in Wiltshire, to the aforesaid Creek of Yantlet. Before 1857, when the first Act constituting the Board was passed, the all-powerful Corporation of the City ruled the Thames from Staines downwards. Some of the piers belong to the Conservancy Board, some to the Steamboat Association. They are pretty frequent in certain parts of the river—the boats taking only about two minutes to travel between them. But so expeditiously are the boats stopped, the gangways run aboard, and the passengers transferred, that the halt occupies but about a minute, and then on again glides the little vessel full speed ahead with its living load. The whole operation is so deftly done by the piermen and the boatmen that it is little, if anything, more than the pulling-up of a 'bus, and with this comfort for humanitarians: that the frequent stoppages cause no severe trial to horse-flesh.

It is very quiet to-day down here on one of the piers. The wind is chilly; few people are travelling, forgetful of the snug cabins of the new boats; the tide is low, and we are beneath the level of the Embankment. The noise of London roars around, but somewhat softened; we seem to be outside it, and might be miles away from the hurry and bustle that we cannot see. A fat little sparrow hops and flits about the timber balks, as much at home as if in a country rick-yard; a labourer lurches down the incline from the Embankment, a tin can under his arm; an energetic shabby-genteel man—how many shabby-genteel folk there are in London!—fiercely paces from side to side, his face portraying

trouble; a worn-visaged woman sits on one of the benches; then another labourer lurches down; far out in mid-stream a little screw-tug hauls fast along a train of bulky barges. The water is lumpy to-day; but presently, up glide two boats, one from either side, swiftly and smoothly; officials start from their shelters, gangways are rattled on to the sponsons, impulsive would-be passengers are prevented from hurrying on board before those coming off have disembarked, a clergyman and his boys turn up from somewhere, the late passenger thunders down the incline, the impulsive labourers, disdaining the gangways, jump on the sponsons by the paddle-boxes, and before you can say the familiar Jack Robinson, the pretty little vessels, as docile to the captains' will as the best trained horse, are away to the next pier.

## SCHOOLS OF DOMESTIC SERVICE.

"I DON'T approve of factory girls at all," pronounced a wealthy lady with whom I had ventured to plead the claims of a working girls' club. "Why do girls go into factories instead of entering domestic service, where they would have regular wages, good food, and comfortable homes, and would not be exposed to the temptations you describe? There should be no such thing as factory girls; I don't approve of them at all!" she reiterated.

I did not remind the irate lady that she owed to the work of these same factory girls a large proportion of the necessities and luxuries of life by which she was surrounded; nor did I endeavour to prove to her that great as is our need of domestic servants, we should find it difficult to employ in our homes a sudden influx of the hundreds of thousands of maidens who are working in our factories to-day. I felt strongly inclined to impress upon her that she would about as readily admit a gorilla into her elegant house as one of the rough lassies I was trying to benefit. But I refrained, and contented myself with laying before her one or two of the reasons and remedies, as I deemed them, of the increasing distaste which the girls of the working-class seem to manifest towards domestic service.

I said little of the disqualification on the *mistress* side of the problem, though I might have dilated on the slavery, the unkindness, the loneliness endured by servants, especially in lower middle-class families. It was useless to touch on these things: one cannot venture to suggest a direct panacea for them; they are conditions out of which we hope to grow with the development of the race. But I spoke of the hindrances to the girls themselves, which seemed to open vistas of surprise to my hearer; and thinking there may be others to whom my experiences may likewise be new, I am setting them down here.

As is well known, the children leave our Board schools at the age of twelve or thirteen years (sometimes even earlier). Girls cannot enter factories till they are fourteen, so that there is a danger that at a most important period in a child's career there may be a period of interregnum, or waste of a year, two, or even three years. Amongst the lower working-classes in London and the large towns it is usual for the wives as well as the husbands to go out to their daily toil, and when the parents are industrious or the need is pressing, work will at once be found for the little lass whose emancipation from the Board school has been anticipated as a new means of supply to the wages fund; the work she will do will be one of the innumerable home industries by the aid of which the poor manage to eke out a subsistence: tailoring, match-box making, boot-stitching, or whale-bone covering, perhaps. Or maybe a "place" will be found for her, and she will have her first taste of domestic service. Too often, however, she will be left at home: ostensibly to mind a baby very likely, really to run wild on the streets. There will be no one to initiate her into the decent housewifely ways which might make a true *home* of the bare tenement, and be a source of untold comfort to the toiling members of the family. She will be loitering and romping with rough companions, forgetting all she has learned at school, the very discipline of school proving a stimulus to evil by the rebound of license consequent upon the withdrawal of its restraint. All this just at a time when the child's education should commence. As has been said, during school-time she has been only "carting materials," and now, instead of beginning to build, she squanders what she has gathered. By the time she is fourteen she is confirmed in her wild ways, and only fit for work at a factory; no decent home would be open to her, neither would she submit to its discipline.

I have said that the little lass sometimes takes a "place" at twelve or thirteen years of age. It may be easily imagined what sort of "place" this would be. No one with a very comfortable home or easy ideas of housekeeping would hire a *child* to do the work, so that the places most frequently open to such children in the poor districts are the small general shops, beer-shops, and the homes of women-sweaters. The women in these establishments want a little drudge to help in the shop, run errands, mind the baby, do the washing,