


Household.

Graded Establishments.

III.

HOMES WITH TWO SERVANTS.

 ONE striking difference between home conditions here and in Europe lies in their indefiniteness in America, as contrasted with the rigidity and binding regulations which make up the social atmosphere abroad; and this difference is very striking in domestic service, especially where two or more servants are kept. In the matter of the maid-of-all-work, or "general" servant as she is called in England, it is comparatively easy; she naturally has to do all the work there is: but the case changes when two servants undertake the management of a home. In my own experience, I have found it an excellent plan to lay down rigid rules in such cases.

I had at one time the charge of a fairly large house in the country, which I undertook to manage for a friend of mine. At first we had only one servant, a German girl, who had been thoroughly trained since her arrival in America, and who resented any interference or advice, or even help, although, as the family grew to larger proportions, it was hard work to get through washing and ironing, and keep up the perfect order and cleanliness we aspired to; and she finally left because we insisted on hiring help in the laundry. We then decided upon engaging two Irish girls; but that there might be no disagreeables, I drew up a schedule of their respective work, which I insisted upon, the result being that we enjoyed perfect immunity from quarrels, and although the house was in the country, and errands to the village were a frequent necessity, I do not know that any dispute ever arose between the girls.

A great secret in the success of our *ménage* I think arose from the fact that having once gone over their work with them I left the responsibility entirely in their hands. I will give the division of work, as far as I remember it, for the guidance of those who find the usual difficulty in securing peace in their homes, or who are constantly confronted with the statement, "'Tain't my work."

The cook had charge of the dining-room, hall, front piazza and steps, kitchen and laundry, was expected to do the washing and ironing, the latter with assistance, and of course all the cooking. She was not allowed to order anything from the tradesmen, and was held responsible for the stores which were kept in the old-fashioned country cellar. I found it answered well to tell her the limit of house-keeping expenses, and to enlist her ingenuity in reducing the tradesmen's bills. I commend this plan to my readers, for the reason that cooks are always in sympathy with some one or other, and it is better to enlist their suffrages on the right side. It can be truly asserted as an experience, that in this way many girls will be induced to practice economy and care.

The second girl's duties were very strictly defined, both in regard to regularity and extent. She was responsible for the parlor, library, and staircases, and for all the bedroom work; was expected to "do" the rooms twice daily, as far as replenishing water and "picking up" were concerned, to be always tidy to answer the door-bell, to help in the ironing, to keep the silver bright, to arrange and wait on the table, to attend to the lamps (which were oil-lamps), to run the errands, and to clean every room thoroughly once a week, on settled days.

Window cleaning was divided between them. Each had

a right to one evening a week, from eight to ten o'clock, when the other was bound to do the work; and each had an alternate Sunday afternoon or evening. The plan worked admirably. No objection was made if the cook offered to do an errand and the other girl was willing to relinquish it. The only question which arose was, to my mind, a very strange one. It was with regard to the table glass and silver, of which there was a considerable quantity, and which the second girl declared it was not her place to keep in order. I had, in preparing the schedule, omitted special mention of cleaning silver, and considered it included in the care of the table; but I soon rectified my oversight, and by throwing on the girl the responsibility of having an attractive table, shining with well-kept silver and glass, I obtained a very thorough and willing service in regard to it, so much so that Maggie became quite renowned for her skill and taste in arranging the dinner-table, even to the fanciful designs into which she educated the napkins.

My observation has been very closely directed to this question of two servants. In one house in which I am a constant guest, the second girl does a good deal of plain sewing; but in this case the family is very small, and there is no washing done at home. It certainly would help the question of domestic service very much if an attempt were made to have a definite standard of duties, for it very often happens that the fact of having two servants means that actually less work is done than when one only is kept. The work of the smallest house in which washing, ironing, and baking are done, is immense; yet very many servants do it alone, and find time, moreover, for fancy cooking, while often, where two girls divide the work, so much time is lost in gossiping or quarreling, that many things are neglected, and people who have two maids constantly find that extra help is needed. This is one of the most curious problems of daily life, and one which all mistresses will recognize. It arises, I think, very much from indefiniteness. The very person who gets along admirably with one servant, whose house is the admiration of her friends, will often find that the advent of a second girl means trouble rather than help, and that, instead of any lightening of her own task, things become increasingly difficult, discontent enters the door, and the girl who has done admirably alone, suddenly shows the cloven foot.

Now much of this might be prevented if rigid rules were laid down before the second girl entered upon her duties. Half the trouble in life arises from want of definite regulations, and nothing in the housekeeper's experience is so disheartening as the failure to secure more leisure and satisfaction with the increased expense of more help. Yet we all know, by our own feelings, how much easier it is to do work for which we receive all the credit, than when no such result follows. Mistresses are more apt to lavish praise upon the maid-of-all-work upon whom everything depends, than to divide it fairly between a cook and second girl; and yet in the houses where my unstinted approval is claimed for order and efficient service, this is the secret of the success.

One acquaintance of mine goes even further; she not only throws the responsibility of the weekly expenses upon the cook, but after the first fortnight rarely gives an order. She goes through all the details of kitchen management during the two weeks, and then says: "Now, cook, our expenses must not exceed such a sum. If you can lessen them I shall be glad, and you will find the fact appreciated at Christmas; but you know how we wish to live, and I shall leave the ordering of dinners to you, and expect you to do me justice." The daintiest dinners and luncheons are the result, and my friend assures me that her weekly bills are lower than when she manages herself; and yet, even when ex-

pecting company, she merely sends word down by the waitress that such and such guests are expected.

This may, of course, be a rare case; but everyone who has had experience in governing the ignorant is aware that they generally respond to trust. It brings out their honesty, and they are proud of being trusted, and especially enjoy the credit they gain. Love of recognition is not the highest moral ideal, but all human beings are liable to the weakness of liking to be appreciated, and servants especially.

One of the efforts of my own home management is inducing my servants to save for themselves. I find this easier in the case of two than of one. The maid-of-all-work, in nine cases out of ten, refuses to put away a share of her wages every month, on the ground that she sends it to her family; but where two girls are living together, a sort of rivalry soon springs up, and if one saves the other does.

Some experiences with help are very curious. One in regard to this very matter has recently come within my own ken. The only girl in a small family received, as a Christmas gift, \$5 in the savings-bank, and was much delighted with the ownership of a bank-book, but can never be induced to add a dollar to it monthly, because she wishes to wait till she has a "respectable sum." say \$10, to add to it. It is vain to argue the point; but it is more than likely that, if two servants had received each a sum in the bank, one would save and so incite rivalry in the other. Very few mistresses realize how much they can do in this direction; and one main reason that two servants are often unsatisfactory, is because they are left to themselves, and the many trivial opportunities which present themselves for encouragement in kindly sympathy are neglected by the mistress.

A prolific source of trouble is the Sundays out, or evenings out. The discomfort of letting the only servant out is easily fathomed; the mistress knows that she must depend upon herself during the time of absence; but nothing is more aggravating than to find that cook objects to bringing in the supper-things in Mary's absence, or that Mary will not or cannot keep the kitchen fire up while cook is away. But a little prevision will do much to obviate this difficulty; and the mistress who in engaging a girl makes a point of her helping in another department if necessary, will find less friction in the household machinery.

Another cause of trouble in American households is the alacrity with which servants are engaged. It is a revelation to one accustomed to consider a "personal character" indispensable, to learn the vague ways of intelligence offices, and the ease with which incompetent, unindorsed women obtain positions. Moral character seems to be nowhere considered important. Another very curious feature of this question is the loose way in which girls present themselves as applicants. You go to an intelligence office and want a waitress, and are told there are none, but perhaps someone present may be willing to "go as waitress;" and a girl who never waited at table in her life, is obliging enough to allow you to engage and "teach her." Such "ways" are sufficient to make the hair of the experienced housekeeper stand on end. Where are the hundred and one questions she is prepared to put? Of what use her regulations and methods, when she is to feel under a positive obligation if this inexperienced, ignorant young person is willing to come to her and be taught—and break a few glasses and dishes daily in the process?

Surely, indeed, do we need some definite rules for service, some standard by which to judge of applicants, some knowledge of values by which to stand or fall. If only domestic service could be regulated on trade principles, we might hope for some amendment; but who is sanguine enough to be pioneer in such a social revolution?

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Going to the New Home.

HOW TO PACK AND MOVE.



COOL head is quite as necessary in packing up and moving, as in speculation or war. Having it, and a little of what the Yankee calls "gumption," the mover is likely to find at the journey's end that all things have arrived decently and in order.

When once you have decided to move, sit quietly down and plan a little. Time thus occupied is money and trouble saved; and if the packing be done gradually it will be much less fatiguing, and the hurry and consequent hubbub at the last will in a great measure be avoided.

To begin with, the clothing, ornaments, and other articles not in general use are to be disposed of. A good plan is to set apart the spare room for packing what is to go into trunks, and the parlor for packing chests and large boxes. In any event, manage, if possible, so that, after packing, the receptacles will not need to be moved about, and that the heavier ones will be near the entrance; no bulky articles of any sort should be placed in the halls.

Having decided on the rooms to be used for the preliminary packing, have the curtains and carpets in them removed, the floors washed, and all dust removed, and as opportunity offers, carry to the rooms the articles to be packed there, and the necessary receptacles for them. If you ever have moved before, try to remember how many barrels, boxes, and trunks you had, and estimate how many more you will need this time. Half a dozen moderate-sized packing-boxes will be none too many, and if they are undersized, more will be better. Do not have your boxes too large. Shoe-boxes are the best for such purposes, and may be bought at the shoe-stores for the merest trifle; and soap-boxes are excellent for small, fragile articles. Barrels are the best of all receptacles for holding kitchen ware, glass, or china.

Those who have never tried them, cannot realize the convenience of bags made from burlap. The goods cost from twelve to twenty-five cents per yard, and each bag should contain about one and three-quarter yards. Run the bags up at the end and side with strong twine such as is used in sewing sacking on furniture for shipping. Then stitch the seams up on the sewing-machine, turn the bags with the seams inside, and go over them with the twine, taking deep stitches into the fabric on either side. Nine or twelve bags will not be too many if there are the usual household belongings of a large family, as anything except breakable articles can be packed in them.

One or two trunks, as may be necessary, should be reserved for the family belongings that are in constant use, and these should not be packed until the last. If the move is to be to a distant point, it is also well to provide a couple of extra trunks for blankets, comfortables, and house-linen, for use in case the larger boxes do not arrive on time. House-cloths, scrubbing-brushes, dusters, dust-pan, whisk-brooms, soap, and other articles necessary for cleaning the house, can be put in the trunk with the linen. If they are well wrapped, they will not interfere with the other things; and they should be placed on the top of a trunk where they may be found without unpacking anything.

A bottle of spirits of ammonia, one of glycerine, some toilet-soap, the family medicine-case, adhesive plaster, and a pair of scissors should be carried in a hand-bag, so as to be ready in case of emergency. This little forethought may save a great deal of suffering. It is well to select all of these articles before the packing is begun, and put them in one place; for in the confusion of the last few hours there seldom is time to spare in looking for them, and they most