

the day she came; but the fact was I had an invitation to stay a week with some friends, and as I rarely had a treat, and worked very hard, mother saw no reason why I should deprive myself of this pleasure.

I came home the day after her arrival, and well remember my first glimpse of her. It was a snowy December night, and bitterly cold, but at the sound of wheels the hall-door flew open, and two girlish figures ran out on to the steps. First came Janet, my special chum, followed by another girl, who was evidently the new-comer. Impulsive Janet seized my two hands in hers, and after rapturously kissing me, held them while she poured out all the news, till I laughingly said, "Let me get a word in edgeways, dear; and you are keeping Miss Gordon out in the cold all this time."

Janet blushed at her own thoughtlessness, and released me, whereupon I turned to our guest, who, with a merry laugh, exclaimed, "But you must call me Candy, please—they all do. Otherwise I shall have to call you Miss Chardwell, and I would so much rather say Molly, if I may."

How pretty she was, I thought, as I stooped to kiss her. Such sweet eyes and charming manners did she possess that no wonder she had taken the family by storm, as I soon found was the case. Everyone's verdict was favourable, and I saw no reason to alter it.

From the first she and I were great friends, although we were all fond of her, for she tried so amiably to fit herself to our ways, helping mother in the house, doing all she could for me and Janet, playing with the children, and, in fact, finding her niche, and filling it admirably.

The only one among us with whom she did not get on was Robert; and it really was all his fault, for he presumed on the fact of her being a few months younger than himself. She had not a good temper, though it was kept so well under control that we scarcely knew it; but she could not bear anything like teasing, and her eyes would flash and her cheeks burn at the least approach to it.

Of course in a large family like ours there was always a good deal to put up with in this respect; but I did my best to shield Candy from it, knowing her weak point, and was pretty successful on the whole, except with Robert. Being so good-looking, people rather spoilt him, and he was so audacious as to be quite beyond my control; but I hoped his innate chivalry and politeness would lead him to desist when he saw it was unpleasant, which, I grieve to say, it did not.

Candy bore it fairly well on the whole, generally leaving the room when she could stand it no longer, but not always in time to prevent a passage-at-arms. Next time they

met it had usually blown over, for she was neither sulky nor vindictive.

She did most things well, but excelled above all in drawing, and at her own request went to London once a week to attend a class, having private means of her own which enabled her to do this. She was very independent, for she used to go up with father and Wilfred in the morning, do any shopping she might have on hand, take her lesson, lunch at an A B C, and come down in time for tea.

Sometimes she varied this by going to her old governess, Miss Brown, who lived at Kensington, and then coming back with my father and brother; sometimes Janet or I would go with her, and we would all spend the afternoon at a picture-gallery or concert; but oftener she would go alone.

Hitherto we had seen no special sign of the delicacy which had been hinted at, though she was rather subject to headache. She was obliged to avoid all excitement; but as we never went in for dissipation, and found all our pleasures and occupations at our own fireside, she missed nothing, and being a quiet contented girl herself, frequently said she preferred a regular calm life. As an inmate of our house, therefore, she was a decided acquisition, and we soon ceased to look on her as an outsider.

(To be continued.)

OUR FRIENDS THE SERVANTS.

By EMMA BREWER.

CHAPTER I.



SERVICE is, and has ever been, the condition of more than one-half of the inhabitants of the globe, and so many interests and affections are bound up with it, that it surely must be worth while to look into it, if it were only to try and understand why so many opinions of adverse character are formed concerning it, and why so many prejudices hedge it about.

Servants and masters! Mistresses and maids!

Two short sentences, but extremely important ones, and upon the good understanding of them rests nearly all that makes life happy, useful, prosperous, and comfortable. There is no separating the interests of servants and masters, mistresses and maids. The two classes are not only necessary the one to the other, but the one could have no existence but for the other, and it is certain they are more

intimately connected than either friends or acquaintances.

Those whose office it is to serve are members of our home-life, our friends often, our helpers in time of sorrow, and the companions of our children, and this has been the condition of things from earliest days to the present time.

Why is it, then, we are all frightened to write on a subject so full of interest, and of such near concern?

Perhaps it is that everyone has his or her definite opinion about domestic service, formed by personal experience, and therefore whatever line of argument a writer takes, it attacks someone's prejudices, but rarely, if ever, removes them.

It is certain that around no subject are there so many pitfalls where a writer may lose his or her popularity as around that of *our friends the servants*, and therefore it is that so few commit their opinions to writing.

It would be possible for me to get out of the difficulty by dealing only with servants as they were in olden times; but this is not what is expected of me by the Editor, who is eminently practical, and infinitely sympathetic with the women and girls of to-day, be they mistresses or servants; and although he has not said it in so many words, I know that he expects me to bring out in bold relief the question of domestic servants as they are to-day, "nothing extenuating, nor setting down aught in malice."

This ought to be very easy; but it is not, and for the reason that very few of us are outsiders, but belong either to the class who serve or are served, and our power of observation is confined to our own special case or surroundings.

We are too interested to see the question in all its bearings. We do not use the same coloured spectacles two days together, and we go through life, in consequence, quite ignorant of the way to turn our daily crosses into blessings, and this applies equally to servants and mistresses.

Domestic service differs in some respects from all other occupations. For example, if a girl selects dressmaking, millinery, upholstery, teaching, type-writing, music, singing, or telegraphy, she prepares with all diligence to fit herself for it: she does not hesitate to sacrifice time, money, or even the very necessities of life, in order to be a success, and earn a competency in the work she has selected. But in the case of domestic service—which is, perhaps, the most important of all employments—ninety out of every hundred who seek it as a means of living never dream of making any preparation or sacrifice whatever for it, but grow into the work, as it were, as well as they can.

It is this lack of knowledge and experience that makes young servants' lives so very hard at first, and sends even a good mistress into a condition of despair. They come into the family life with every desire to please, but without the very rudimentary knowledge required. Poor girls! and poor mistresses too! They are a constant trial the one to the other.

Looking into a very poor Scotch cottage one day, we asked the old woman after her girls, and she told us with pride that one had gone as housemaid in the gentleman's house over the hill. It was her first place, and on asking where she had learned her duties, she was quite hurt, and said sharply, "Where should she learn but here at home, to be sure?"

I am bound to say that "here at home" was a brick-floor room which served as kitchen and bedroom not only for the human beings but for poultry as well. What education was this for the situation she had taken, and what wonder if she failed to give satisfaction?

Even as I write I am listening to the story of a girl who went as general servant to a young married couple a few weeks ago, with nothing on earth to guide her in her duties save the reiterated injunction of the mother, "My gal, be honest and obedient, and don't tell no lies." The young husband was very

particular as to the way his coffee was made, and on the first morning the wife went into the kitchen, saying to the girl, "I will make the coffee this morning, and if you will watch me carefully this once you will find it quite easy to make in the future."

The girl did so, and noted that her mistress broke an egg, smelt it, and threw it away; she did the same with a second, but after breaking and smelling the third, she used it to clear the coffee. No word of explanation was given as to why the two eggs were thrown away, and she evidently concluded it was part of the process. For a fortnight the coffee went up quite satisfactorily; but the day following it was so filthy that no one could drink it. The mistress, hurrying to the kitchen, told the girl to make some fresh while she in her turn watched. To her amazement she saw the servant break two eggs, smell them, throw them away, and with the third clear the coffee exactly as she herself had done on the first morning. Of course on this particular day the third egg had been specially bad. The mistress was very angry, and dismissed her. I was very sorry, for though she may have been stupid, I do think with patience and kindness she could have been educated into a good and faithful servant. What should we think of a dressmaker who demanded of a young apprentice that she should undertake to make a beautiful silk dress? Yet such a proceeding would not be at all more unreasonable than to expect an untrained girl to perform the duties of a cook or housemaid in a gentleman's family.

The very best education for domestic service is to start in life under a good house-keeper or upper servant, who does not mind the trouble of teaching, and who will be patient and kind with the girl, whose very desire to please makes her nervous and clumsy.

The great mass of servants, however, are not

in the houses of the rich, and it may be that a girl's first place is as general servant in a small household; and well for her if the mistress is very particular about the work, as well as kind, and capable of teaching. Such good chances as these, however, only happen to the few, and girls thus fortunate almost always turn out well.

There are good conscientious upper servants, and kind, yet strict, mistresses, who believe in the good effects of kindness and patience; and between such and the poor servant-girl a bond of attachment is formed, far outweighing all pecuniary consideration.

The career of a maid-servant is almost wholly decided by the start, or first launch, as it were, into the new life. Very many of our London servants are from pure, happy homes in the country; they come to London full of hope, and brave resolves to be good, industrious, and faithful; but they know nothing of the great city, its people, its habits, its temptations, and its vices. For all these reasons mistresses think themselves fortunate in securing them as servants. And so they are, and probably all would turn out well if the mistresses would only think of the increased responsibilities entailed upon them by receiving into their homes girls so thoroughly ignorant and innocent of the world's ways.

Such girls as these stand in the greatest need of a tender friend and watchful superintendent combined; and unless a mistress is prepared to act in this double capacity, she makes a mistake in taking a girl into her service who knows no one in London.

Another peculiarity of domestic service is, that the supply of really good and efficient workers falls far short of the demand, while in every trade and profession the opposite obtains, and the supply literally gluts the market.

This is the more remarkable because domestic service is thoroughly respectable,

very comfortable, exceptionally well paid, and infinitely superior to the wretched life of the ordinary shop-girl or machinist: the wages are higher even than those earned by the teacher or the type-writer, and yet there is a large, unsatisfied demand for good servants. The majority of girls stick to the overcrowded and poorly-paid industries rather than enter a comfortable, respectable, and exceptionally well-paid service. There must be various reasons for this. What are they?

As far as I can ascertain from the large number of women and girls whom I have questioned, there are three. The first, which affects all classes of servants alike, is the *loss of liberty*; the second, which applies more especially to general servants, who as a rule are members of poor, large families, is the *utter loneliness of their position*; they eat alone, live alone, sleep alone, and are cut off from the rough sympathy of their own people, with no one to speak to; it is very dull, and any other life or means of livelihood seems preferable to being an only servant in a house.

The third reason is a very important one, although hitherto it has escaped notice. It is, I think, a good and sufficient reason why so many good girls and women choose the ill-paid employments rather than domestic service, and one which calls forth our admiration and respect. It is, that they have sick parents, or little sisters and brothers, wholly dependent on them, and for whom it is necessary to have a home, however poor, if they are to be saved from the workhouse. I could not have known this had I not visited a great deal among these poor people and their wretched homes.

Were these self-denying, self-sacrificing women and girls added to the ranks of domestic service, it would do much to add to the character and high standard of *our friends the servants*.

(To be continued.)



THE ARTISTIC LIFE OF LOUISA PYNE.

By RUTH LAMB.

CHAPTER II.

GIRLHOOD.

UNDER the careful training of Sir George Smart the young singer's voice gained rapidly in compass, strength, and quality. The compass was indeed remarkable, embracing three octaves. Her F in *alt.* was usually her highest note; but when the voice had reached full maturity she was able to touch the A above this five times during the song, "Queen of Night," in *Die Zauberflöte*.

From Louisa's childhood she was noted for the ease with which she sang at sight. At Sir George Smart's she met all the musical celebrities of the day, and these delighted to test her powers in this respect. To Spohr she sang his ever-popular "Rose Softly Blooming," and took part in the trio from his opera, *Azor and Zamira*. She was fifteen at the time, and at nearly the same date she was introduced to Mendelssohn, who accompanied her in the lovely air "Jerusalem," from his oratorio *St. Paul*. Her rendering of this song called forth his enthusiastic commendations.

He told Louisa that she must sing for him at Berlin, and that he would arrange for her appearance at a series of concerts which would be given in all the great cities of Germany. Mendelssohn's death, however, prevented this plan from being carried into effect, to Louisa's deep regret. She also met and sang to the great pianists of that day—Litolff, Dreyschock, and Liszt, all of whom greatly admired her voice and style.

Probably Liszt's admiration of the girl's singing was greater than her enjoyment of his playing, for during his performance she was in continual dread that her teacher's piano would be rendered useless by the merciless thumping it received at the hands of his guest.

Louisa's elder sister, Susan Pyne, was also a pupil of Sir George Smart. Contemporary papers state that in 1841-2 the London concerts of the Misses Pyne were largely and fashionably attended. Our heroine was only fourteen years old in the latter year.

When very little older, Louisa sang at a large garden-party given by the Duke and Duchess of Buccleugh at Richmond. Three

queens were entertained on that occasion—her present Majesty, the Queen-Dowager, widow of William IV., and the Queen of the Belgians.

"There were only part-songs," said Miss Pyne, in describing what took place; "and I was one of the singers. I was taken to the party by Sir George Smart. I shall never forget one incident. When it was growing dusk, three Scottish dukes of that day—Buccleugh, Argyll, and, I think, the Duke of Athole—danced a reel in the great tent for the amusement of Her Majesty. The Duchess of Buccleugh took me into the tent, accompanied by Sir George Smart, and there, standing behind the principal spectator, we saw the performance. The dance was kept up with immense spirit and all the usual accompaniments of a Scotch reel, each noble performer being apparently determined not to be the first to give in. I cannot say now which proved the victor. The Queen sat on a low chair, laughing most heartily, and applauding by clapping her hands from time to time, in evident enjoyment. She left at the close of

without price, my Irene. I gave the old fellow £10 for it, and he reckoned it cheap at the money."

"£10! Oh, Frank, he gave me exactly half that!"

"The old—dissembler! Still, it *was* cheap, darling—the *best investment I ever* made, for it brought me to you." Then for the first time he told her of his Aunt Lu's enigmatical wish about them, and for a few minutes the thoughts of both were very tender as they looked over the sea and remembered the warped and shadowed life, so much of which had been spent in watching for a love-ship that never came home.

"They are together now," said Irene softly.

"Yes; and I think she will know somehow of our happiness, dear, and rejoice that her dream for us has come true. Blessings on her memory and on all her part in bringing us together!"

Charlie had time for many a little turn up and down the sands and still longer journeys through the dark forest before the truant couple came back. When they did return there was such a tell-tale light on both faces he scarcely needed the brotherly explanations that were soon forthcoming.

Irene hurried on with a vivid sense of the need of supplementing their frugal dinner and making it a feast worthy of the occasion, and in presence of the cutlets and dainty trifles from the confectioner's Frank proved, as many a lover has proved before, that a happy wooing does not necessarily impair the appetite. What a merry trio they were, and how rapidly the golden hours went by!

The treasured reviews of the new book were slipped into Irene's hand at parting. "Just to beguile the time till Saturday evening," he said saucily as he went away; and it is superfluous to add they were studied and delighted in as no scraps of print had ever been before. The book itself followed next day, and Irene lost all interest in the travels of the renowned Stanley thenceforth.

One more happy meeting by the sea, and then came the journey back to dreary Bloomsbury; Charlie taking new health and hope and tenacity of purpose, and Irene feeling as if no

cloud of sorrow could really darken her life again.

They went together to Wharton, and though Charlie became very pale as they entered the doors of the bank, he was soon reassured by the kind welcome of his old friend. And after several interviews, he joyfully accepted the offer of a subordinate post in a distant branch of the bank, where he would have a chance of retrieving the past, and making his way up slowly and surely to something better.

Irene's delight when told that the opening was at Netherleigh may be imagined, and, to add to her satisfaction, the offer of her old post in the school, which had not been permanently filled, was made to her and gladly accepted.

Frank grumbled, as lovers will, when he found that he could not shake her resolve to have at least one winter's waiting.

She did not mistrust her brother now, but she did know that first steps are most difficult, and she wanted to give a home-feeling to his settling down, and to care for his health, that was still far from robust. Besides, she longed for time and money with which to make at least a few of those preparations which are so dear to the heart of girls the wide world over. So they established themselves in her old lodgings, the honest landlady gladly fitting up her warmest room for the young gentleman, who looked "as if he needed cossetting like;" and here the happy winter went by.

Charlie nobly redeemed the vows made in his illness, and while regaining bodily vigour in the pure air of the hills, his soul prospered and was in health too. His duties at the bank were faithfully and thoroughly done, and before Christmas he succeeded in getting some evening book-keeping to do for tradesmen near, and these extra earnings were set aside to refund to his sister at least a part of what she had spent and lost through him.

At first Irene stoutly refused to touch it, but she had to learn that Charlie's will was now as strong as her own.

And so, when Easter came, it was with many goodly plenishings the happy bride went to her new home. The school-children scarcely knew whether to laugh or cry, as they scattered their daffodils on her path, but Frank's smile

was so infectious, the sunshine won the day. A pretty villa, covered with climbers, with a real lawn in front and sunny garden at one side, had been made ready for the bride.

It was a dozen miles from town, but Frank had decided that a season ticket would annihilate that distance, and he thought his country flower would flourish best away from the din and fogs of the city. Besides, his very best work was to be accomplished in the cosy study for whose adornment Irene's clever fingers had worked their hardest.

Among their wedding-presents came a mysterious-looking hamper labelled, "Alive—with care," and accompanied by a letter containing Jerusha's duty and "best respects to both, thinking as how you'd like to have her for missus' sake." When the lid was raised, Joan issued therefrom with many a portentous growl and sputter, but presently resigned herself to the inevitable, and, recognising Irene, stretched herself nonchalantly on the rug.

Frank's shout of laughter was irresistible, and Irene joined in, with a lively remembrance of her first meeting with the ancient specimen. "Only think, Irene, it might have been Darby," he said, "and that screaming bird would have sent all my ideas to the rightabout. Poor old Joan! she'll lend a beautiful air of antiquity and old-establishedness to our new-made nest, and it will be good to have her for auntie's sake."

And so their new life began together, and Irene more and more deserved her pet name of Sunshine as the happy years went by.

Charlie often came to spend Sunday with them—a brother of whom neither had cause to be ashamed. Presently he too set up a home of his own, having long since been promoted to a good position in the Netherleigh Bank, and well fulfilled in after years the promises made in that crisis of his life.

Joan, most fortunate of cats, still enjoys life among the Chippendale chairs and sofas, glorified as they are now with pretty cushions and art draperies of the latest. She often recalls the old days to her master and mistress; but most potent in this direction are the Dresden vases that, in home and heart, have place of honour as "Aunt Lu's Legacy."

MARY ROWLES JARVIS.

OUR FRIENDS THE SERVANTS.

By EMMA BREWER.

CHAPTER II.



FAMILY life is one of the most beautiful ordinances on the face of the earth, and it is, or ought to be, the centre of love, peace, and harmony. It is made up, as a rule, of parents, children, and servants; and

there is no doubt whatever that upon these last much of the family's happiness and comfort depend.

As a matter of course, when so large a number of human beings are engaged in domestic service, there will be gathered together the good, bad, and indifferent. It is so in every occupation which employs a large number of people, and why should it be otherwise in this particular branch? The practical thing is to accept the fact of this state of things, and to set about trying to make the bad and indifferent into good servants, to keep the good ones up to their high standard, and attach them all to us as real friends.

We hear more about the faults and shortcomings of domestic servants than of any other class of workers, for the reason that they specially interfere with our own personal ease and comfort.

In a factory or work-room, if a girl is late in the morning, or ill-behaved, or slovenly, the inconvenience is hers alone; she alone pays the penalty. She is at once dismissed, leaving no blank or discomfort behind; for the manager knows there are hundreds of equally good workers waiting to be engaged. It is the same with seamstresses taking work home; if they are indolent or dirty they lose their work, and stand face to face with starvation, their places being supplied without an hour's delay.

It is quite another matter in our homes. The faults and shortcomings of our servants act like yeast in a pan of flour—they go through the whole house and interfere with everyone's comfort.

Take the apparently trifling habit of getting up late in the morning. The hour so lost is ruin to the peace of every member of the household, and nothing makes up for it. There is no time for the servants to kneel

down and pray for help and guidance, and all is hustle and bustle from morning till night.

The mistresses may scold and be very angry, but they cannot turn the maids out, and would not even if they could; for in many cases where a single servant is kept it would mean lighting the fires and cleaning their own saucepans.

Young limbs want plenty of rest and sleep; and if servants go to bed very late it is hard for them to wake in the morning. A good and considerate mistress will see to this, and will point out to her maids that the love of sleep is like the love of drink—it holds its victims with as firm a hold, and makes equally poor creatures of them.

In large establishments early rising is compulsory; but in smaller households, where there is more work to be done in proportion to the number of servants kept, early rising is of very great importance indeed.

In an atmosphere of love and kindness the maids will learn to get up *because it is right*, and because they wish to save their mistresses trouble; there is nothing like ruling through the heart if one wants order and obedience.

I have often heard people say, "*Servants are necessary evils*;" but I am sure that in a large number of cases the *evils* might be, and are, often transformed into *real blessings*.

The numbers of devoted self-sacrificing servants among us, thank God! are very many, and the heroic deeds they perform in the service of those they love are not few; Miss Muloch must have known this when she wrote *Mistress and Maid*. I believe there are many servants working in our homes for a much higher motive than meets the eye; and wherever these are found, the happiness and comfort of everyone with whom they come in contact is increased, from the greatest to the least of the household. Servants are often what they are according to the example of the mistresses. The fact is, God has cast us all much in the same mould, whether we be mistresses or maids, and we are certainly open to the same influences. If we are planted in the right soil the best side of us comes to view, and such virtues as we have are nourished into strength and beauty; but if, on the contrary, we are taken from our homes and set down in an arid soil, amid driving winds and angry storms, with an utter absence of warmth and sunshine, what chance is there for us, mistresses or maids?

If we take untrained servants into our family life, it represents a good deal of trouble to ourselves before we can hope to obtain comfort and happiness through them; but it is by no means a hopeless task. There is so much good in many of these poor girls waiting to be drawn out by kindness; indeed, there is no surer way of securing comfort to ourselves than caring for the comfort of those about us—it returns to us sevenfold.

If a mistress be able only to keep one servant, and that an untrained one, let her treat her as a child to be instructed, improved, and encouraged, and by all means let her be taught to feel herself part of the family. It leads to a good deal of discomfort and unhappiness when mistress and maid get too impatient of present inconvenience, and hope to find a remedy in change. "Here to-day and gone to-morrow," is not a good state of things for either one or the other, and the results are very unsatisfactory. It is a bad feeling, and one most hurtful to a girl, if, the moment she is corrected or found fault with, she says, "It seems I don't give satisfaction, and I wish to leave this day month." It is like saying, "I would rather give up the situation in which God has placed me than try to please you." Here again is work for the mistress, whose example of patience and forbearance is the best of all teachers to the maid whose education and bringing up have been faulty and deficient. One thing is certain—that whether we be mistresses or maids, "our circumstances may be greatly improved by taking hold of the tool at the right end."

We have heard a good deal at various times about the superiority of domestic servants in the last century over those of the present, and we maintain that we have more good servants now than formerly—servants equally faithful, competent, and loving with those of earlier days. We get a wrong notion of them because we will persist in holding up to view the inferior and unworthy ones as though they alone existed, whereas the truth is that the good outnumber them. As if to confirm us in our idea, we have just come upon two or three letters, written nearly 200 years ago, of which we will give fragments. The first contains the following:—"I have resided in and near London for seven years, and have made many acquaintances among the better class of people, and have hardly found one of them happy in their servants: and yet," goes on the letter, "all great travellers admit that in no part of the world have servants

such privileges and advantages as in England. They have nowhere else such plentiful diet, large wages, or indulgent liberty. There is no place wherein they labour less, or are so little respectful, or where they are more wasteful, more negligent, or where they so often change masters and mistresses."

In the second letter the following passage occurs. It is from a servant finding fault with the employer:—"Being used worse than I deserve, I care less to deserve well than I formerly did."

The third letter is from a second lady's-maid. She writes:—"My lady is one who never knows what to do with herself. She puts on and off everything she wears twenty times before she resolves upon it for the day;" and after stating her grievances very much at length, winds up by saying "that she wishes all mistresses to understand that nothing can be done without allowing time for it; and that one cannot be back again with what one is sent for, if one is called back before one can go a step for that they want."

Such are fragments of letters written nearly a couple of centuries ago, and confirm us in our opinion that neither servants nor mistresses were in any way superior to those of to-day; indeed, those of to-day strike us as by far the best. At all events, our servants are better educated than those of former times, and as a body they are hardworking and honest. Considering that the majority of domestic servants come into our homes without preparation or knowledge of our ways, it speaks highly for them that they turn out as well as they do.

Some time ago I heard a conversation between a lady and her housekeeper, which seems to me to fit in here. The mistress, after making her arrangements for the day, said, "By-the-by, Browning, how is the little maid getting on who came in last week?"

"I think, ma'am, she will do in time; though just now it's all my work to look after her."

"Why, then, do you think she will turn out satisfactorily?"

"Because, ma'am, she does well the one thing her mother was able to teach her in their little home. Why, there isn't one of our servants can wash the china and glass as well as she does; it's quite a picture to take up a cup or a glass after her. And so, you see, ma'am, I feel that if we take pains to teach her, she will, in time, do everything as well."

"Yes," said the lady; "I think you are right, Browning."

I was also present years ago when a friend of mine was engaging a nursemaid. The girl was well recommended, but that which decided in her favour was the fact of her being very particular in requiring permission to attend church at least once on every Sunday, except in case of sickness. I can say, from knowledge, that her example in the house was most beneficial. She identified herself thoroughly with the interests of the family, and the mistress always speaks of her as "*my friend Mary*."

It would be interesting if we could gather up the early histories of some of our best and most faithful servants from the time they entered their first situations. Very grotesque and clumsy would be the sayings and doings which marked the early days of their new duties, the result evidently of pure shyness and absolute want of the special knowledge required. If they had been abused and laughed at, instead of being treated with great consideration, they would in all probability have turned out failures, instead of the blessings they have been.

The following came to my knowledge through the relation of the old servant herself. When she was a girl of sixteen, the parlour-maid at the rectory of the village in which she lived was taken ill, and she was sent for to give what help she could. Being

neat and tidy in her habits and appearance, she was first taught to lay the table for luncheon, and after a time permitted to wait upon the family at that meal. She felt dreadfully shy, and thought it very rude to stand and stare at the gentry while they were eating; so she turned her back upon them and looked out of the window. Presently she heard the lady say, "Phoebe, turn and look this way; hand the bread to your master." Whereupon she took the bread, and dropped a low curtsy, and said, "Please, sir, missis says you've got to take some bread." Instead of laughing, he said politely, "Thank you, Phoebe." Again she turned her back, and again heard her name called; and thinking her lady had some secret to tell her, she flopped on her knees so as to get quite close to her, and finding that nothing was being whispered in her ear, she looked up, and saw that all had smiles on their faces. Then the lady said, "Never mind, Phoebe." Before she had time to think, one of the young ladies rose from the table and went to the sideboard, taking from it a small basin, which she put into the maid's hands, saying, "Take it to mamma, and she will put some food in it for the poor woman." "Will you believe it, ma'am, they put me right so easy like that I never knew what stupid things I had been doing? They must have wanted to laugh ever so much, but *they didn't*," said the old woman; "and I have always remembered it when dealing with young servants put under my charge," were her concluding remarks to me.

From my own observation, and from what I have heard from servants themselves, I should say that those are the happiest who begin life as general servants to people with whom they can take their meals, and by whom they are really treated as one of the family; and those the most miserable who begin as the only maid in a house where the lady keeps her at a sharp distance. Poor girl! she has no one to speak to, no one to wish her a loving good-night, no one to speak a word of encouragement. The utter loneliness and monotony of her life, added to the incessant work, must prove almost unbearable.

A girl very respectably brought up, whom I knew very well, went to her first place full of good resolves. She was told that at ten o'clock she was to lock up and go to bed. She was but seventeen, and felt very lonely on this the first night; and longing for a word of human sympathy, looked into the room where the mistress and her daughter were sitting, and said, "If you please, I've locked up all right. Good-night, ma'am. Good-night, miss." The lady, though surprised, nodded, but the daughter got up and made a very low and sweeping curtsy, and said, "Oh, good-night, *Mary Jane*!"

The girl could not tell what she had done wrong, but she hurried from the room and sobbed herself to sleep. As she related this to me, she said, "I have never been happy since that night; but I have stayed twelve months, and now I am going as useful maid to a lady just married." I may say this change was made thirty years ago, and still the useful maid is in the same situation, and the very thought of her leaving would cause anxiety and grief to every member of the household. It is beautiful to see mistress and maid grow old together as in this case, and it is in such homes that every kind of service is best performed.

Mr. Ruskin says a nation is in a bad state when its girls and young women are sad; and this is certainly true, and will serve for the following remarks.

I believe that domestic servants are the only class of toilers for whom no organised recreation has been started. I am thoroughly glad of this, as the taking up of this question by outside philanthropists would reflect great

* In the *Spectator*.

discredit upon mistresses; for, being members of our families, they ought to find their recreation with us just as our children do. Outside influences avail very little, if within the home content and happiness have no existence. We should be ashamed to keep our servants without a proper supply of food, yet it is equally reprehensible to keep them from early morning till late at night, and that day after day, week after week, without any hope of happiness outside the work. Block up the highways of moderate recreation, and the by-ways will be filled to overflowing.

It may be asked what more can be required of mistresses than to give good wages, board, and lodging to those members of the family whom we designate as *our friends the servants*. Certainly, these items of wage, board, and lodging are a necessary exchange for good and honest service; but there is a large margin outside these for both mistresses and maids to shine in if they want the full amount of happiness each can afford the other, and one does not know how much that is till one tries.

It is the fashion, I know, to let servants

have a Sunday out, and an evening in the week besides, without enquiry as to how or with whom these hours are to be spent; and thus the amount of sin and sorrow strewn broadcast over the lives of these members of our families would terrify mistresses if they could see into the future. Indeed, I had no idea until a year or two ago, when I was looking into the causes which sent so many domestic servants into a special part of the various workhouses of the country, that the pernicious rule was so prevalent of mistresses sending out their maidservants on certain evenings, called *their evenings out*, from two o'clock till ten, often without a choice permitted them of remaining in the house. In many cases out they must go by the law of the house, and not return until the specified time. Imagine a young girl fresh from the country, without friends or experience, not even knowing a street or a square beyond that in which she lives, being turned out to amuse herself for eight hours, more or less, no question asked as to where she is going or with whom, or if she has money to get a cup of tea or pay for

an omnibus! While she stands considering what she is to do with this liberty, some smooth-tongued person comes to her assistance and solves for her the difficulty. She thinks the stranger kind, and falls into the trap of making undesirable acquaintances, if nothing worse. This evil is more the fashion in small households, where one, two, or three servants only are kept; but that which obtains in houses of greater pretensions is equally objectionable, and even more disastrous in results—I refer to the late hours ladies'-maids have to keep during the season, while the mistresses are at balls and receptions, even till three or four o'clock in the morning several times in the week. These are disastrous to the poor girls in every way. They are too tired for work, and they dare not sleep, lest they fail to hear the mistress's return; and it is no wonder if they choose to spend the weary hours in the company of those who are sitting up for the masters of the establishments. Much of the mischief is wrought unconsciously, and only wants thinking over to be mitigated.

(To be continued.)

AMATEUR GARDENING FOR TOWN GIRLS.

JANUARY.

By CONSTANCE JACOB.



THIS month most of the large growers post their spring catalogues to customers; and although few seeds need to be sown before March, it is well to make out and despatch our orders betimes, so as to ensure getting exactly what we want; for although old-established firms will only supply uniformly good new seed, they may of course later on have run out of some

kinds; while with nurserymen in a small way of business I fancy the first comers will always be best served.

Seed catalogues are such enticing literature that I always strengthen my economical principles beforehand by firmly deciding the exact sum I can spend on annuals, generally dividing it also into five parts—two to be devoted to cheap seeds, which have thriven in former years, two to other old friends of a more costly description, and the fifth to experimental novelties; and this is, I think, as good a financial system as any.

To many people it saves trouble, and possibly money, to simply send for one of those "collections," varying in price from 1s. to £5, which are made up by seedsmen for the special benefit of amateurs. There are, however, two objections to this course: first, that the list is sure to include the names of some seeds we do not care for, or already possess; secondly, that only certain annuals will flourish in a London garden; and the collection will not be confined to these. Individual taste must largely determine our choice, but possibilities of culture even more so, especially whether one has or has not a greenhouse, hot-bed, or frame. In my own experience very satisfactory results have ensued from growing sweet peas, nasturtiums, virginian stock, nicotiana affinis, convolvulus, lupins, poppies, malope, coreopsis, and sunflowers, all of which can be sown in the open ground. Less hardy kinds, which have

also done well, are stocks, cannas, zinnias, lobelia, pyrethrum (golden feather), phlox Drummondii, and French marigolds.

I have never been successful in growing good asters; but as they are not favourites of mine, I have only tried once or twice, and it is possible that damp summers had something to do with their failure. Mignonette is fickle; some seasons it never comes up at all; at others it appears everywhere, especially when a few plants of the previous year have sown their seeds without assistance.

I have grown single dahlias from seed, but as the colours seldom come true, and the unpleasant puce shades seem the most frequent, it is on the whole better to buy tubers later on, or to take cuttings from old plants.

Lobelia and golden feather are best sown in the early autumn, if grown from seed at all.

Salvias and celosias (cockscombs) have been fashionable for pots and borders for the last few seasons, and should be sown early; but it is useless to attempt growing them from seed unless stove or bottom heat is available.

In making out a list, a good deal of thought should be given to the permanent inhabitants of the garden, and those annuals selected which will be in full bloom when the other plants are over or only in bud, as in a small garden a succession of flowers throughout the year is required rather than large masses of one kind which will only make a show during a few weeks. In this calculation, however, due allowance must be made for the fact that all flowers bloom a week or so later in London than in the country, owing, probably, to the smaller supply of sunshine—certainly not to a lower temperature, or to more exposed positions.

Differences of soil must also influence our choice. Some things, like sweet peas, demand a good rich earth, with plenty of moisture at the roots; others, as nasturtiums, a dry, much poorer mixture, and for this reason they are useful on banks, and in places where the roots of large trees draw much of the nutriment from the ground.

It is undoubtedly safest to buy seeds from first-class firms; on the other hand, they

often only supply larger, more expensive packets than are required; when, unless one can induce a friend to go shares, it is cheaper to obtain them from a grower who will put up small quantities of good seeds for 1d. or 2d. each.

Of actual garden work there is little to be done this month except in sweeping up the dead leaves and twigs which are sure to litter the lawns and beds. The rubbish should be put on to a heap to wait until the last spring tidying up, when it may all be burnt together and the ashes dug into the ground, or saved for future potting purposes. Leaf mould ought always to be manufactured on the premises. It only means collecting all the dead leaves of the garden into a heap, covering them with a little earth to prevent blowing away, adding all other dead vegetation during the winter, turning the heap over occasionally, and using when the forms of the leaves have disappeared—generally in about eighteen months' time. If two heaps are made side by side they can be built up and used in turn. At any rate, no leaves ought to be wasted, as, mixed with spent manure from hot-beds, they form the most valuable of plant foods.

Hot-beds ought to be made up now, in readiness for the seeds which will want their assistance next month; but I must allow that this is hardly girls' work, although I have in an emergency done it myself. The beds being emptied out, the old manure should either be spread round the roots of outdoor roses, trees, or other plants which will at this season appreciate the extra protection and nourishment, or spread over the store of rotting leaves dating from over a year before. Then the empty pit must be filled with fresh horse or cow manure, and an equal quantity of the leaves collected since early autumn. These must be well shaken together, left until fermentation commences, then shaken again, and the lights kept closely shut until the bed has sunk some five or six inches, and the drops of moisture on the glass are clear, not dirty. Then, a thin layer of fine leaf mould being spread over the surface, the hot-bed is ready.

OUR FRIENDS THE SERVANTS.

By EMMA BREWER.

CHAPTER III.

"As a servant longeth for the shadow, and as a hireling looketh for the end of his work."
—Job.



N almost every occupation for women and girls, except domestic service, there are certain hours of every day and the whole of Sunday absolutely free of control of employers; that is to say, hours at the disposal of the employed in which they can amuse themselves in any way they please, and concerning which no questions are asked, providing the hours of work are well and faithfully rendered.

Much to the credit of a large number of girls and women, these free hours are often devoted to study, to caring for their homes, to teaching in evening and in Sunday-schools, to visiting the sick, and in many like occupations. But the privilege so highly valued is, that the hours are their own, to use in any way they please, either in varying the occupation or in seeking amusement; and they consider it no mean advantage that at a certain hour in the evening they can put on their bonnets, and turn their backs on business until the morrow.

As I have said, domestic service stands out as an exception. The work goes on from morning till night, every day alike; and from the nature of the employment this cannot well be avoided. Those who choose domestic service are quite aware of this, and are prepared for it. Of course it greatly depends upon the families with whom they live whether their work is a hardship or a pleasure, a possible or an impossible task; and on entering a situation they hope for the best.

To live in a pure moral atmosphere, surrounded by kindness and homelike treatment, far outbalances the so-called privileges of other callings; if it were not so there would be no servants at all. Of course there are many poor girls who find the reverse of this pleasant picture, and who are so unhappy in their service as to have nothing to sweeten their lives but the thought of an occasional "day out," and a talk with the tradespeople who call for orders.

As long ago as fifty years *Punch* took up the cause of servants so situate, and tried to improve their condition by ridiculing the unreasonable demands of a mistress seeking to provide herself with a maid-of-all-work. He supposes her to be writing for the character of one Bridget Duster. She says, "I have kept house for five and twenty years, in which time I have constantly endeavoured to find a servant who should be without a fault; yet though I have given £8 a year, with tea and sugar—would you believe it?—I have never once succeeded." She goes on to enquire: "Is Bridget an early riser?"—without any reference to the time she may be allowed to go to bed. A good maid-of-all-work should, so to speak, be like a needle, and always sleep with one eye open. Has Bridget any followers? Such creatures I never allow. I conceive that a servant ought to be a sort of nun, and from the moment she enters your house should take leave of all the world beside. Has she not her kitchen, for willing hands always to do something in? And then for company, doesn't she see the butcher,

the baker, the dustman, to say nothing of the sweep?" She finishes up by writing, "I require a servant to consider herself a sort of human kitchen-clock. She must have no temper, no sulks, no flesh-and-blood feelings, as they are ridiculously called; but must go as regularly through her work as though she was made of steel springs and brass pulleys. For such a person there is a happy home in the house of your obedient servant, PAMELA SQUAW."

What a house for a poor girl to find herself in! And as to leaving with a good character, it would be next to impossible. Thank God there are very few such mistresses nowadays! although there are still many with whom to live is not a happy existence, and with whom servants have no advantages to compensate for loss of freedom and companionship. Still, just as there are good, bad, and indifferent servants, so there are good, bad, and indifferent mistresses; but there are many more good than bad in both cases.

We have said that English family life is a beautiful institution, and so it is; but in order to keep it in all its beauty, purity, and sweetness, there must be no schism in it, and every individual forming it must have his or her privileges and springs of hope. What is good for one member is good for another. The boys and girls at school look forward to their half-holidays and open-air games; the elder daughters to the visits of their sweethearts and to society generally; the parents have many sources of hope and interest; but the servants—what of them?

Well, except their "day out" and what they shall wear on the occasion, they have little to look forward to, nothing to vary the monotony of the long hours of work; and yet they are by no means an unimportant part of the family life, and, if the truth must be told, it is mainly to their skill, devotion, and faithfulness that all the component parts work in peace and harmony.

If it be a fact that they are an essential part of our family life, then of necessity they must have home enjoyments. The music-halls and low-class theatres are not suitable places of amusement for those who are one with us in family, even if hours were at their disposal to go to them.

What, then, is to be done for those who cannot select their own pleasures, and who are dependent on us for happiness?

There are many ways of making life pleasant for them. For example, servants are as a rule very fond of singing, and often have very good voices; would it not be possible to have them upstairs once a week, if only for half an hour in the evening, and teach them some part-songs, of which there are so many pretty and easy ones? This would be something for them to look forward to, especially if it were in company with the rest of the family.

On Sunday evenings an addition to family prayer might be the singing of hymns. Again, it would be a real pleasure to look forward to if in the summer the servants could, just for one day, be the mistress's guests, taken by her to some place in the country, or by the sea if they be London servants, and to London if they be country ones. Let the rôle of mistress and maid be set aside for that day, and let friendship be the ruling power on both sides.

Again, on certain days when everyone looks forward to some little pleasure—*Boxing-Day*, for example—would it not be possible to take the whole of the household to some good concert or entertainment, no distinction being

made, but all members of the family sitting together, thereby proving the oneness of the home-life? These little acts of kindness and consideration would bring the members of the family into touch one with the other, and bring out all that is good in mistresses and maids; and for the latter, it would sweeten labour, and increase their respect for the mistresses.

This sort of thing has been done for years in some houses I know, and better servants or happier homes cannot be found than these.

A lady, whose home is a happy one, on being asked how much liberty she gave her servants, answered, "As much as I give my children."

These are only hints of what has been and could be done to render family life more complete and happy; for surely in these days of clever, beneficent schemes, thought out and built up by ladies for the recreation of toilers in London and in our great towns in their masses, there will be no difficulty in each lady providing for the members of her own individual home if she put her mind and desire into it.

For so large a class as domestic women servants—which includes something like two millions in the United Kingdom—it would be obviously impossible to provide any general rule of recreation, and even if it could be done it would be the destruction of family life for outsiders to interfere.

It must be the work of each individual mistress or housekeeper to think of and carry out her own plan for providing her servants with suitable recreation, which is as necessary to their health and usefulness as food and lodging. If one individual can create an atmosphere of friendliness and comfort for the few entrusted to her, and get near to their hearts, she will have done a good work in the world.

It will not always be easy to arrange for servants a share of those enjoyments of life in which we, as mistresses, freely indulge, and it must often be performed at some sacrifice of convenience; but it must be done all the same, for it stands to reason that the social feelings of the employed want exercise quite as much as those of the employers. If they are always kept to their work, with nothing to vary the monotony, how can they be perfectly happy and content? It is contrary to nature, and only harm can come of it. I hear that betting and drinking are becoming a practice in many kitchens, and the excuse offered is, that the maids are so dull they must do something for a change.

Where liberty can be given in matters such as going to church or chapel, it ought not to be withheld. A girl who has been brought up all her life as a Dissenter should not be compelled to go to the parish church, nor a member of the Church of England forced to go to chapel. It makes a great difference in the lives of our servants if liberty is accorded in this direction.

I have had a Welsh servant in my house for a long time, and for the first few Sundays she went with the other members of the household to our parish church. I soon noticed that she was losing her spirits and bright look, and found on enquiry she was very miserable at giving up her Welsh Methodist service, which she clung to with great tenacity. By granting her wish at once I have retained a good and faithful servant. She has never abused the liberty so given; on the contrary, she has made me greatly respect the sect to which she belongs.

The difficulty of managing our servants is, I

know, to many mistresses, a very real one, and productive of much sorrow and vexation; and it was with some interest and curiosity that I heard some little time ago of half a dozen mistresses being asked to meet a member of the Press, in order to give their opinions on the subject of *maid-servants* generally, and to express what they considered to be the cause of the unsatisfactory relationship between mistresses and maids.

After many opinions of little value, one declared it was the want of education, while another considered too much education was the source of the trouble; but the real cause of the difficulty, I think, was touched when one of the ladies remarked, "It does not matter how kind you are to them, or how much you put yourself out for them, they look upon you as their natural enemy; it has always been so, and always will be, and it comes from our *dual establishments*—I mean, *two families in one house, with no go-between but the children. One family lives upstairs, and the other downstairs.*"

This, to my mind, is the root of the evil. There is no unity in the home. The dual establishment is an exhibition of class against class; and love, sympathy, and devotion have no place, no common ground for exercise. Harmony is out of the question; perfect confidence equally so. The mistresses are not interested in the family downstairs, and the downstairs in their own fashion take care of themselves. *It is a house divided against itself; and the mischief goes beyond this—it is a depreciation of the dignity of manual labour.*

With the disappearance of the dual establishment, much of the difficulty and trouble of mistress and maid will vanish also.

A very sore point with many mistresses is the way their servants dress when they are out of the house. It is quite true that one's nerves are jarred occasionally by the startling mixture of colours and incongruity of style and material; but it must be remembered that many of them have had no training or education in this direction, any more than in the duties of the household. The dress, however, is a much more delicate subject to set right, because personal vanity is involved.

To dress in the way which so offends good taste is *not by any means* a vice, but the result

often of an earnest desire to look their best on the day they go to see their friends, especially their young men. In this, as in most other things, the heart of a domestic servant is worked by just the same machinery as that which sets her mistress's going.

Of course the mistake of their dress is palpable, even to their eyes. Poor girls! they have spent their hard-earned wages in vain, and they do not look half as well as in their pretty home-dress; still, they will not take advice or correction from mistress or housekeeper, who, they believe, want to deprive them of the power of looking nice when they go out, and wish to keep them down.

The fault of what is called over-dressing will never be corrected by anger, sneers, or laughter; but example, kindness, and real sympathy will do much to tone down the startling effects, until education and the knowledge of the fitness of things step in, and produce good taste in dressing.

It is noticeable that the higher you go in the scale of domestic service, the neater and more suitable is their outdoor attire. Take a general servant and a lady's maid. The latter will be much more quietly dressed than the former, not because she is a better woman or more faithful servant, but because she has more knowledge of the fitness of things. Nothing but a firm belief that the interest in them is real will induce a servant to take advice upon so important a matter as personal appearance.

A kind, overworked, soiled little lodging-house servant came into one of the rooms occupied by two girls one evening, and banged down the lamp on the table in her usual style, and displayed face and eyes swollen with crying. The girls wanted to know what was the matter. Her sorrow was, that she had received permission from her mistress to go the next afternoon to tea with her sister; and a young man lodger, who, she said, was half-inclined to keep company with her, was also to be there. The little maid had bought a new dress and jacket for the occasion, but she had not got a hat. She could not afford any more money to buy a new one, but had bought a shape for a few pence, intending to cover it herself; but the mistress said it was all nonsense, and would not allow her the time to trim it; and, bursting into tears, she said, "If I goes in my old 'at, Jim Baker 'll 'ave naught to say to me, for 'e's

that pertickler about the way gells dress—'e is!"

Of course she was not disappointed of her hat. One of the girls made it with as much care as though it were for herself. I mention it to show that this little slavey was a type of most other girls. She wanted to look nice that she might give pleasure to her friends, "*specially Jim.*"

A little time ago there was quite a raid against the pretty caps and aprons worn by most of our servants in the present day, some of them declaring they would rather starve than carry about with them these badges of servitude. I thought our Editor's remark to one of these servants was so good that I mention it here. He said, "Soldiers are not ashamed of their uniforms, neither are nurses of theirs; on the contrary, they are proud of them. Why should you be ashamed of a white cap and apron that will make you look dainty and nice?"

In one of our colonies, where the cap and apron rebellion was in great force, the parlour-maid, housemaid, and cook in the house of the Governor went to the mistress on the day of a large dinner-party and reception without cap and apron, stating that they did not intend to wear them again, and, if it were insisted upon, they would forfeit their month's wages and leave that morning. The lady, English to the backbone, although sorely perplexed as to what she should do about the dinner and reception, said quietly, "Then go, if you please, at once."

The lady called her daughters, whose ages were from twenty to twenty-six, and who were most sensibly brought up, and consulted with them as to what could be done. They knew it was impossible to get help at so short a notice, and determined to fill the posts themselves. One took the cook's duties, the second the parlour-maid's, and the third answered the door and assisted at waiting table, each wearing a black dress, cap, and apron. Everything went off well, and very few of the guests were aware of the honour they were enjoying of being waited upon by high-born damsels. I do not believe there is one among our friends the servants who would not have blamed and felt ashamed of the three wilful servants, and sympathised with the mistress.

(To be continued.)

THE KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

CHAPTER II.



SOME hours later, when all the village was dark and still, and the cottage was wrapped in slumber, little Willie awoke with a start, and sat up in bed with wide-open eyes and a beating heart. He did

not know whether he had been sleeping or dreaming or listening; but surely he had heard a knock, soft, but clear and distinct, at the front door! He listened intently for a moment with suspended breath and strained ears, and then, slipping quickly out of bed, groped his way to the adjoining room, from whence came the sound of deep and regular breathing.

"Father!" he whispered breathlessly, "father! wake up, quick! He has knocked here!"

He waited for a moment, but there was no response—both were fast asleep.

"Father!" he repeated, in a louder voice, trembling with excitement, "oh, father, do wake up! I'm sure I heard a knock—a soft one, just like teacher said. Do come down and open the door at once!"

"Eh? What's up? What o'clock is it? Why, it's quite dark. Surely it isn't five o'clock yet?" said Mr. Turner, rousing himself heavily, evidently under the impression that it was morning already.

His wife started up in bed. "What is it? What is the matter? Who spoke? Is anyone ill?"

"I heard a knock at our door, father. I'm sure I did, it woke me up. Do come down and open it."

"Bother the child! It's that sermon again!" exclaimed Mrs. Turner. "Go back to bed at once, you naughty boy! Do you hear? Go to bed directly, if you don't want a good beating. You shan't go to church again, I can tell you, waking one up in a fright like this. Now get into bed at once!"

Poor Willie crept back to his little bed with a sore heart, and Mr. and Mrs. Turner composed themselves to sleep again. "Just to think he should lay hold of an idea like that

so strong!" said Mr. Turner discontentedly; then suddenly starting—"What was that?"

Both listened for a moment. "Why, it's rain against the window, that's what it is!" said Mrs. Turner, sharply. "It's a shower, that's all! How you startle one; you're as bad as the boy!"

Mr. Turner laid down again with a muttered remark about the rain doing a deal of good, and all was silent in the cottage once more. But little Willie had also heard the rain, as he lay intently listening in his little bed, and the sound filled him with dismay. Supposing He were outside, waiting for them to let Him in, and no one opened the door all night! What would He think if they left Him waiting humbly outside in the cold and the wet, whilst they went to sleep again in their warm comfortable beds? The thought was quite too much for his tender little heart, and once more slipping out of bed, he made his way again into the other room.

"Father, it's raining so hard, won't you get up and let Him in?" he sobbed. "He'll get so wet and cold, and perhaps He has nowhere to go to!"

"Who spoke? Is that you again, Willie?" exclaimed his mother. "See if I don't punish

OUR FRIENDS THE SERVANTS.

By EMMA BREWER.

CHAPTER IV.

"If thou wilt have a good servant find the servant a good mistress."—*Quarles*.



CHOICE of a mistress and the knowledge of her character is every whit as important to the maid seeking a situation, as her own character and qualifications are to the lady looking

ing out for a servant; but the opportunities open to each for obtaining this information are widely different and altogether unequal.

A mistress would never think of engaging a servant without first enquiring into her character, and suitability for the situation from the lady with whom she last lived, nor would a good servant care to enter a situation where the lady did not trouble herself to do this—she would feel there was something wrong.

As we all know, there are no obstacles in the way of a lady obtaining every particular as to the life and character of the maid seeking her service, and quite right that it should be so; for the entrance of a new member into her household, is no small matter, and may affect the happiness of all within the home.

I know some people who invariably make it a subject of prayer that they may choose aright when engaging a new servant, so important do they think it.

For the mistress then all is as it should be; but what of the other party to the contract? What opportunity has the servant of learning anything about the lady or her household. It rarely happens that she is allowed to speak to the out-going servant lest she should malign the mistress whom she is leaving and speak ill of the house; neither, as a rule, is she allowed to look over the house which is to be her home, or to see the other servants—and so she is cut off from all lawful means of getting any reliable information. But this does not hold good on the other side; the lady may be very bitter against the maid who is seeking service elsewhere, but the poor girl has to risk this, and all that may be said against her, and abide by the consequence.

It would be better, I am sure, if the privileges appertaining to both parties in the contract were equal. Let a servant, before she is definitely engaged, see the house and the people with whom she is to live, and judge for herself if it is the kind of situation she wants. If this were done there would be a diminution in the practice of leaving and dismissing at the end of the first month, and much discomfort and expense saved to both mistresses and maids.

Everyone should be careful in taking a new servant, and very truthful when sending one away. The power of giving a character should be looked upon as a trust from God for which the mistress must give account to Him; the character should be truthful, without extenuation, or exaggeration, and never given in anger. False characters, in whichever direction they tend, are as bad as false weights and measures, and more disastrous in their effects, and for the honour of mistresses generally no one should punish by threatening to hold or withhold a girl's character.

There is no class of workers in our country to whom it is of so much importance that char-

acters should be freely and honourably given, as to honest servants.

Important as it is that mistresses should be assured of the high character of a new servant, I think it is even more important that a servant should be quite sure of the character of the mistress to whom she is engaging herself. I feel very strongly on this point, as it was only a short time ago the following came under my notice.

A girl in the country advertised for a situation, and was answered by a lady living in a good part of London, and all seemed so satisfactory that the maid arranged to come on a certain day. It turned out that neither the mistress nor the house bore a good character, and, as she was taking her box upstairs, a gentleman met her, and seeing that she looked good and respectable, said to her, "Do you know the sort of house you have come to? No, I thought not! If you desire to retain your good name, do not stay a night nor even an hour here; go back at once; better lose your money than your soul."

Seeing that the girl agreed, he took up her box, carried it down, called a cab, put her into it, and placing a sovereign in her hand, said, "That is to pay the fare back to your home. Thank God I happened to be here." Asking her the name of the station, he told the cabman, and quietly went back to the house. The girl thinks he must have been a doctor.

If this poor girl had known of the Traveller's Aid Society, 16A, Old Cavendish Street, she might have written to the secretary a day or two before her arrival, and she would have been met at the station, advised and received. In fact, with its help she could not have got into the trouble.

I do not think this society is half enough known among our friends the servants, who stand more in need of it than almost any other class of toilers. One part of its work is to guard women and girls from the difficulties and dangers to which they are exposed, as they move from place to place in search of employment. I could write many pages upon its Christlike work, but it would be out of place here. I will, however, give one illustration.

A little servant-maid from the country, age fourteen, was discharged from her place one morning with her fortnight's wage of three shillings. Her place was a hard one and her strength not great, so her mistress told her to be "off home where she could live like a lady."

The fare home, however, was much more than any money she possessed, so she took a ticket to Gravesend, hoping that an aunt who lived there would take her in till she could find another place. The aunt refused to do this, and told her to go back to London and get the people at the station to pass her back to her own home. Arriving in town again, weary and broken-hearted, she told her tale to the officials, and they knowing all about the Traveller's Aid Society, took her at once to 16A, Old Cavendish Street, where she was well-cared for and sent home. She was much too ill to go to other service just then. It was a very pathetic story she told, though it was not without a touch of humour; for while sobbing out the particulars of her dismissal, she said, "I wish now as I hadn't took such pains with master's boots and the front doorstep."

Many a girl from the country, knowing nothing whatever of London, having been engaged to fill situations here with a promise that they should be met at a certain train, have not been so met, and had it not been for

this Society, who took care of them until the people had been seen who failed to keep their promise, it is impossible to say what might have happened to them.

Servants are in many ways at great disadvantage in seeking new situations, unless they obtain them through recommendations, which is really the only safe way. Except in a few cases registry offices are failures—they take the girls' money and send them long distances for situations they know nothing about, and it is a perfect lottery whether anything worth having can ever be obtained by their means. Of course there are some very good ones, but how are the servants to know the good from the bad.

I wish very much that the incident I have related and chosen from many others, of girls engaging themselves to mistresses of whom they know nothing, would convince us of the necessity of having some central office where, by paying a small fee, a girl may learn something of the people who wish to engage her, and where she may go for advice in the many difficulties which beset domestic service, and where she may be instructed in some of the laws which govern it.

It would want well thinking out, but in these days when the market is glutted with philanthropic projects, cannot a little earnest thought be expended for the benefit of our friends the servants who are part of our families, and should stand near to us indeed? For want of the knowledge which such an office could give, many a girl's happiness and career are wrecked.

Very few girls know the laws concerning the giving up or dismissal from a situation, and have an idea that for mistress and maid they are the same, but except in one instance, that of a month's notice on either side, they are not so; for example, mistresses are quite within the law if they dismiss a servant without warning, provided they pay a month's wages, in addition to the wages owing at the time of dismissal.

And supposing a servant to have been guilty of immoral conduct, wilful disobedience or incapability, she may be dismissed without warning, and without a month's wages.

Servants, on the contrary, cannot leave their situations without warning, even by paying a month's wages. Should they leave thus they forfeit all the wages due from the last quarter's payment, and are liable to be sued for damages sustained by their employers.

Here again, the privileges are unequal, and the laws want rectifying, but whatever they are, a girl should not go into service ignorant of these things.

Knowing, as I do, how difficult it is for girls to find situations altogether satisfactory, I am grieved when, without thought or reason, they blindly rush into difficulties. For example, in the spring of this year an invalid lady, who was known for the great care and kindness she showed her servants, was startled by two of them, the cook and the housemaid, who had been with her some three or four years, giving notice to leave. After some questioning as to the reason for desiring to leave, they said they had no fault to find except that it was dull, and too comfortable, and they liked a blowing-up in the house sometimes; it made a change. "Beside," they added rather reluctantly, "we want just for once to live with a real lady."

The mistress replied, "You surprise me! I had an idea that I was what is generally known as a real lady, but perhaps you will explain."

"Well, ma'am, real ladies dress grand, have big parties, go out to dinners and storm about

the house if anything is wrong, and we should like to try it for a change."

As *their grievance* was one which the invalid found it out of her power to remedy, she accepted their notice.

I am sure that both mistresses and maids will agree that these two servants really deserved, what I believe they afterwards obtained, most uncomfortable places.

The invalid, speaking sorrowfully of the circumstance to her doctor, said, "I thought kind words, kind deeds, and sympathy meant home to my household, but I suppose I have been wrong."

It is this sort of inconsistency in servants which spoils what are called good places, and does much harm in destroying the sympathy between mistresses and maids which I hold to be the very keystone of the arch of domestic service. My personal feeling is that it does not matter how high in position, or how rich a mistress may be, she should be acquainted with every servant in the house, from the highest to the lowest; they are entrusted to her by the Master, and they have immortal souls, whose destiny it may be hers to decide, and she should be known to them all, even to the meanest, as *their friend* as well as mistress, and wherever this is a reality and not a sentiment only, it puts everyone on his or her mettle to merit the approbation of such a mistress. True, a lady may have a good housekeeper to look after the details of the work, but she cannot take the place of the mistress any more than the Prime Minister can take the place of our Queen.

In these days, when philanthropy is the most fashionable and attractive form of occupation, and no time or trouble is thought too great to amuse the workpeople and others at the East End, I cannot help thinking of the good that could be done by devoting some of the time to our own households—it would repay us a hundredfold, and in doing this we need not leave the other undone.

Two classes of mistresses were vividly brought before me a few months since in the following manner.

An elderly lady, very plainly dressed, called one morning upon a very rich woman living

near her to inquire the character of a servant. Her name was announced so very indistinctly that it failed to reach the lady of the house. She did not ask the visitor to be seated, but said sharply,

"What is your business with me?"

"I have come," was the answer given in a sweet refined voice, "to inquire the character of a kitchen-maid who lately left your service."

"You should not have troubled me with such a matter, but have gone to my housekeeper. I know nothing whatever about these sorts of people."

"I am very sorry to hear that," said the visitor. "I know all my servants, and I think I may say they are one and all really my friends."

The lady was angry, and, looking at her dress, said,

"That is all very well for you, but not for people in my position," and ringing, she said, "the servant will take you to the housekeeper."

"Thank you," was the quiet answer; "I shall be obliged to you."

During the interview the housekeeper discovered that the visitor was the Duchess—living in the same square, and whose kindness to all dependent on her was well known.

Let us hope that the rich lady learnt that to make of your servants *friends* is not a sign of low birth and poverty, but of noble breeding and a kind and loving heart.

A mistress who possesses the hearts of her servants may do much in teaching them *Thrift*, for we know that, as a rule, servants are reckless with their money; they think they have earned it and can do what they like with it; and never having been taught the value of money, they believe their quarter's wages will buy everything their heart longeth for. If however, they can be induced by the mistress to put aside a certain portion of it every quarter in the Post Office Savings Bank it is a double blessing—not only do the savings accumulate, but the servants gradually learn the value of thrift.

A friend of mine some years ago had two young servants, and she did her best to teach

them this virtue: one took the advice, the other did not. At the end of three years the savings bank in which the girl placed her savings became bankrupt, and she, of course, lost all her money. The thriftless one now thought she had the best of it, and said, "Now, who is the best off? You went without things you wanted in order to save your money, and you have lost all ways, while I have spent all mine on myself and enjoyed it." The mistress who overheard this speech, said, "My girl, you are wrong; for you and your fellow-servant are not on the same platform at all. It is true she has lost her money, but she has gained the habit of thrift, which will abide with her always, while you, in these three years, have learnt the habit of self-indulgence; and so, you see, the roads you have been walking have led you far apart, although you have been living under my roof all the time. Three years' habits leave their mark on the life."

I have seen often that saving part of the wages has prevented destitution, which, as we all know, is often a forerunner of sorrow if not of crime, and in time of sickness money saved has proved invaluable.

One thing from which our friends the servants suffer frequently is want of punctuality in the payment of their wages. In not a few cases girls have told me that a second quarter is due before the first is paid, and that if they were to ask for it they would give offence. This ought not to be; the servant should be paid to the day, and if not, it should be considered no misdemeanour if she remind the mistress that the wages are due. The want of it puts her into difficulties and often leads her out of the straight path.

A punctual payment of wages cannot be too strongly urged. It is not only a good example, but it gives servants the opportunity of purchasing, which, if deprived of, might tempt them to dishonesty; and not only so, many a poor, sickly mother is kept from starvation by the help she gets from her good daughter in service—and this help she cannot send if wages are not paid when due.

(To be continued.)

MY LADY MARJORIE.

By ADA M. TROTTER, Author of "The Miner's Hero," etc.

CHAPTER III.

BRINGS THE PLAGUE TO THE VILLAGE BOUNDARIES.

MOLLY ran lightly along until the farmhouse came in sight; then she fell to walking slowly. After a fashion she had enjoyed this visit to the Rectory, and she was not sure that she wanted to go home just yet. If only Christopher had been out with the sheep she might have had an excuse for wandering away to the purple Heath in search of him. With a child's acuteness she had discovered her limitations under Mistress Pierce's gentle rule, and desired for her own comfort not to outstep them, for she resented punishment in any shape or form. But as she loitered up the shady lane, climbing the banks for late blossoms of fragrant honeysuckle, she saw from this point of vantage that the squire's carriage had stopped before the farmhouse gate. Down went the honeysuckle in the dust, and Molly flew along,

eager to see and receive greeting from the great folk of the parish.

The squire was seated beside Mistress Pierce in the porch, and so deeply interested in conversation that he barely noticed Molly's curtsy at the gate. The child sat down with a sense of injury, for she always considered herself of the first importance.

"Go, Molly—look for father. The squire wants him at once!"

Molly had to obey. She ran down the lane, meeting the farmer walking as rapidly as his limping gait permitted.

"Well, squire!" was his greeting as he opened the garden gate, "I would give you a warm welcome but for the fear I have that some evil hangs over us. It would be no common matter for which such a landlord as our squire would call away a man from gathering in his after-math with a storm brewing."

"Right you are, Pierce!" said the squire. "But I tell you, man, the storm

the Almighty sends from heaven can't compare with the evil that's likely to begin in our parish. I tell you, man, there's the plague within a mile of our boundaries!"

The farmer nodded. He had feared something like this.

"I came on 'em as I was driving this afternoon—poor wretches hardly able to drag themselves along," said the squire; "flying from the plague, and carrying the disease among them. They cried out to me to stop and give them charity. But I threw my purse to their leader, who called me a man of Belial for my pains. I doubt he's but a schismatic. Certain it is that ere an hour is over they, and others I saw trailing over the Heath, will be here and make a fight to enter the village."

"The stream out there is the boundary," said the farmer. "They must not cross it at their peril."

"The only place they *can* cross is at

OUR FRIENDS THE SERVANTS.

By EMMA BREWER.

CHAPTER V.



AMONG mistresses who earnestly desire the welfare of their servants there is no question which causes more trouble and anxiety than that of allowing visitors in the kitchen, men visitors especially. It is in-

deed a difficult question, and cannot be solved for every one alike.

I know several ladies who have thought it right that such of their maids as were engaged should be permitted to receive their sweethearts from time to time in the kitchen; but in every case where this has been granted that has come under my notice, the results have been so disastrous as to necessitate the withdrawal of the privilege. It was found utterly *destructive of harmony* in the kitchen, and gave no real pleasure to any one. In some cases the fickle men forsook their old love in favour of some younger and more attractive of the fellow-servants, and it is not difficult to imagine the bitterness, anger, and sharp words which became the fashion after such faithlessness.

In others the sweethearts borrowed money of all the foolish girls in order to lay it upon horses in which they were interested; in others, where more stimulant had been taken than was good for them, they have boasted among other men of the beautiful silver, etc., in the houses where their young women lived, with what results may be guessed.

In simple fairness the privilege cannot be granted to one without extending it to all; this, in many houses, would fill the kitchens of an evening; for no maid would acknowledge that she had no young man, and would get one on the spot without considering his character, and such an one would scarcely add to the *safety or morality* of the kitchen.

To illustrate the evil of receiving men visitors without the knowledge of master or mistress, I am going to tell a true story; but before relating it, I want to beg of our friends the servants not to think themselves badly used because the rule is strict against young men being admitted into the kitchen, while at the same time the young ladies' sweethearts are received upstairs. The comparison does not hold good here, because there is a mother or father in the drawing-room, whereas it often happens that there are only young girls downstairs, without any staid or responsible person to look after them and guard them from evil.

Neither should it be expected that women visitors may come when and how they please. In many instances they are servants out of place through their own folly, and in this case are bad friends and advisers for girls who desire to be good and steady. It is always better to mention to the mistress or house-keeper that such a person has come to see you, and may you ask them in? it makes all things so much easier and safer, and it is no more loss of self-respect to go to the mistress in *such a matter*, than it would be to consult the mother at home; and my experience is, that no good mistress ever withholds a favour from her maids if she can possibly grant it. And now for my story—

We were sent for one evening, just as we had settled down for a quiet hour or two with books and work, by a dying woman, whose home, if such it could be called, was in one of

the worst parts of London, inhabited mostly by criminals.

We started off at once, and at length found ourselves in a court with a row of squalid-looking houses on both sides. We had difficulty in discovering the one we wanted, for all looked much alike, and the numbers were partly or wholly obliterated from the doors. We were successful at last, and stumbled up the dark filthy staircase. Receiving no answer to our knock, we pushed open the door. The room was cold, wretched, desolate, and lighted by one small candle; a rickety table and a broken chair were the only articles visible, and these were occupied by a ferocious-looking unkempt man. He evidently expected us, for he got up, and without speaking took up the candle and led the way into the next room; he drew down the sheet, and there in a corner of the room, on a few rags, lay a woman and her baby dead. The flaxen curls hung limp about her head, and lent a strange kind of gilded framework to the picture of want, exhaustion, and misery of all sorts, which, even yet, kept hold of the dead mother. There was something about the face which was familiar and puzzling, but our utterance was choked by emotion, and we could not ask a question.

The man replaced the sheet, and we went back to the room adjoining. At length he said, "She wanted you badly just at the last. I don't know why, except perhaps you knew her years ago, for she comes of a better sort." He was right; memory came back, bringing with it a picture of a bright intelligent girl, daughter of tenant-farmers, who were very proud of her, and who, having given her a good education, sent her to be nursemaid in a family of good position in London. "Was her name Mary Fleming?—and did she come from near Norwich?" we asked. He nodded. It seems that for a time she was happy and respected in her situation. Unfortunately, among her fellow-servants was one who had made the acquaintance of a civil-spoken, well-dressed man, whom she knew nothing about, on one of her Sundays out. This man followed her up, showed her many attentions, and at length easily gained admittance to the house one Sunday morning, when the family were all at church, except this girl and Mary Fleming. The latter was so distressed at what she knew to be wrong, that she remonstrated seriously with her fellow-servant. The only result of this was that on the following Sunday the man brought a friend with him to engage Mary's attention. The two ticket-of-leave men, for such they were, induced the girls to go with them the following Sunday afternoon as far as Epping Forest, to hear, as they said, "some famous ranter."

Mary had wit and courage enough to slip away from her evil companions and reach home by the proper hour; the other girl was not so fortunate. A few days subsequent to this Sunday outing the house was robbed, and some of the stolen property found upon the man who first came to the house, and he was transported. The second man, who for this time escaped punishment, so frightened and threatened poor Mary that she was afraid to speak and say what she knew to the mistress; and when a second attempt was made to rob the house she was in some way suspected and dismissed from her situation. With loss of character and self-respect she could not face her kind parents, and when this man, Elihu Palmer, offered to marry her she consented. Ill-usage, association with criminals, and starvation had been her lot from that day to

this on which we saw her lying dead with her baby beside her. Poor Mary! she might have been happy and loved but for the reckless way servants have of making acquaintances and disregarding rules which are made for their safety.

We were too late to help her, poor thing, but we did what she so earnestly desired, viz., see her parents and tell them she had not been a thief, and that she had suffered bitterly for the wrong she had done; and secondly, to see that she was not buried in a pauper's grave. She had written a few of the above facts on a soiled piece of paper, which the husband had promised the dying woman to give us, and he told us the rest. This is not a solitary case by any means, but it was one in which we felt deep interest and compassion.

While writing these articles I have received several letters and various communications from masters, mistresses, and servants, and one received yesterday is such an exceedingly good, thoughtful letter, that I give one or two quotations from it.

"The servants we have," says the writer, "are nearly always beginners, and our experience is that their greatest enemies are their relations and friends, who are always worrying them to 'better themselves' before they are in any way fitted for a better place. The consequence is that if they do get the better place, they are simply dismissed after being there a week or a fortnight, and this sort of thing, often repeated, makes them lose heart and go to the bad."

"My sister-in-law went the other day to see one of these poor girls who was dying in the Brompton consumption hospital. She said, 'Oh, ma'am, if I had only listened to you and remained in your house it would never have come to this. It was my friends who were always worrying me to go in for higher wages, but I could never keep a place more than a week or two, and you can't think the misery I have gone through; and when I told my friends what bad advice they had given me they only laughed and gave me still worse advice.'

"Servants who have done badly themselves are not good companions to steady, well-intentioned girls, to whom they do a pitiful amount of mischief. In all cases where servants who formerly lived with us turned out badly, the cause was to be traced to the influence of unworthy female acquaintances."

The last quotation I give is, "The want of training and the impatience while undergoing instruction is at the root of a good deal of the evil." The writer then gives an example of the opposite:—"We once had a girl who was rather stupid and slow, but patient. She remained with us for three years and slowly learned all that could be taught in such a house as ours. She called upon us a few days since and told us that she was in a place as cook and getting £45 a year. This girl had no brains, but she was so patient, respectful, and anxious to do her best that in the end she quite succeeded in making up for the want of them."

There are a few things in the relationship between mistress and maid which distress me greatly, because I know they are utterly destructive of home-peace and comfort; one is a mistress reproving her servant in public, another is a maid answering her mistress rudely, and a third is a mistress finding fault with servants out of the room to one who is waiting in the room.

No good servant would endure the first nor

be guilty of the second, but one and all are evil in their result, and it is easy to see that, let the fault be what it may, it cannot be remedied in this fashion.

Servants have feelings to be wounded and rights to be respected, and when these are ignored they feel that their occupation is compromising to their respectability and freedom.

We lose many good servants in this way, and get in their place large importations of very inferior ones from the Continent. It gives one a feeling of sadness that while the mother country stands in increased need of good and trustworthy servants, she cannot retain them or make friends of them, but has to look on while her Colonies attract those she herself would so gladly keep.

I do not know if all are aware that every month ships leave England with a number of servants on board; indeed, as many as fourteen vessels go over to Queensland alone, carrying on an average, two hundred servants on each ship. Any young woman with good health and good character can get a free passage to Queensland if she is under thirty-five years of age. This colony, even above others, values highly our friends the servants, whose success is undoubted. They try to live up to the high opinion formed of them, but it is grievous to see them leaving the old country which wants them even more than the Colonies.

It is a curious thing that now, when many of our servants are under-rating their position, gentlewomen are turning their attention to domestic service as a means of earning their living, and up to this have been very successful. They go systematically to work, apprenticing themselves for a certain number of years to the Aid Home, Zeals, Bath, or like teaching institutions, and go through a thorough course of training in the special branch they select, so that at the end of the term they can enter the ranks of domestic servants as "duly qualified." They go out as "aids," or as permanent servants, and very good and reliable ones they are. I have visited in houses where they have served, so can speak with knowledge. This training has turned out very happily in cases where whole families of what are called a superior class have, through misfortune, had to emigrate. The women and girls used to be of no real service in the home, but now with this training they are valuable and steady helpers to the fathers and brothers; and where there

are too many girls to find occupation at home, they hire themselves out as domestic servants to other families in the Colonies, often getting very high wages, and naturally, later on, make thoroughly good wives. The way some of our general servants, who were snubbed here in the Old Country, have prospered in the Colonies savours more of romance than reality.

There are good positions waiting to be filled not only in London, but in all parts of England in one branch of domestic work, and that is laundry work. I hear there is the greatest difficulty in obtaining laundry matrons in many of the great institutions. Miss Steer,* a great authority, says:—"The post of laundry matron is one of great importance in an institution, and there is often difficulty in obtaining women of the right stamp; hearts as well as heads must be thoroughly in the work, and I cannot understand why, with the great desire expressed on all hands for Christian work, women with ordinary health should not get themselves properly trained as laundry superintendents. In their daily work, and while earning a fair salary, they would have many opportunities of influencing and guiding those under their care. It seems a matter of surprise to me that women should cast about them to find a field for their services when here is a splendid work waiting to be done."

I thought this announcement might prove of service to every class of domestic servant; it is something to know of an occupation still calling for workers.

There is scarcely any subject which one touches in the relationship between mistress and maid that does not bristle with difficulties, and for the reason that no two cases are the same—that which would be quite correct in the one would be a serious evil in the other; take, for example, that of rigid locking up from the servants. It is one of their great grievances, and one of which they speak in no measured terms. One said to me the other day, "I do not think I can stay in my situation, but I will try." "Why?" I asked. "Mistress takes out her keys to give me even a little salt from the cupboard, and locks it up again; there is not a thing in the house that is not tightly locked. Why, ma'am, it makes a servant feel ashamed. If I am a thief I ought not to be in her house at all; I am not trusted a bit."

* Bridge of Hope Mission, Ratcliff Highway.

I myself never lock up from the servants, but trust them entirely, and I do not think I am robbed of the smallest particle of anything. They are on their honour, and would resent a breach of trust on the part of any one of their number. Still, I am quite aware that in many houses this would be folly.

I remember two instances in which my plan of leaving things open acted in a curious manner, and which I ought to mention. The one occurred during my absence from home. My husband bought a small quantity of very choice tea, put it into my tea-caddy, and locked it up, intending to make his own tea (bachelor fashion) while I was away. This so roused the anger of our old cook, who had been with us many years, that she gave him a bad time, and was as nearly as possible dismissed from her service by him. She wrote me a long letter complaining of the master's want of trust in her, and it was long before she forgot what she was pleased to call a "slur upon her honour." The second was curious. My child's cabinet, which contained all the pretty pieces of jewellery she had given her, was, and is always, kept locked by her. We had an under-servant who had been with us a year, and who was, on the whole, a very good girl. Judge of my astonishment when she came up to me in charge of an upper-servant, who said, "Annie has something to say to you, ma'am," and left her with me. "What is the matter?" I inquired; but it was long before I could get an answer. At length it came out that the one thing persistently locked up had been to her a veritable Blue Beard's chamber, and she had been trying all the keys in order to unfasten the cabinet, and had broken one of them in the lock. "But, indeed—indeed, ma'am, I did not want to steal anything, only to look at what was inside." And I believed her; and after a serious talk she went downstairs a happier and a wiser girl. She remained with us three years after this incident, and now fills a very important situation, and she is reckoned quite among our friends.

Hard-and-fast rules which may apply to everyone alike cannot be made or kept with regard to domestic service. Everything depends upon the relationship between mistress and maid; and where faith and trust bridge over the gulf between the one and the other, the difficulties of housekeeping will be minimised.

VARIETIES.

HOW TO ARRANGE WILD FLOWERS.

The prettiest arrangement that girls can make of wild flowers is to secure a thick piece of bright green moss, and fit it into a dish with a little water under it. Then make little holes down through it with a skewer, and thrust down the stems of the flowers—hepaticas, anemones, dog-tooth violets, etc.—pressing the moss around them again to hold them in place.

Do not put them too thick, but just as they might grow on a mossy bank, and they will keep fresh, and continue to bloom for a week or two, if you have secured any buds, and will delight everyone who sees them by their delicate fragrance and beauty.

HIGH AND LOW NOTES.—Fine high or low notes produce a very good effect if used with discretion, but if abused, to the detriment of the rest of the voice, they are better left alone, for good singing does not depend on extraordinary notes, but on the proper use of the ordinary ones.—*Charles Santley*.

A WRONG READING.

"May I kiss you?"

It was in the orchard.

She answered him not. Picking a leaf from a pear tree near by, she handed it to him.

He thought he read her answer—"Leave." Turning, he went his way.

She gazed at him in astonishment, for she meant her answer to be, "You have leaf."

And so it all ended.

A CHINESE COMPLIMENT.—In China, where fans are carried by men and women of every rank, it is a compliment to invite a friend or distinguished guest to write some sentiment on your fan as a memento of any special occasion.

THE GRADUATING GIRL.

'Twas not her essay we admired,
Though 'twas of "Earth's perfection;"
But how the way she was attired
Just suited her complexion.

HAPPINESS.—Happiness is not an easy thing; it is very difficult to find it in ourselves, and it is impossible to find it elsewhere.—*Chamfort*.

ANSWER TO ACROSTIC I. (p. 291).

G
S I X
E R R O R
B O I L E A U
A S S E S S O R S
M E R I T O R I O U S
G I R L S O W N P A P E R
P E R S O N A T I O N
T R A M P L I N G
P A R A S O L
H A P P Y
T E N
R

VARIETIES.

SAVINGS FROM THE FAR EAST.

She who keeps her mind under perfect control is happy.

Even when provocation is given, maintain serenity.

May all creatures everywhere, all living things of every kind, enjoy life.

MANNERS TAUGHT.—The society of ladies is the school of politeness.

WHY IT WAS BROKEN OFF.

First Friend: "I see Jack and Molly have made it up again. Why was the engagement broken off?"

Second Friend: "They had a quarrel as to which loved the other the most."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.—Judge of a girl by her questions rather than by her answers.

TOO BUSY.

The sceptical Aunt: "What does he do, Dolly, for a living?"

Dolly (greatly surprised): "Why, auntie, he does not have time to earn a living while we are engaged."

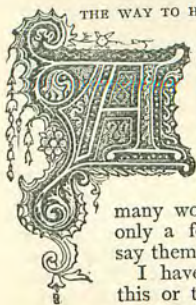
IN A SMALL WAY OF BUSINESS.—The girl who lives only for herself is engaged in a very small way of business.

OUR FRIENDS THE SERVANTS.

By EMMA BREWER.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WAY TO HONOUR LIES OPEN TO ALL.



As this is the last chapter upon the subject of "Our Friends the Servants," I am anxious to utilise it to the utmost for, like one taking leave of friends, I feel there are many words yet to be said and only a few minutes in which to say them.

I have been so often asked if this or that particular work is the correct thing to demand of cook, housemaid, lady's-maid, or parlour-maid that I will try to answer these questions in the way I myself understand the matter.

Everyone will, I think, agree with me that of all occupations in the world open to women, domestic service seems to possess the greatest variety of work, position, and condition; and beyond any other it defies the laying down of rigid rules for the carrying-out of the duties of each situation within its range, because in every class of household they are different; but a good girl or woman will, if she care to do so, recognise what is required of her and fulfil the hopes centred in her whether she find herself one of thirty servants, eight, three or single-handed.

Domestic service is not without its prizes, and it is no small encouragement to a girl beginning life to know that although she may commence service in the meanest situation and by performing the roughest possible work, yet that by the exercise of self-discipline, industry, and attention she may in time reach the highest rung of the ladder of domestic service; and this realises a great deal that a good woman values and which it has been her great object to attain. It means that she has gained the respect of the whole household, a position of comfort—even though it be one of great responsibility—and lastly, it is one which gives her the power of being a true friend to all the young servants under her.

Let us look at a house sufficiently large to require the services of a high-class cook, kitchen-maid and scullery-maid. To begin with the kitchen-maid. Her duty is to assist the cook by preparing everything for her use; she makes the sauces, cooks the vegetables for upstairs, prepares the servants' dinners, makes the cakes for luncheon, tea and dessert, as well as the rolls for breakfast; she is almost what we may call second cook. She and the scullery-maid are up at six and have everything in kitchen and housekeeper's room spotlessly clean and breakfast ready by eight o'clock both in the servants' hall and housekeeper's room. The rough work being in every case performed by the scullery maid.

In such a house as this the cook is most particular about punctuality and cleanliness. She is often heard to say that it is an insult to cooking to come to it from anything but clean water, and she never permits the kitchen-maid to cook by guess work which rarely turns out well, but in everything to go by rule and weight and measure. The wages for such a maid would be from £20 to £28, and for the scullery-maid from £14 to £22.

These two servants would be strictly under the supervision and at the order of the cook.

A girl who has been thoroughly well-trained as kitchen-maid often makes a very good cook single-handed. She knows how things ought to be done, and how they should taste and look, and as a rule is much less extravagant than a professed cook.

A poor little kitchen-maid came to me a short time ago, and said she had been under a good cook for a whole year, and had really learned nothing because the cook did not like that any one under her should learn her methods of cooking. Let us hope that this kind of thing does not often occur, for it is neither kind nor helpful.

In such a household as we are looking into, the head of the kitchen, being a professed cook or at least high-class, is a very important person indeed. The kitchen-maid and scullery-maid are strictly her servants, and only the cooking proper is done by her.

She is not expected down in the morning until a few minutes to eight, when everything is ready for the upper servants' breakfast at which she presides. This being over she attends to and superintends the cooking for the upstairs breakfast. She next makes out a menu for the day's luncheon and dinner, ready to submit to the mistress of the house for her approval or alteration. It is much more satisfactory for the mistress to see the cook daily, no matter how clever and reliable she may be.

This being settled she arranges the servants' dinner and supper, and leaving it to the kitchen-maid to carry out, writes down her orders for the tradespeople and gives out the stores. The remainder of the morning is usually taken up by her in making the soup for the morrow—it is never used the day it is made—and in making jellies, creams, and pastry.

After her own dinner she dishes up the luncheon, and then the afternoon is pretty free for her. From five to nine o'clock she is extremely busy, and during the "dishing-up," which is a serious business, the greatest order prevails in the kitchen, not a word is spoken except to give a command, and there is no such thing as confusion.

There are many good regulations observed in a house such as this which might be followed with great advantage in smaller ones for example, silence, strict punctuality and cleanliness would be of great value and

materially improve both the comfort and work of households.

After dinner is served the cook's work is practically over. The wages of a cook in such a house would vary from £40 to £60.

We shall see later on another class of cook, and the following which I saw the other day in a French paper describes the difference of work and wage between the two classes.

A person is described as applying for the situation of cook. The lady who was young and timid asked mildly, "What wages do you require?"

"That depends, madam, upon your style of housekeeping; if I am to attend to everything—cooking, cleaning, and scullery-work, I require £25, but if, as I hope, you require me only to superintend the cooking, my wages will be £50."

We will take next the duties of a housemaid, which also depend altogether upon the kind of household in which she is engaged. For example, in a large and fashionable one the actual work of the head housemaid is not so great as her responsibility. It is her duty to look after the linen and give it out, to see that each room is supplied with its requirements, whether of pens, paper, ink, candles, soap, towels, etc.

The chintzes, curtains, wardrobes, drawers, are all in her charge, and she is answerable that the work done by those under her is thoroughly well performed. The undermaids are expected to do the needlework of the house under the supervision of the head-housemaid. The wages for the head maid would be from £20 to £30; the second £14 to £20; the third £12 to £18.

There is no situation in domestic service that varies so much in its duties and position as that of lady's maid. In a fashionable household she must be thoroughly experienced, a good dressmaker, milliner and hair-dresser, a good packer—in fact, she must know and be able to do everything that a lady in society requires.

Such a maid waits upon the mistress in every circumstance of her daily life; she washes and gets up her laces and fine linen, and sits up for her at night no matter how late she may return. She is constantly up till three or four in the morning, and if it were this last duty alone, it renders the situation of lady's maid more open to temptation than any other in domestic service. A maid such as I am speaking of would not take service in a quiet family because, beside her wages, she expects many perquisites, which can only be obtained in the service of a lady of fashion, and which often exceed her wages, which vary from £25 to £30 a year.

As a rule ladies' maids are more highly educated than other servants and are often quite good linguists. *Punch* says they are the "rarest articles of female domestic service, and

being in the nature of luxuries are the best paid." I do not know if Mr. Punch is right, but of one thing I am quite certain, that they are more exposed to temptation than other servants, and far oftener come to grief. I have very rarely seen cooks or housemaids in a special ward of our workhouses, but I have unhappily seen many ladies'-maids.

Of course it is very important for the comfort and well-being of our homes, whether grand or simple, that we should have good servants in each department, but in none is it so absolutely necessary as in the nursery, and most emphatically so in a fashionable household, where the mother, as a rule, sees little of the children, who are almost wholly in the care of the nurse and her subordinates.

The head nurse should be a person of education with a pleasant voice, and more, she must be truthful, trustworthy and good-tempered, for she is a teacher without knowing it. The little ones from their earliest infancy are learning from her, copying her and taking impressions from her.

Of course it is no easy matter to obtain a nurse possessing all these qualifications, not one of which should be dispensed with.

Her duties are comparatively light, but her responsibility is extremely great.

Young ladies, daughters of clergymen and doctors, members of large families, have taken up this branch of domestic service with great success; they have been accustomed to assist their parents in the care and education of the younger children, and are therefore experienced in all that concerns little folk.

A nurse is always supposed to be up and dressed by seven, and with the help of a second maid, if there be one, to have the children bathed and dressed by eight o'clock, which is the breakfast hour in the nursery, and is prepared by the second nursemaid or housemaid. Generally the nurse has all her meals served in the nursery except in the case of the young lady-nurse, who dines with the family at their luncheon.

Servants do not as a rule in well-regulated houses go out without leave asked, but if a nurse should do so it would be regarded as a grave offence indeed.

The under-maid's duties are very practical; she has to obey the orders of the nurse and do her work well and conscientiously. She rises at six, sweeps and dusts the day nursery, lights the fire and brings the water for the baths, and in all things waits upon the nurse. About £25 is the sum received by the head one; £16 by the second and £13 by the third.

The majority of people, however, have not the means to keep up such an establishment as we have been looking into, and consequently only a comparatively small number of servants are occupied in them.

An overwhelmingly large number are to be found in households where three servants only are kept, consisting of cook, house-parlour-maid, and a young one under her.

The duties of these servants vary considerably from those we saw in the grander houses, but I am not sure that the situations are not more comfortable in these less-pretentious ones; many servants, I know, prefer them.

The cook has very much to do beside the actual cooking; neither can she lie in bed until eight o'clock. She must or ought to be up at six, and having lighted the kitchen fire, her duty is to clean the dining-room, hall, and doorstep—for all, from the dining-room downward, is her territory, and has to be kept clean by her. Her next step is to prepare the kitchen breakfast, which should be ready punctually at half-past seven if it is to be taken in peace, and when that is over all her attention is given to cooking the upstairs breakfast. Of course the amount and style of cooking is very different and much less complicated here than in a large fashionable

household, but for the health and comfort of the family upstairs, and downstairs, that which is required should be cooked in the best manner possible, and it is just this that is so difficult to obtain. In a large number of cases the cook is altogether ignorant of the science of cooking, and gathers knowledge as she goes along; she is not to be blamed for this, for what is she to do? If she has not had any opportunity of training under a good cook there is no means, or at least she does not know of any, by which she can learn accuracy and economy in cooking.

Now and then a mistress is fortunate enough to get a girl who has been kitchenmaid under a good cook, and then the household is in clover as regards the food.

She is required to answer the door until twelve o'clock, at which time the parlour-maid is supposed to be dressed, and, however tempted to do so, she should never go into the area first to see who it is at the door, but answer it as quickly as possible. It is her duty also before going to bed to see that everything is safe, from the hall downwards, whether windows, gas, or fire.

A house-parlour-maid's position is a very responsible one. The whole of the house not undertaken by the cook is in her charge, and she has the care of plate and linen beside.

Waiting at table and answering the door are also her duties; in all of these except the two last she is assisted by the under-maid.

The way a maid answers the door is a good indication of the way a house is managed; indeed it is almost possible by this to tell the character of both mistress and maids.

A visitor's knock attended to at once by a clean neat maid, who opens the door wide and answers politely and definitely any question asked as to whether the mistress is at home or can be seen, are very good signs of a cared-for home.

The way she waits table indicates whether she be thoughtful and has a head on her shoulders. She will not, if she be good, have to run in and out of the room for things forgotten.

In these days so many prefer to be waited upon by a maid in her pretty cap and apron rather than by a man-servant. Her wages would be about £22, and those of the under-maid £14 or £16.

The difficulty of obtaining a good cook, and the inability of many mistresses to give the large wages lately demanded, are acting in a curious way, and will result, I fear, in making our English homes more like those on the Continent.

Let me give one or two examples as illustrations of what I mean.

A master and mistress of a house such as I am describing like to give now and then a small dinner-party; the practice in such a case is to engage a lady who has been thoroughly trained, and has obtained her diploma, to come to the house, take all responsibility of the little dinner with the help of a girl, wait until everything has been sent up and then take her leave. Those who are in the habit of doing this tell me it answers really well, and is quite economical.

The second example is that where there are master and mistress only in a house, many of them shirk the trouble and expense of a cook, and take their dinners daily at a good restaurant, of which there are now so many: here they get good food, are well waited on, and it is less expensive than dining at home.

Cooks must look well to it that they are not superseded on the one hand, and on the other that they be not blamed for the breaking up of our English home-life, which has hitherto been held up as an example to all peoples of the earth.

I think, too, in my capacity of friend of servants, I may be allowed to say that the

upper class of ladies' maids sometimes stand too much on their dignity. The following is quite true and will serve to show what I mean. A lady of title, one of the most kind and considerate of mistresses, was one morning busy writing in her morning-room, when her maid came in with something required. Looking up and seeing the fire was low, the lady said, "Put on a few coals." The maid answered, "I will send the footman to put them on, my lady."

"No, do not trouble to do that, I will see to the fire myself."

This same maid received her dismissal, married a footman, and became so poor that in a couple of years she was glad to work in the hop-fields.

Again, I would say whatever your situation in the house may be, do not forget that sometimes giving up willingly what you consider a privilege is a kind thing to do. A girl in whom I am greatly interested ran the risk a short time since of losing a situation which in every way suited her by the following incident.

The lady, who takes a deep interest in her maids, said to them, "As you know, we do not as a rule receive visitors on Sundays, but some foreign friends are in London for a few days, and have appointed Sunday to take tea with us, so I must ask you to be at home to help me, and for once give up your afternoon out." One looked very displeased and said, "I don't think I can, ma'am, I have made arrangements to take tea with a friend." "Write," said the lady, "and say you will come later." "No, thank you, ma'am," was her answer.

A little yielding would have been graceful and would also have strengthened the tie of friendship between mistress and maid instead of weakening it.

Little as they may think it, the happiness and welfare of our country lie very much in the hands of our servants, and I wish I could impress upon them their great responsibility, which is quite equal to that of the mistresses. Many young people among our acquaintances would like to marry, but the sum required for domestic service is so much in advance of what it was a few years since, that it forms a real obstacle.

That good servants have been and are greatly valued by their employers we have ample proofs. The celebrated Earl of Chesterfield left by his will legacies to each of his domestics equal to two years' wages; and a venerable and godly man, by name John Claude, when dying, said to his son, who, with an old servant was kneeling by his bed, "Be mindful of this domestic, as you value my blessing, take care that she want nothing as long as she lives."

There are many things I would like to speak of, such as the great value of family prayer, and its power of sending all the members of the household to bed restful and at peace one with the other.

And again, of the evil resulting from the habit of mistresses giving their left-off clothes and finery to their servants. It is no help to them, and only creates in them bad taste, and one which is beyond their power to afford.

The large body of domestic servants is, as a rule, intelligent and clever, and it rests with them to determine their position in the world. I would say to them, Be self-respecting; be kind and helpful, and in all things conscientious; let the work be done in the best possible manner, and remember that an account will have to be rendered as to the use of talents and opportunities of doing good.

Let no reproach or shame ever attach itself to the name of servant, for it is one of honour and privilege, and one we all bear to our loving Father; and I take my leave by wishing earnestly that God would bless our friends the servants.