

nounced intention of the Chartists to assemble at Kennington Oval, and march in overwhelming numbers across that bridge. A strong body of police were first to bar their progress, and if not sufficient the military would act. After hours of anxious watching the news at last came that the meeting had assembled, had listened to two or three of their orators who spoke from the top of a four-wheeled cab, had satisfied themselves with this, committed the monster petition to the charge of a few, and quietly dispersed, thus ending the great Chartist demonstration of April 10, 1848."

Having briefly sketched an outline of the Government and its position, I would at some future time say more of the different offices of State if my readers are sufficiently interested in the subject.



A LETTER FROM A KITCHEN.

[To the Editor of THE

GIRL'S OWN PAPER.]



HONOURED SIR,—I take the liberty of writing you these few lines to tell you how much my fellow-servant, Sarah, and me like your paper. I was always fond of reading, from a child, and mother used to make rare fun of me, and say she believed I would sit with a book written in French in my hands sooner than not be reading at all; but I don't know that I ever read anything I liked so

much as THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, for there's a bit of all sorts in it—something to make you laugh, as well as something to teach you; but there's some of the writings in it I thought I'd like to say a word about, in case there was any readers might be placed like myself.

You must know that I am a general servant, only there's a girl of sixteen kept too, being rather more work than one can do properly, as it is a largeish house, and master and mistress very particular, not but what they are good people, and kind to us girls in many ways that some would never think of.

Well, as I was saying about THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, there's many pieces in it very nice to read, and useful, no doubt, to the ladies as have not got to work all day, but that poor folks might pass by, with—"Oh, that isn't suited for the likes of us; however could we do all that's written down here?" That's what I thought when mistress made me a present of the first few numbers, and advised me to take it in regular.

There are some pieces written, I should say, by a medical gentleman, to tell you how to

improve your appearance, and all by fair means; not any of those nasty messes for the complexion as you see advertised. I could not help smiling when I saw those rules for making you look healthy and bright; and I remember saying to the other girl, "Ah, Sarah, we haven't time to be thinking about our complexions, have we?" But then I thought to myself, why shouldn't we try to look nice as well as them as happen to be born young ladies; so said I to Sarah, "I'll just see what the gentleman has to say about it."

With that I took the book up again and read all about taking care of your hair. Certainly it would not be right nor yet reasonable for such as me to take new laid eggs to wash mine with, but we always have the best yellow soap, or else the soft soap, which is better to my thinking, and I don't know but what that is as good as the eggs when all's said and done. At any rate, since I began to wash my hair thoroughly with it once a fortnight, and give it a good brush every night, no one would believe the difference. Even mistress said once, "Why, Jane, how nice and bright your hair do look now; quite different from the dusty-looking wig you used to have."

I felt pleased at that, I can tell you, for mistress don't often pass a remark about our appearance, unless she thinks we are getting too fine, and then it isn't praise she gives us.

Then it seems you can't be healthy without having a bath every morning, leastways it says so times upon times in those papers I'm speaking about. If anybody has a need to be strong and well, certainly it is servants, for if they fall ill, whatever is to become of them? But I never was in a place yet where the servants could have a bath, neither night nor morning, and what with being in such a desperate hurry in the morning, and too tired to do anything at nights, most girls aren't so particular as they might be about washing themselves regular.

But though we can't have a regular bath like the paper says we ought to, there's not much difficulty about having a thorough good wash all over, say once or twice a week. Sarah and me share the same bedroom, and how we manage is this. On bath night, as we call it, I get a can of hot water and go to bed half an hour earlier than usual, which mistress has no objections to, as, if anything is wanted, there is Sarah to attend to it; and on her bath nights she does the same, and I attend to her work, for I have persuaded her into following the same way. And certainly it's time well spent, for I feel a different girl since I began, and Sarah's mother says she shall be about keeping her children a bit tidier, for Sarah puts them all to shame when she goes home on a visit.

Then there are all the papers about cooking, and many's the hint I have taken from them. I can call to mind feeling rather angry when I read about us English cooks being wasteful when compared with foreigners, which I've always understood lives on frogs; but certainly by using up the scraps and bones, and even saving the water meat has been boiled in, I must say it has brought down the butcher's book above a bit, and many's the tasty little dish I've sent to table, made, as you may say, out of nothing, and mistress soon noticed them, and likewise the change in the butcher's book, and when I told her the reason she *did* seem pleased. "If that's the case, Jane," says she, "I shall have to raise your wages, or you will be wanting to leave us and take a grand cook's place now you're getting such a first-rate one, and so economical too."

It says in one place that your meat ought never to be laid down on a dish, but always hung up. But suppose your larder hasn't any hooks in it, and the larder not over good nor

over large, which is the case with ours. That stopped me at the first; but then I thought to myself, "Mistress won't begrudge a shilling or two if it keeps the meat better," and I have a good strong wrist, so I took and bought a dozen long nails and a few stout iron hooks, and hammered them in the larder walls, and sure enough there were my meat hooks, as good as if the first carpenter in the land had made them.

I must not forget the papers about needle-work, which those on cutting out and making dresses have been most useful to me, and others too, no doubt, for it is a shame to pay three shillings or more for making a plain print, when anyone can make it themselves by following what it says in the book, for most has an hour or two to themselves of an evening. I saved up the old newspapers that came downstairs, and gummed them together, and though I did not get on so very well at first, I managed at last to cut out a pretty fair pattern, taking the measures from an old dress, and kept it by me, so I can always cut out a dress now without any trouble about the pattern.

There are some beautiful pictures of what might be termed fancy darning, and very well described, too, as come in very useful for mending the table linen; also one, more proper for knitted things, that I use when I have time for mistress's stockings, and very nice they look, for you can't see where the hole was; but in general it is the table linen I use the directions for, for you can even copy the pattern of the damask if you go by what the book says.

If you will please excuse me being so long-winded, as the saying is, there is one more thing I should wish to tell you about. There was a piece in the paper about making your bedroom look nice, though some might say the writer did not mean them for such as us. Perhaps not; but I daresay she will be all the better pleased to think they have been followed out by one, at the least. Most girls in service don't care what their rooms are like, so long as there's a bed and a washstand, and just room to turn round; but after I had read that piece up to Sarah one evening, we thought we should like to make ours more comfortable than at present. Of course I asked mistress if she would object to my putting up a shelf or two, and when she took it in what I had in my mind, and what had put me up to it, she said quite pleasant, "Oh, certainly, anything in reason; tell me what you want, and I will give you a shilling or two to pay for them."

With that Sarah and I talked it over, and decided to have a bracket covered with American cloth by the washstand, which is terrible crowded, what with a water-bottle and soap dish, and one thing and another, and in a corner we shall have a shelf with a curtain hanging from it for a cupboard to keep our other dresses in, just like the young ladies in the story did. Then under the bed we have a wooden box where we keep our best bonnets and boots and such like, and we thought we might cover that and make it look quite handsome, and keep it out in the room instead of under the bed, and it will make another seat, which at present we have only one chair; and we are going to stuff the top with paper torn up small and make it like a cushion.

So what with one thing and another the paper has been very useful to me, though a poor girl, and may you go on as interesting as you have begun is the sincere wish of

I remain, your obedient servant,

JANE COOPER.

[The Editor has, with Jane Cooper's permission, inserted the above interesting letter, and he hopes that the perusal of it will prove of benefit to many of his readers.]