ceremony of knocking, "do come back with me! Father 's took bad, and I can't make out what ails him. He won't move nor speak, and takes no notice of anything I do."

Kind-hearted Mrs. Carter, who was just sitting down to her breakfast-table, rose hastily, and leaving her untasted tea to cool in the cup, hurried across the road, and followed Mary's eager footsteps up the steep stairs and into John Hayes's bedroom.

The old man lay just as his daughter had left him—speechless and motionless, with the same troubled look in his eyes, and his face strangely livid and distorted.

"What ails him, Mrs. Carter?" asked Mary, as she anxiously watched the good woman's face to read her verdict there.

"It 's a stroke he's had, my lass. You'd better send for the doctor at once, though it 's little he can do when a man's struck."

"But will he die?" whispered the poor girl, in her terror and distress.

Mrs Carter shook her head. "Wait till the doctor comes," she said in tones meant to be reassuring. "He'll tell you better nor me. Happen he'll live long enough; happen he'll get better of it, or happen," sinking her voice to a whisper, "he'll just go out like the snuff of a candle. But put your bonnet on, my lass, and run down for the doctor. I'll wait here. The air'll do you good; you look ready to faint."

Dr. Winter came, but could do nothing. Mrs. Carter had been right in saying the old man had had a stroke, and how it would end no one could say. He might pass away any moment, or he might live for days or months.

Mary's place in the village choir was empty that day. Neither was there any walk for her by the riverside after evening service. Instead, the day was spent by her father's bedside, while the summer sun shone without, the birds sang gaily, and the church bells filled the air with their solemnly joyful music. Patiently Mary sat by the stricken old man. The shadows crept round and lengthened; the soft breeze, laden with the scent of roses, hay, and sweetbriar, came in through the open window, and mingled with it came the distant lowing of cattle and the bleating of sheep and lambs. Now the clang and the clash of the bells ringing for evensong had ceased, and in the silent chamber Mary could catch the faint rise and fall of the hymns, sung to the dear familiar tunes. It soothed her anxious sorrow listening thus, and presently she found herself humming softly in accompaniment to the distant music, and the very words fell like balm on her heart.

'Oh, God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home."

She wondered if her father took in the meaning of the beautiful words. Surely they ought to soothe away the terrible anxiety in his eyes. He was always fond of hymns, and liked to hear Mary sing them; but now he seemed insensible to their meaning and to the hope and comfort they conveyed.

She had repeated his favourite texts over and over softly in his ear, and had read him short passages from the New Testament; but nothing seemed to calm the trouble which was evidently on his mind, and which the dumb lips seemed to be longing and striving in vain to tell.

"What is it he wants, Mrs. Carter?" Mary asked, when the old woman came in for the sixth time that day to see how her neighbour was. "I'm sure he wants something, and I can't make out what. I can't bear to see him look so, and not know what he wants. I'm sure he wants me to do something."

"They mostly look so," answered the old woman. "Maybe they are thinking of things they had meant to say; but there's no use wondering when they can't tell us. Try not to think of it, honey; don't bother yourself worse nor you can help. Go and take a little walk and I'll wait here till you come back. He won't want anything just now but what I can get him as well as you."

Mary thanked the kind old woman, and did as she was bidden, as far as going out into the fresh air. But she was not inclined for a walk, and shrank from meeting any of the little groups of friends and neighbours who were congregated here and there, discussing the news of the village, or sauntering by the riverside, or along the meadow paths. Instead, she seated herself in the open doorway, and leaning her head against the oak frame, abandoned herself to sad thoughts.

A voice at her side roused her, and she turned to meet the face of Tom Altham, who stood close by with a look of pitying tenderness on his face.

"Poor little Mary," he said, softly; "there was no walk by the river for us this evening."

The tender tones were too much for the poor girl. She had borne up bravely through the day, but Tom's pity and the yearning love shining so unmistakably in his eyes made her break down. Her lip began to quiver, and then, hiding her face in her hands, she burst into tears.

"Don't cry, Mary; don't cry," pleaded Tom, with an odd little quiver in his voice. "I can't bear to see you cry. I wish I could take all your trouble from you." He possessed himself of one of her hands as he spoke, and it was not withdrawn. His kind pressure was gently returned, for Tom's love and sympathy were very precious to the poor girl then. She was soon calm again, and had raised her face and wiped her eyes.

"I can't bear to see you in trouble, Mary," the young man went on. "It cuts me to the heart to see you cry, when I'd lay down my life cheerfully to make you happy. I'd meant to tell you a great deal this evening, my dear, if things had gone right, and you'd have met me by the river. Maybe you'd not be in a humour now to hear what I'd got to say?" he questioned, hesitatingly and doubtfully.

"No, not to-night, Tom," she answered quickly, while her thoughts flew to the old father upstairs lying in his living death. "It seems I oughtn't to think of anything but him just now, when he's so as he might go off any moment."

"You know best, Mary," he answered, with a heavy sigh, in which there was no trace of impatience. "I'll wait till you're ready to listen to me, and if you want anyone to help you any time with the old man, you know how glad I'll be to do it."

"Thank you, Tom," was all she said, but the look she gave him spoke more than words, and he was content; while to her in her sorrow his patient unselfish love came with a wonderful power of soothing comfort.

(*To be continued.*)

HOW TO WASH AND IRON.

By Ruth Lamb.

CHAPTER I.

Cottage Washing.

"For it's thump, thump; scold, scold; wash, wash away;
There's not a bit of pleasure upon a washing day."

Many a time, in my childish days, have I heard the "Washing Day" verses of which the above two lines form the chorus. The verses themselves have escaped my memory, but I know they were a vivid description of the domestic misery and discomfort which accompanied washing day. There were the scolding wife, the truant husband, crying and neglected children, meals ill prepared, or not prepared at all; the sloppy kitchen, deserted by the cat; and the favourite dog kicked out of doors, and not daring to show his honest muzzle until his instinct told him that the chief business of the day was over.

A certain amount of discomfort is almost inseparable from washing day in a cottage home, and where there are few conveniences; but the mother who directs, and the girls who help, may very materially lessen this if they go about the work in a neat and orderly fashion.

Order is like a fairy helper, and has been represented as such in many a juvenile story. It not only reduces discomfort to the minimum, but actually lightens labour.

In arranging my chapters on washing, I will

first take cottage work, where space is small and mechanical appliances are few. I will then tell something about the modern improvements, and the more expensive machinery of various kinds which are used in laundry work on a large scale, and which equally save time and diminish labour.

The materials required for simple laundry work are wooden tubs or earthen pancheons—or both, if possible—wicker clothes baskets, pegs, lines, props; a wooden clothes-horse, or "maiden," as some call it; a thin calico bag, to boil clothes in; a long, smooth stick, to turn them in the copper; blue-bag; soap of two kinds, pale yellow and white curd; some soda, starch, and blue. Soda softens water, and is valuable for dissolving the grease and cleansing very dirty articles; but it should not be used in water intended tor flannels, or it will turn them yellow, and it would also spoil most prints. Many washing powders are advertised, but I cannot recommend or condemn any from actual experience. I have heard ladies complain of the use of strong powders by laundresses, and say that clothes were made tender and rotted by them. A pint of boiling water poured over a quarter of a pound of quick lime, and drained off *clear* into the copper before clothes are put in to boil, helps to whiten and bleach such as need it. It must be well stirred in. In most old-fashioned cottage homes, and, indeed, in many new ones, the Peggy tub is an important article, and a much-borrowed one amongst neighbourly people. Properly used it is a great help, especially for coarse things and the much-soiled clothing of working people. Old-fashioned as it is, numbers of cottage laundresses prefer it to some of the newer washing machines. I say some, because there *are* excellent articles which lighten labour, and there are others so heavy and clumsy that they rather increase than diminish it.

The number of washing utensils, the length of lines, &c., must be regulated by the amount of work to be done, and the space available for drying purposes. The copper in which water is heated and clothes are boiled should be kept scrupulously clean, as, indeed, should every other utensil. Baskets, pegs, and lines ought to be regularly washed and brushed; the lines, when stretched, rubbed with a clean coarse cloth, and the wooden rails carefully dusted before the ironed garments are hung on them to be aired.

Soap goes further when dry. It is more economical to buy it a week, at least, before it is wanted. It should be cut up into squares and hung in a twine net in a dry place. When boiled starch is used, it is advisable to strain it through a muslin bag, which ensures perfect smoothness and no lumps. Solid blue, which I prefer to the powdered article, should be tied up tightly in double flannel, and the bag kept in a clean place when out of use.

These details may seem very trifling, but it is just want of attention to these little things which makes all the difference in the appearance of the linen.

Who has not been annoyed at seeing a dingy patch on the hem of an otherwise clean garment, and manifestly caused by dirty peg or line? Who has not chafed over a shiny patch of starch on the surface of a dainty shirt-front, or cuffs flecked here and there with dark blue, instead of being evenly tinted, as the linen was when new?

Yet all these oft-recurring disfigurements might have been easily prevented by regular attention to mere trifles such as I have enumerated.

In my early home it was an article of faith that girls ought to learn how to do everything connected with the house, not merely in theory, but practically; from cleaning a saucepan, blacking a grate, and scrubbing a floor, to the concocting of a dainty dish, or the "getting up" of lace as fine almost as cobwebs. I will not say that *I* attained perfection in all these branches; but I had to try my hand at them, and I have a very vivid recollection of the indignation I once felt when set to do something which *I* considered *infra dig.*

My dear, sensible father put his hand lovingly on my shoulder, and said, "My dear child, if, during your future life, you are so favoured by fortune as to have servants to do *all* these things for you, the knowledge you are gaining will enable you the better to estimate the work of others. You will know both the time and labour that should be bestowed on each, and this will teach you to be reasonable and patient with other workers. If your servants are ignorant you can teach them, and your knowledge will command their respect. If, on the other hand, you have no servants to teach, experience will render the work you have to do far easier to yourself."

The lesson went home. I believe that was my last grumble, and I have known what it is to feel very proud of many a bit of household work which my mother commended, and of the nice appearance of my white muslin frock, "got up" by my own youthful hands.

These lessons in domestic economy were not, however, allowed to interfere with my school duties, which were regularly attended to. Time was found for both, and I remained a daily pupil until I was nearly eighteen. My French lessons at school were not less attractive because I could boxpleat a French cambric frill, or my Italian translation less carefully prepared because of my intimate acquaintance with an Italian iron. And now, as I look back, after being many years wife, mother, and mistress of a home, I assure you I value more than ever the lessons which my own mother taught me.

Let us now suppose ourselves preparing for a cottage wash. All articles, except prints and flannels, should be soaped and put in to steep the night before; and this points to Tuesday as the best for washing, because in hot weather especially the water is apt to smell badly if dirty clothes lie in it from Saturday to Monday.

The articles should be carefully sorted, according to texture, &c. Those which are comparatively little soiled should not be mixed with the coarser and dirtier. Fruit and wine stains on table linen should be taken out before they are touched with soap, as follows: Stretch the stained part over a bowl, cover it with salt, and pour quite boiling water over it. Some stains may be removed by dipping in sour buttermilk and drying in a hot sun, afterwards washing in cold water. This process may require repetition. By putting salt on a port-wine stain while it is wet, the mark will not become fixed; or the immediate application of a little sherry will have the same effect. For the removal of iron-moulds, fill a basin with boiling water, cover it with a pewter plate, on which place your linen. Cover the spot with essential salts of lemon, and then slowly pour boiling water from a kettle upon the powder to dissolve it. Then lay a dry portion of the linen lightly over, so as to keep in the steam, but not to touch the stained part. If your salts be good the marks will quickly disappear. The article should then be washed out separately, or the salts will curdle the soap, and make all the water in the wash-tub hard and useless.

Perhaps it may seem out of place to introduce these instructions preparatory to a cottage wash. But it is in cottages that a very large proportion of the laundry work for much larger houses is carried out. This is almost wholly the case in our watering-places and other summer haunts, and very sweet does the linen smell when it has been dried in an old-fashioned cottage garden; very different from the smoky odour which country people complain of in town-washed linen.

When the clothes are put in soak, all the most soiled parts should have a special rub after an extra soaping—such as collars and wristbands, grease spots, &c.

Early rising is essential on washing morning. The first thing to be done is to light the boiler fire to get the hot water ready. While this is heating let the kitchen, house, place, or by whatever name you call the apartment in which the family take their meals, be put into its proper state of cleanliness. In towns washing is mostly done below stairs in the cellars; in country cottages it may be in a little lean-to washhouse, or, perhaps, in the one room that serves for parlour, kitchen, and every purpose, except sleeping. But even if this last is the case, there is all the more need for order. What makes the old jingle, "There's not a bit of pleasure upon a washing day," a truth?

Is it not the unswept hearth, the unmade beds, the unwashed breakfast crockery, the absence of everything in the shape of a decently-prepared meal?

So let your hearth be bright, if the wash-tub has to stand under the window; and do those little things *which you know must* be done at the proper time.

When ready to commence, work the clothes that are in soak about with the hands; pour off the soiled suds, and add fresh hot water to each lot. Begin with the cleanest, lightest articles, and, as each is washed through, soap it again and pass it into another vessel with fresh, warm water. The articles should follow each other according to fineness and colour, a portion of the dirty water being poured off from time to time and fresh hot added. After a second washing through, all white articles should be scalded. Lay them in the pancheon—the coarsest at the bottom, and so on, till you finish with collars, cuffs, and muslins at the top; cover with a clean towel, to prevent grit or sediment from being mixed with your clothes, and then pour on boiling water till the vessel is full. When cool enough wring out, and rinse through plenty of perfectly clean water, into which enough blue has been squeezed from your flannel blue-bag to give it the necessary tint. Too much blue is a great mistake. It looks ugly by daylight; and, by gaslight, gives, what should be white articles, a grey appearance.

Most articles are dried before being starched, but I remember my mother had such as required only slight stiffening passed through what she used to call "water starch," after being blued. It was a little of the thick, boiled starch strained and immediately diluted, until it seemed scarcely thicker than water. The bodies of shirts were passed through this, and the wristbands, fronts, collars, &c., squeezed through some as thick as jelly afterwards. A little white was scraped into the pan when the starch was boiling, to prevent the sticking of the iron later on.

Fine white articles which require boiling should always be tied up, very loosely, in a thin calico bag. Coarse towels and aprons do not need this precaution. Flannels and prints of the common kinds will follow each other very well. They should not be soaped in places, but washed in a strong lather, made of white curd soap, boiled and prepared beforehand. These ought also to be *quickly* done, and never allowed to lie in a lather, as it would shrink flannels and fade prints. They require twice washing through, but no scalding. Flannels are sometimes wrung out from a clean, light lather; others rinse them in clear water. The following is said to make flannels keep their colour, and not shrink: "Put them into a pail, and pour boiling water on them, letting

them lie till cold the first time of washing." I presume they would be first clean washed, as scalding dirty articles helps to fix the dirt.

Before making up flannels I always soak the lengths for twenty-four hours in cold water, and hang them out dripping, in order to do the shrinking in advance.

Prints should be put into plenty of clean, cold water after washing, and a handful of salt dissolved in this will sometimes help to fix the colours. Delicate prints are best washed in a thin solution of bran.

A word about using plenty of rinsing water. I once heard a lady remark, as she cast a discontented glance at the linen which the laundress had sent in, "I do not know how it is that our clothes always have a muddled look. The creases are out, and there are no absolute marks. It seems as though the clothes were well rubbed, but they are grey instead of being white."

No doubt the greyness arose from using too little water. Where it is scarce, or has to be fetched from a distance, there is a strong temptation to stint the clothes; but where water is near and plentiful, there is no excuse for not giving them an abundant supply of it. In any case the improvement in the colour consequent on its use well repays a little extra trouble.

Coarse woollen stockings and other odds and ends in the shape of dusters and household cloths come in last, and require nothing but washing. For all these the Peggy is a valuable help.

A word about wringing clothes. The little inexpensive wringing machines, which press out the moisture and serve also as mangles, may be found in the possession of most cottage laundresses, especially those who "take in washing." In large cities, a person in a poor neighbourhood will make a living by such a machine, a trifle being paid per dozen for wringing large things, and again for mangling. Articles with many buttons are best wrung by hand. Care should be taken that no part of the garment is tightly strained over the rest. A nightdress, for instance, should be gathered up at the collar and the garment lifted up and down and allowed to drop in loose folds. For want of care in this apparently trifling matter, new material has been cracked into slits, and unsightly patches rendered needful.

Every article should be thoroughly shaken before being pegged to the line. Black and delicate coloured stockings require great care, boiled curd soap or bran water used, and thorough rinsing. They should be hung up by the tops and dripping wet.

Apropos of clearing. A laundress, whose linen and prints were noted for whiteness and brilliancy of colour, told me that she used to place her tubs of clothes before using blue water, under a running spring in her garden.

After the actual washing is done, the last business is to scrub and clean all the utensils, clear out the copper, and tidy the cellar or washhouse. Let us hope some thoughtful little girl has the tea ready, so that there may be a refreshing cup for mother.

When writing about utensils, I forgot to mention the shaped tub which seems to me the best and the one always used in my native county, Lincolnshire. It is oblong, and narrower at the bottom than the top, so that the suds do not flow over so readily, but run back down the sloping sides. There is a little triangular shelf at one corner, to hold the soap.

Young laundresses, when learning, are very apt to rub the skin off the wrists. This is owing to the rubbing on the wrist instead of making one portion of the article come in contact with another. Some, too, wet their own clothes very much in the front. This is both uncomfortable and dangerous, as damp garments must be when near the chest or stomach. To obviate this a washing pad, as it is called, composed of several thicknesses of flannel or a stout material, may be tied on under the large apron.

In very poor homes there are a good many makeshifts on washing days. Clothes have to be boiled and water heated in the pot and kettle, which on other occasions serve for potato boiling and tea water. Or, they are stewed in brown earthenware, covered up with a dinner plate, and on the oven shelf.

I was once in a very tidy cottage home at dinner time, when a little lassie brought in a baked rice pudding, cooked in a small back kitchen. The mother noticed a peculiar odour, as the steam arose from the dish, and said, "Polly, the pudding has a queer smell." "Yes, mother," replied the child, "the stockings have boiled over on the oven shelf. But nothing went in the pudding for *it* was on the top, and the stocking pot was at the bottom."

This was reassuring, but the soapy liquid having boiled over on the hot shelf had burned there, and raised sufficient steam and smoke to give the pudding an undoubted flavouring of essence of stewed stockings.

The drying of clothes in close city neighbourhoods is a great difficulty, and, in small streets with little traffic, is often done on lines stretched across the street itself. Sometimes the neat garments, dried under such difficulties, excite one's admiration. At others, the wretched, dingy rags call forth a mixture of disgust and pity.

Not long ago I was going to pay a visit to a member of my mother's class, when the coachman brought his horse to a dead stand, instead of turning down the street. I soon discerned the reason. There were rows of lines across it, laden with garments, and the appearence of a coach excited a grand flutter. The women rushed out, slackened the lines, and lifted the props to such a height as to allow the coach to proceed. And so we passed through a series of arches, the flapping garments reminding one, in a ludicrous way, of trailing flags on so-called triumphant erections at gala times.

The very queerest mode of drying I ever saw, though, and the strangest collections of duds, were in Edinburgh. It was on a Saturday afternoon, the washing day of the locality—the closest of closes in the auld toun. The pieces of garments—for there was not a whole one amongst them—were fastened to sticks and hung from the windows, story above story.

Our driver said that, in all probability, the adult male owners were in bed whilst the fragments were being washed, and the children ditto, unless the younger mortals were too restless, in which case they were probably careering up and down in, let us say, the primeval costume of the Garden of Eden.

With this last sample of laundry work under difficulties I will close this chapter. In my next I hope to describe the cold starching, folding, ironing, and mangling of garments, table and bed linen, and to show my girl friends how very easily they may get up their laces. I will also describe some laundry machinery, and, if space permits, tell something about the way in which washing is done in other countries.

HER MAJESTY'S HOUSEHOLD AND HOW IT IS GOVERNED.

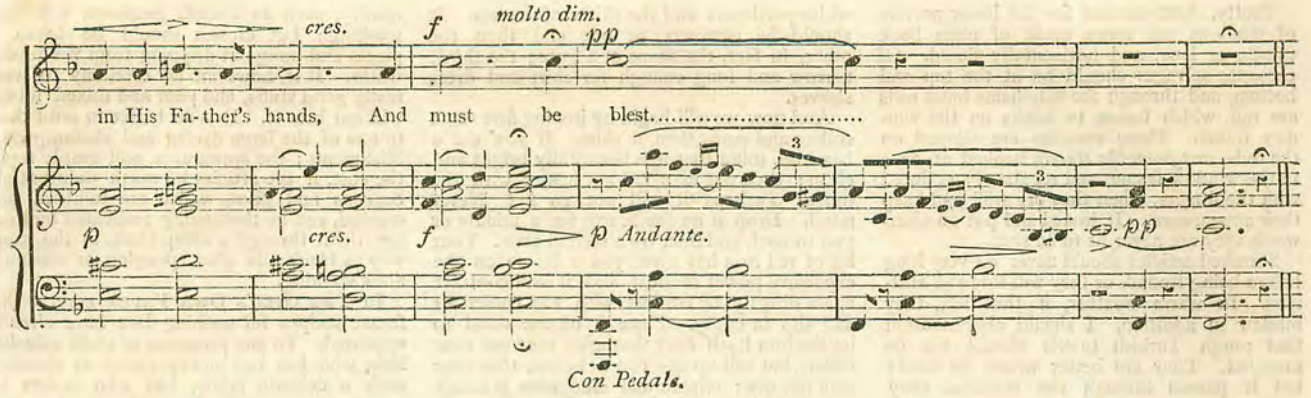
THE Queen was married in 1840, and as early as 1841 the Prince, her husband, began to set on foot the reorganisation of the royal household. We read in "The Life of the Prince Consort" how difficult this proved, for it is a little kingdom in itself, and enjoys a peculiar reverence from its antiquity. But he succeeded in making the royal establishment, as it was first in dignity, also first in purity, in efficiency, and in well-regulated economy; and waste, the canker of all, but especially of great, establishments as difficult as possible. All this was done without detracting from the splendour befitting a great monarchy and without incurring any debts; for, in the Queen's own opinion, "a wise system of economy is the only source of true magnificence." Nearly every bill is paid within three months, equivalent to ready money. George III., when he realised how much pilfering was going on at Windsor, caused inquiries to be made of the different functionaries who, according to their showing, received little or nothing beyond their respective appointments. They were then directed to make an average statement of their perquisites, which they put down at a trifling sum. The king adopted the report; and from that time, in lieu of any extras, the sum named by each was to be added to their salaries. They were caught, you see, in their own wiles.

I daresay my girl readers, who will most probably have some household cares resting on their shoulders in course of time, may care to hear how the first home in the country is regulated.

Presiding over all are three great officers of State. First, the Lord Steward, now the Earl of Sydney, G.C.B., to whom "the state of the Queen's household is entirely committed to be ruled and governed by his discretion." All that appertains to eating and drinking comes within his province. In early days not only did he punish the servants at his discretion, but he was the judge of life and limb for the dwellers in the palace; now his rule does not extend to chapel, chamber, or stable. He is a member of the Privy Council, takes precedence of all dukes not of royal blood, and carries a white staff as a sign of his office. At the death of the sovereign he breaks the staff over the corpse.

The duties of the Lord Steward were more arduous erewhile than they are even now, seeing how in Elizabeth's time most stringent rules were laid down "that no forrayn meate or dishes being dressed out of your Majestie's court be brought to your food without assured knowledge from whom the same cometh;" and that "special orders should be given with regard to the charge of the back doores to your chamberors' chamber, where laundresses laytors, wardrobers, and such used to come." Poisoners and traitors were always to be feared.

Secondly, the Lord Chamberlain, now represented by the Earl of Kenmare, on whom devolves all matters connected with the furniture of the several palaces and royal residences, the royal wardrobe, state ceremonials, private audiences, and the licensing of plays. He issues the invitations to balls, concerts, &c., and he it is who holds sway over the long list of physicians, surgeons, apothecaries, dentists (thirty-two in all), chaplains, comedians, the band, the trumpeters, and many other members of the household.



HOW TO WASH AND IRON.

By Ruth Lamb.

CHAPTER II.

THERE is a very general impression that the more rapidly a family washing is got out of the way, the more excellent must be the domestic management. Certainly, the having clothes about in an unfinished state, day after day, is a sign of anything but good management in a home. Still, I am not in favour of too great hurry. Laundry work, like everything else, requires a reasonable amount of time and pains, if the result is to be satisfactory.

In a sanitary point of view it is good to give underclothing, table and bed linen as much light and fresh air as we can, colour and purity being both improved thereby. When it is noticed that articles are getting a bad colour, let them go through all the processes with the rest, and then, weather permitting, put them out on the grass to bleach, wetting and turning each from time to time, and finishing when washing day comes round again.

In my former chapter I described the mode in which boiled starch is used. For all delicate fabrics, such as muslins, and for shirts, collars, cuffs, fronts, &c., cold starch is preferable. It is very economical, both as regards time and material, cold-starched articles being almost immediately ready for the iron, whilst those done with boiled starch require to lie some time after being sprinkled and folded. The use of extremely thin, water starch for all white underclothing, makes it easier to wash and to keep a good colour, besides improving the appearance.

For starching collars, cuffs, and things which require to be very stiff, the starch is smoothly mixed in the proportion of four ounces to a quart of water. There is an article sold called "starch gloss," and a small quantity of this, well combined with the starch, adds a beautiful sheen to the surface of the linen, and makes it look like new.

The water should be put in slowly and very well stirred, and, if needed, the surface should be skimmed after the mixture has stood for a few moments. When well mixed it should stand for three or four minutes to allow part of the solid starch to settle, and then half the mixture, which will be of the consistency and colour of new milk, should be poured into a clean basin. In this, starch shirt-fronts, collars, &c.; but as each article will take a little of the stiffening quality out of the mixture, more must be added from the other vessel to make up for the loss, the solid starch left being again treated as at first directed.

Four ounces of starch will suffice for nine shirts, or smaller articles in proportion; and, when too thin for these, the poured-off mixture can be used for other things which require less stiffening. I say the poured-off mixture because there is always the greater part of the solid starch left behind, and when the cold starching process is over this must by no means be thrown away. On the contrary, though no longer available for the same kind of stiffening, it must be allowed to settle and the water drained off. Kept in a clean, cool place, the sediment again dries and hardens, and on the next washing day can be used up only in the form of boiled starch, for which it is almost if not quite as good as when fresh. I prefer the white starch to the blue, and use the ordinary-looking article.

The sprinkling, folding, and ironing of linen is such cleanly and pleasant work that I cannot fancy the most fastidious young lady finding anything to object to in it. The deal ironing-table should be white and clean, and, as each article is taken from the clothes-basket, it should be lightly and evenly sprinkled.

Careless hands sometimes deluge one part and leave the others dry. Fine, even sprinkling is the right thing, and in winter, if the chill is taken off the water, so much the better for the fingers of the workers. When you have sprinkled a goodly pile, put your hands under and over, and turn the clothes topsy-turvy, so that the bottom article may come to the top. Well stretch and straighten each piece, bring corners and seams nicely together, and fold everything for the mangle, as nearly as possible in the same way as when finished ready for wear. Shirts and similarly starched articles are not sent to the mangle; they are sprinkled, cold starched, folded, and singly wrapped for ironing. Collars and such little matters should be nicely straightened after being squeezed through the starch, rolled up, and wrapped in a clean towel. Table-cloths and sheets should be stretched by two pairs of hands, and lengthways. Suppose two girls doing this. Each must take two corners; go back to the full length of the article, and pull it gently but firmly out, gradually gathering up the hemmed ends in your hands until both meet in the middle, but with each fold stretching again. Then let the cloth go gradually, until your hands are back at the corners again, when you must give it a good shake or two and fold it in half, right side inwards. Turn the selvages back to the middle of the wrong side, just as a pocket-handkerchief is folded; meet your companion by bringing your corners neatly to hers, and finish the straightening on the table.

Table linen requires very little starch, only enough to give it consistency. Nothing is more disagreeable than to have stiff, crackling, table napkins, and board-like table-cloths; but they should be very well mangled and ironed on both sides, so that when laid on the table they look almost like brocaded satin. The folding should also be most carefully done, that there may be no folds sticking up, or unsightly creases when the cloth is spread.

There are a few starched articles that require no ironing. Dimity curtains should be most particularly stretched, straightened, and shaken after starching, and pegged out by the loops, or pinned to something else when put on the line to dry. Many laundresses, otherwise experienced, do not know this; and consequently iron all the pattern out of the dimity, and send home, smoothed and glazed, what ought to be in ridges and have a rough surface, as when new.

The cleaner's art is now brought to such perfection that most people, whose means allow them to do so, send their long curtains to be cleaned instead of washing them at home, and they come back made up like new. It is, however, very easy to do them at home, for whether lace, leno, or muslin, they should not be touched with an iron. The cleansing process should be effected by abundant soaking, with a little soda as well as soap, and frequent changes of water. These things would be worn out rapidly if subjected to rough rubbing, so they must be handled tenderly, stewed in a bag, as before directed, or bleached, squeezed through strong cold starch, and very nicely straightened while wet.

The quickest and best way of drying them is to have a frame. It is a mere oblong rim of wood, long enough and wide enough for the purpose, and with small hooks fixed near the edge, at a distance of two inches from each other. The curtains are simply stretched and hooked on these, and when dry are ready for neatly folding up or hanging at the windows again. The frame is a very inexpensive article, and saves much trouble, as the curtains dry very quickly on it.

As a substitute, a sheet may be spread on a carpet, and the curtains pinned to it, should there be a spare room available. I know a very good house in which they are always dried in this way. If hung on a line, the edges should be nicely straightened, and the curtains gently pulled when about half dry.

Pretty, short curtains for the lower portion of windows are those made of plain book muslin or leno, and horizontally fluted. Of these the selvages should be at the top and bottom, and through the side-hems brass rods are run, which fasten to hooks on the window frame. These curtains are slipped on the rods, *wet from the starch*, hooked at once to the window frame, and regulated and fluted with the fingers, when they dry stiff, and keep their appearance. If ironed and put on afterwards they are never fit to be seen.

Starched articles should never lie very long before being ironed, or they will lose the stiffness. In warm weather, if thus left, they mildew in addition. I should also mention that rough Turkish towels should not be mangled. They are better wrung by hand; but if passed through the machine, they require a great deal of shaking to raise the knots to the proper state of roughness.

Starch made of common wheaten flour is sometimes used for stiffening dark prints. This is done with a view to economy, but cannot be recommended, as prints subjected to this process are much less clear-looking than when proper starch is used.

We will now run over a list of articles required for ironing. There must be our ironing board, or clean deal table, covered first with a suitable blanket and then with a moderately fine sheet; a stand or two for the irons; padded holders to lift them with and preserve our hands from being burnt; a board, sprinkled with bath-brick, on which to rub them; dusters to polish with after the said rub; a basin of clean cold water close by to sprinkle or damp an article that may have become too dry; the clothes-horse to hang the linen on as fast as it is ready; and, if you like, a tray on which collars and cuffs can be placed near the fire for a time before they are put away.

I am supposing the irons are at the fire; but I ought to say a word or two about them, as you require various kinds for the work. If there is no proper stove for heating flat-irons, they will be hung on a bar in front of the fire, which should always be made up beforehand, and allowed to burn clear before they are put down. *Never let a fire go low when you are ironing.* Bring the hot coals forward from time to time, and keep adding a little fresh at the back, so as not to smoke your irons. There should be at least three flat-irons, or a box-iron with three heaters, for each person at work. Box-irons are less used than they once were, but they are very cleanly articles, and, for delicate ironing, preferable to the others, as being less likely to scorch dainty collars or muslins.

There should be two box-irons, varying in size, and an Italian iron for frills, each with three heaters. Goffering irons and a little crimping machine are also very useful for flounces and frills. In using the latter care should be taken that the little rollers are not too tightly set—otherwise the muslin will be cut in the operation, as I know to my sorrow. A laundress once sent me a whole set of new underclothing home with the frills looking beautifully crimped. But, alas! when next washed my dainty cambric was all in tiny shreds, having been cut to pieces in the crimping, and all the trimming had to be picked off and replaced. Hand crimping, though rather tedious, may be nicely done with a blunt knife. A silver pocket fruit knife answers admirably, and injures nothing.

Wherever there is much delicate ironing to be done, it may be greatly facilitated by the use of three, differently shaped boards, smoothly covered with double flannel. One should be about eighteen inches long and nine broad. This is for slipping below the fronts of shirts, night dresses, and ornamental chemises, &c.; the second for putting under white petticoats and the skirts of dresses. It should be narrower at one end than the other, in fact, the shape of a gore; the third, narrow and long enough for shirt and dress sleeves.

And now we will begin by ironing first some collars and cuffs, then a shirt. If you use a box-iron, mind that it is beautifully bright and clean; then put in a red-hot heater with the tongs. Perhaps it will not go in! Never mind. Drop it on the hearth for a minute or two to cool, and then try a second time. Your bit of red iron has given you a lesson on the expansive power of heat, and it will contract again directly by contact with the cooler air and slip in easily. Place it on the stand to let the iron itself heat through; take out your collar, but roll up the rest as before, that they may not dry; stretch and straighten it nicely *wrong side up* on the ironing cloth. Try your iron on something of little consequence, then run it quickly over the collar once or twice, and turn it the right side up. Now press the collar firmly, again and again, till it is thoroughly dry and stiff, lifting it occasionally to let the steam escape below. Your irons should be as hot as it is possible to use them, without risk of scorching the linen. If you only half dry the article, it will turn limp and the surface will be blistered and unfit to wear.

I daresay you may have noticed that when you buy new collars there is a little ridge which looks like a cord between the band and the upper part, and you probably wonder why this pretty ridge disappears the first time of washing and is seen no more. There is really no cord, but the appearance is produced by the deft hands of the London laundress, and requires considerable practice to manage it. The collar must not be run over with the iron all at once, but in two parts, as it were, and very few country laundresses produce the effect or perhaps care to try. You may leave your collars and cuffs flat, if the shape be suitable, or give them a turn round in the finishing, if desired. Take care always to place your irons on the stand whilst you adjust the linen, or your sheet and blanket will soon be scorched and spoiled. A flat-iron should be vigorously rubbed on the board with bath-brick, polished with a cloth, and its cleanliness tested before you begin the shirt. *And be sure you treat the buttons respectfully.* If you stamp the iron on them they will break; if you rush at them violently with the point they will fly off; go tenderly round them and they will seldom want replacing.

The parts of a shirt should be ironed in the following order:—Back lap, saddle, neck-band, or collar, sleeves, cuffs, front—for which use the flannel-covered board number one—front lap, then finished and folded. The final folding of most articles may be very neat or equally clumsy. Look at specimens done by a first-class laundress, study and copy, which will be better than pages of printed instructions.

In ironing skirts and dresses do them in the following order:—Bottom hems, tucks and flounces, sleeves, body or band, lastly, rest of skirt, using shaped board.

After rinsing delicate prints or muslins, let them lie for a few minutes before starching in clean water in which an ounce of Epsom salts has been dissolved. This is a little secret imported from France and has been successfully used by a very superior laundress of my acquaintance, who finds that it fixes and brightens colours, and improves the general appearance of prints.

The many beautiful, printed cotton fabrics now in use should, if possible, be made up in such a manner that they can be ironed on the wrong side. They should not be rubbed with soap, but washed in a lather made with boiled curd soap. Woollen stuffs of very good quality, such as French merinoes, will bear washing; but dresses should be taken to pieces and hung out dripping from the rinsing water. It is, however, no economy to wash really good stuffs, and poor and mixed fabrics will not bear it. It is far better to send them to one of the large dyeing and cleaning establishments; the appearance will amply repay the cost, if the articles be worth doing at all. Sateens and prints which are tumbled and creased, can be thoroughly renovated by ironing them through a damp cloth, in the same way as black silk after sponging, or merinoes after washing.

In THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER several different recipes for washing lace have already appeared. To any possessor of really valuable lace, who has had no experience in cleaning such a delicate fabric, but who desires to experiment upon it, I would give the same advice as the celebrated *Mr. Punch* did to persons about to marry—"Don't." By valuable lace, I mean Brussels, the various kinds of points, Honiton, &c., &c., which require very delicate manipulation. Maltese, Cluny, Torchon, and others of a comparatively strong kind of thread, are easy enough to do, and I will give you my method of getting them up; but by all means send costly lace to a professional cleaner. It costs very little, comes back exactly like new, and may be done time after time without injury. I have a beautiful piece, only thirty inches long, of rare old point, which cannot be reproduced in these days. It went to Brussels a short time ago, with two little rents in it; it came back so well repaired that the places where they had been were not to be discovered by the naked eye. The mending, cleaning, and postage both ways cost about two shillings; the lace itself is valued at twelve guineas.

A Honiton lace-maker to whom I entrust lace of that description sends hundreds of pieces weekly to be cleaned in Devonshire. I cannot tell the process, but the result is perfection. He says the hand never touches it in the cleaning, and no person could tell it from new unless it has been once washed by an amateur beforehand.

The pretty, frail, and so-called "cheap" laces used at present are really very expensive; many will not bear washing, and are not worth the cost of cleaning.

(*To be concluded*).

A GRAMMAR OF EMBROIDERY.

WE have for the benefit of those of our readers who seem still to find many obstacles in their way towards success in embroidery, summarised, in the form of rules, the various principles to be observed in crewel work, together with the methods of enlarging any design and transferring patterns upon the material to be worked; and we believe that if the rules given below be read in conjunction with the articles on the subject which have appeared from time to time in these pages, no girl ought hereafter to fail for the want of knowing what to do and how to do it.

1.—Success in embroidery is only to be achieved by understanding what can best be done with the

HOW TO WASH AND IRON.

By Ruth Lamb.

CHAPTER III.

AMATEUR lace-washers should not stint time or patience on their work. Soaping, soaking, and many changes of water, with gentle pressing and working about, *should* take all the dirt out. If rubbed at all it ought to be between flannel; or, if necessary, the lace may be stewed in a slow oven, and with abundance of water in a covered jar.

No blue must be used, as it ought always to be dead-white; but it should be passed through the thinnest of cold starch—only a remove from water; say a teaspoonful to half a pint, just to *set* it. Squeeze out of this and straighten most carefully upon flannel, picking out every little point. Lay another square of flannel over, and pass the lace under the mangle. Afterwards iron it *through flannel*, taking care that it is well dried, and pausing to examine and adjust any little rumpled point. Done by this process your laces will look only second to those which have passed through the hands of a professional cleaner, and in the wearing will repay the trouble you have taken.

I mentioned that time and patience are needed, and, as I wrote this, I was reminded of a friend's troubles over a beautiful piece of Honiton point. She had seen a recipe for washing lace, and thought she would try it. Having washed the collarette, she found it was to be stiffened in water with a lump of sugar dissolved in it. But how much? I cannot tell what quantity she used, but certainly far too much. The iron was wrong, somehow, and stuck to the lace; another moment and she had scorched it. A hasty pull was followed by a tear, and a beautiful spray was rent from the rest. Then, wherever the iron touched it was stiff as buckram. Vexed at her failure, and too impatient even to see whether the mischief could be repaired, she flung the costly lace on the fire, put away her ironing materials, and vowed never to have any more to do with lace-cleaning My friend owned to a "good cry" afterwards and a feeling of shame when she thought of her want of patience and the wanton destruction of her collarette—a birthday gift, too, from a distant friend!

Just a little inquiry as to the quantity of stiffening. A rinse to take out what was superfluous, a trial of the iron, a little pains in arranging the lace, and ill temper, wanton waste, and after repentance would all have been spared.

Take warning, dear girls. It is possible to fall into sin and suffer sorrow, even over the washing of a collar.

Now we will suppose the ironing finished. I hope all the strings have been carefully straightened, so the materials may be neatly put away. If irons are not likely to be used for a length of time, rub them over, while hot, with a lump of mutton suet. When wanted heat them, to melt the grease; rub it off, then wash with warm soap and water and polish with a little fine brickdust.

I will now say something about those newer mechanical appliances and laundry fittings which are so valuable when the work is done on a large scale. Indeed, I should be glad if every mistress of a cottage could have her washing machine on a scale suitable to the requirements of her home and family.

Nearly all the good domestic machinery for diminishing and lightening the work of the laundress has been invented and brought into use within the recollection of middle-aged housewives. The washing machine, of which there are now so many varieties, was, like the sewing machine, a thing almost unknown in my childish days. Certainly modern inventions have done a great deal for the relief and assistance of girl and women workers in these, their special departments of labour.

I once heard a young girl, who was not very fond of hand sewing, say to her mother, "Mamma, if I were going to be married and were poor, you know, *I would so save and scrape to get a sewing machine.*" I say the same about a washing machine, and if I were a girl, with the prospect of living in a little home and having my family washing to do, I would save and scrape beforehand in order to have this valuable help at the commencement of my married life, even if I earned its price in pennies.

But there are machines *and* machines. Seventeen years ago I was induced to buy one of the wrong sort, and it has been a piece of useless lumber nearly ever since. Labour was increased by its use, the clothes injured, the result unsatisfactory. We found out subsequently that the much-puffed article was an untested invention; that only three beside ours were ever made; and that the thing, which cost a good many pounds, was worthless. I want to save all young housewives and intending purchasers from a similar mistake and disappointment, and I will therefore describe what should be the characteristics of a good washing machine. It should be light in action, and involve little labour in the turning, simple in construction and easily adjusted, as well as not liable to get out of order. It should combine economy in soap, &c., with diminished labour. It ought not to tear or injure the more delicate fabrics which require cleansing. It should combine with it, in a compact and portable form, a wringing and mangling machine, unless you prefer the mangle to be separate.

If you want your combined machine to answer both for wringing and mangling it must have wooden rollers.

The little India-rubber Wringer is only intended for the work implied in its name, which it does admirably.

The machine should also be cleanly in operation, and not involve the disagreeable accompaniment of a sloppy floor whenever it is in use, especially for wringing.

Let me now suppose that I am advising some dear girl who is preparing for married life, and about to select a washing machine, either for her own use or that of her servants. We must prepare for a little tour of inspection; for we do not mean to choose such an important article in a hurry, or take the first that comes to hand. We will find out the names of the very best makers of domestic machinery; ascertain how long their inventions have been before the public; if they have stood the test of time and public competition; and what position they have taken on such occasions. We will not ignore the medals that may have been awarded at the various great exhibitions. Then we will think over and compare notes as to the merits of two or three machines which, after due examination, we have fixed on as the best, or, it may be, the best which our means will permit us to purchase. I shall, however, whisper to my girl companion if she has only a small sum to spend, "Better wait a few weeks and go on saving, than make a hasty purchase which you will afterwards regret. Have a strong, well-made article, however plain in appearance, and be sure it is fit for the purpose you want it, and will do its work thoroughly."

In machines of the same price we must then compare strength, size, economy, cleanliness, amount of work accomplished, by test of time and labour expended; also probable wear and tear of linen and of the machine itself. If possible, we must either obtain permission to test the machines we fix upon before purchasing, or else we must obtain information where we can see them in actual use. After such a careful investigation I think our young housewife can hardly be disappointed when her purchase is put to work in her new home.

Just one more caution. Most good makers improve upon their machines. They find out little defects in the first construction and remedy them by degrees. So we must mind that our machine has the latest improvements which have been tried and found to be really such.

I will briefly describe a couple of machines of undoubted excellence amongst many which possess considerable merit. The "Vowel," made by a firm famous for domestic machinery, and boasting one hundred and seventy prize medals, is in shape an unequal octagon. The bottom is corrugated by means of wooden bars studded with what look like large, smooth wooden buttons, against which the linen rubs as the barrel is turned. It can be had in many sizes, with movable wringer, or combined wringing and mangling apparatus. The roller pressure is self-adjusting, and adapts itself equally to a stocking or a blanket. The front board, down which water is carried back from the wringers, reverses, and becomes a smooth table for holding the clothes as they are passed under the mangle, and a roller at its edge acts as a revolving "carrier" to take them evenly forward. As they go through at the back they are received on a bracket table, which can be lowered as soon as the mangling is finished, and thus adds nothing to the space occupied by the machine when out of use. The little India-rubber Wringer can be bought separately, and will fasten to any tub.

Machine number two, the invention of another firm, is called the Hexagon Eccentric, and if any young student of geography has been puzzled to understand how the earth moves round upon its axis, and why its poles are alternately elevated and depressed, a glance at this washing machine will instantly make it plain, since it moves round in precisely the same manner as the earth does. The inner surface of this hexagon barrel is perfectly smooth, and I asked the question, "How can clothes be cleaned in this, when there is nothing rough to rub against?"

The exhibitor invited me to come in an hour and I should see. I did so, and found that some warm suds had been prepared, to which a little dry soap was added in my presence. Then some dirty towels and greasy cloths were hunted up from a neighbouring refreshment room, and simply thrown in; the machine was set in motion, and three minutes afterwards the towels were wrung out quite ready for the second water. Then I remembered that when visiting a great industrial school I had seen a larger machine of this kind worked by steam, and doing the washing for four hundred persons admirably and satisfactorily. It has a reversible motion.

In another little and very cheap machine the clothes are worked backwards and forwards between two rollers; others are semi-rotating peggies while one; a comparatively new invention, imitates hand rubbing to perfection; but the arrangement appeared rather complicated. Beside these, there are many other varieties; but leaving the washing machine proper, I will tell you something of sundry modern laundry helps that may be obtained, and in various sizes, prices, and styles.

The "laundry fork" is very useful — a smooth stick, with two blunt prongs of gal-

vanised iron, to turn, stir, or lift clothes out of the hot copper. A double trough, with one partition for rinsing or blue water, and another for starch, with a wringer between, for facilitating this part of the work. Drying cupboards, ironing-stoves, and the old-fashioned box-mangle; but the latter so vastly lightened and improved that it has become a comparatively elegant article with continuous motion.

It is most interesting to see the part which gas is made to play in connection with laundry fittings. Whilst the electric light has been threatening to put out gas in one direction, invention has been busily engaged in turning it to account for cooking and as a motive power of great value. The little gas engines are used for coffee-grinding, book-stitching, silk-winding, braid-making, printing, and only a few days since I saw one working a large washing machine.

There are pretty little gas stoves which can be placed on a table and connected by a few feet of india-rubber tubing with an ordinary gas bracket. A single worker can heat her three irons on this, without any fire in summer. On its perforated centre she can also boil a small kettle or pan of water, toast bread, &c., and all these at a trifling cost in gas.

There are also box-irons heated by gas; a polishing iron for finishing and glazing collars, cuffs, and fronts; egg-irons, shaped alike at both ends, for working in and out amongst gathers, narrow trimmings, &c.

Goffering tongs are inexpensive, but comparatively slow to work with. The machines do beautiful work and very rapidly, having been much improved of late.

I must mention one more little article, called "the lady's gas-iron," which any girl would like to possess and use for straightening ties and ironing laces. It is nickel plated, is heated over a gas burner, and if it were not so useful we might almost call it a pretty toy. A young friend of mine was delighted to have one, and constantly turns her iron to account in getting up lace really beautifully.

I think I have now mentioned most of the laundry articles that are likely to be used in private houses, and some that are perhaps better suited for large laundries, schools, and business establishments of various kinds. But then, wherever washing is going on, whether on a large or small scale, girls are sure to be engaged in connection with it, so it is as well to know what articles can be obtained to improve the work done and to lighten the labour of those who perform it.

Glancing backward at the various materials enumerated and modern inventions in the way of machinery, we are led to wonder how people managed to purify their clothing in times when even soap was unknown. No doubt, in primitive days, the women used to take their linen to the nearest running stream and there cleanse it by rubbing, stamping, and rinsing in the clear water.

To this *day the Hindoos* carry their garments and wash them, without soap, in their sacred river, the Ganges; but when the practice was a common one the streams ran unpolluted between grassy banks. Neither garments nor the wearers were exposed to the dirt and smoke-creating agencies of the immense factories which produce so many articles of luxury and comfort, but, alas! foul sadly the fair face of nature, make our streams like rivers of ink, and now only fitted to wash all the white out of our linen.

Paris laundresses first soap and soak the articles, but complete the cleansing in barges on the Seine. Laying the linen on the flat edge of the vessel, they beat it with a wooden utensil, rinsing, rubbing, and beating in turns, until it is clean. It does not appear that the fabric is injured by this process, or by a somewhat similar one which prevailed in country districts in Scotland.

Scotch lasses prepared their garments as above, and then beat them on a flat stone with a wooden mallet, rinsing frequently in the brook, and, with bare feet, treading them alternately in a tub of water.

Another mode of preparing white cotton or linen articles for the river process was by means of steam, and this has been most practised in France. The clothes were first soaked in a ley of potash, and then hung in a steam-tight vessel, communicating, by means of a pipe, with a boiler. The steam loosens the dirt in half an hour, and little subsequent labour is needed. This mode may be carried out on a small scale with a copper kettle and a strong cask.

If any girl-reader thinks washing a contemptible and menial employment, let her peep over my shoulder at one of the most charming word-pictures imaginable. It is from grand old Homer's pen and Pope's translation, "Odyssey," Book VI. Read how Pallas is said to have appeared in a dream to fair Nausicaa, daughter of King Alcinous. The goddess bids the princess take all the state robes and wash them in the river, in preparation for her marriage.

The blushing princess goes to her father to ask for the loan of his royal car, in which to convey the robes to the river—

"Say, with my garments shall I bend my way,
Where through the vales the mazy waters stray?
A dignity of dress adorns the great,
And kings draw lustre from the robe of state.
Five sons thou hast; three wait the bridal day;
And spotless robes become the young and gay."

The request is granted. And then we see the collecting of the garments, the packing of viands under the queen's direction, the preparing of the golden cruse for the bathers to—

"Sleek the smooth skin and scent the snowy limbs."

The mules are harnessed; they start—

"Swift fly the mules, nor rode the nymph alone—
Around a bevy of bright damsels shone;
They seek the cisterns where Phæacian dames
Wash their fair garments in the limpid streams."

"Then emulous the royal robes they lave,
And plunge the vestures in the cleansing wave.
(The vestures cleansed, o'erspread the shelly sand:
Their snowy lustre whitens all the strand.)"

There is a picture of a royal washing day. Read the rest for yourselves, and you will wish you had been there to join in that delightful drive, and the fun that followed after the work was done!

Old Homer, however, says nothing about soap. The first writer by whom it is named is Pliny, who wrote in the last century before Christ. He tells about it as being of two kinds—hard and soft, and made of goat's tallow and the ashes of the beech tree. The famous German soap was not brought into Rome in Pliny's time for washing clothes with, but—for what, think you, dear girls? For dyeing the hair red, the favourite colour in those ancient days.

But perhaps some young Bible student will ask, "What about that text in the third chapter of Malachi, written nearly four hundred years before Christ, in which it is foretold of Him that 'He is like fullers' sope, and shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver,' &c.?"

The word translated as "sope," many centuries after Malachi wrote, and when that substance had become common in all civilised lands, simply meant anything that cleanses—a detergent. Probably it referred to some kind of earth used by the fuller in the exercise of his business.

The labour of washing with nothing but water caused researches to be made, and various substances were employed as cleansing agents. The juices of what are called saponaceous plants, soap wort, &c.; the gall of animals, still used for carpet cleaning and fixing the colours of stuffs; a ley or infusion of the ashes of burnt wood; infusions of meal or bran, carefully strained; and various kinds of earth, notably what we call "fullers' earth," from the purpose to which it is applied, were amongst the number.

Pliny tells us that in Rome cloth was first washed with Sardinian earth, then exposed to the fumes of sulphur, and lastly rinsed with a solution of another kind of earth.

Partially-cooked potatoes have been found an economical substitute for soap. In India rice-water is commonly employed for cotton and muslin articles.

Until the reign of Henry VIII. all the soap used in this country was imported, and London made none for itself until 1524. At that date the Bristol grey mottled was a penny a pound and black soap a halfpenny.

As a final piece of advice with regard to economy in the use of it: never waste your soap by leaving it in the water, and do not throw away your suds, if you have a garden.

They are a most valuable manure, and your flowers, fruit trees, even your little grass-plot, will be greatly improved by watering with soap-suds.

Starch, invented in Queen Mary's reign, came rapidly into fashion, as all the portraits of Elizabeth's day abundantly prove; but it declined in James the I.'s time, because a Mrs. Turner, the inventor of a famous yellow starch, wore a ruff stiffened with it at the time of her execution for complicity in the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury. The secret of preparing this died with her; but it was subsequently found that all starch had a tendency to give a yellow tint to linen. Hence the introduction of blue, a kind of salt brought into England in lumps, or as a fine powder. Starch is made from wheat, rice, and potatoes, the latter kinds being, I believe, inferior in quality to the others.

There is a great deal said in the Bible both about the washing of persons and clothing, especially under the law, as a means of purification from ceremonial defilement. And it is in that same blessed book that we learn the need of yet another kind of washing, even the purifying of the soul in that fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness.

May we be led to desire that spiritual cleansing, and to use that prayer, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."