

## FROST FLOWERS.

By HELEN MARION BURNSIDE.

A GENIAL presence is drawing near,  
There's frost on the window-pane;  
The north wind blows over wastes of snow,  
And winter is here again.  
Fancy tracings of flower and fern  
Are drawn by some fairy pen  
On window and wall, while the echoes fall  
Of "Peace, and goodwill to men!"

Oh! magic blossoms of winter-time,  
As fair as the rose of June,  
Ye bloom in a night, in silver light,  
All under the winter moon,

And speak to our hearts of the bygone days  
When we laughed and shouted amain,  
To mark the flowers and crystal bowers  
A-gleam on the window-pane!

Because we held it a certain sign  
That Yule was coming apace  
When trees in the wood enchanted stood,  
Each wrapped in its veil of lace.  
Oh! dear are the blossoms of sunny spring,  
And dear is the rose's reign;  
But we love the most the flowers of frost  
That bloom on the window-pane.



## A LADY IN THE LAUNDRY.

By the Author of "We Wives."

## PART I.

"INDEED, I don't know what to do. They are really quite spoiled."

Mrs. Bowen had tears in her voice, and almost in her eyes, as she looked at a little heap of Jaegar under-clothing just returned from the wash. Those articles had been so soft and flexible when they went away. They had returned shrunk up and hard almost as a millboard. Emmie's combinations were only just fit for Anne, the second girl, while Mr. Bowen's vests were diminished wofully. The mistress hardly dared to look at her own nightdresses. They had cost so much, and now—

Mrs. Bowen changed her laundress. Alas! as a class, those worthy women are wofully ignorant of sanitary underwear. Then she tried doing them at home. But the cook understood even less than Mrs. Brown—had less soft water—fewer drying appliances—and less time.

Mrs. Bowen told her laundry troubles to her friend, Miss Bond, as indeed, she told most of her difficulties. She was startled by that young lady's abrupt proposal.

"Why not do them yourself, Bella?"

"Myself! My hands would crack, and chap, and skin. Besides, I know nothing about washing."

"You are only one of the many heads of families, Bella, that profess their ignorance on that point." Miss Bond was fond of using long words. "You would affront ninety-nine mothers out of one hundred if you suggested they could not housekeep—or cook—or sew—or darn. Yet you are one of the ninety-nine who do not blush to confess that you know nothing of just as important a part of household management."

To be accurate, little Mrs. Bowen had no flush on her pretty brown cheeks, but she spoke a deprecativ, gentle apology, and added:

"I know you would not find fault unless you were going to help about those Jaegars, Annette. Do tell me what to do."

"Have a pot of warm soft water ready for me next Monday morning. A bottle of strong ammonia, and a bit of the best yellow soap. I'll show you how to defy Mrs. Brown."

Mrs. Bowen almost hugged her friend as she helped her on with her cloak.

"How clever you are, Annette," she said, admiringly. "How is it no good man has made you mistress of his home yet?"

I think if any of those excellent men Mrs. Bowen spoke about had seen Miss Bond the next Monday morning at ten o'clock, they would have proposed on the spot.

Over her usual morning-gown she tied a big white apron with broad straps, and, to preserve the sleeves, she drew over them a dainty pair of linen cuffs reaching to the elbows.

"Now I am ready," she said, surveying a clean tin pan, a pint bottle of ammonia (Mrs. Bowen was determined to have enough), a bar of soap, and a heap of soiled, self-coloured flannels.

"First shred a small piece of soap into a saucepan and melt it," she ordered, "about a quarter of a pound to two gallons of water is the proportion."

While this was doing—Mrs. Bowen was entrusted with a tin spoon and allowed to stir it—our amateur laundress shook out thoroughly every bit of underwear before her separately, "to get rid of dust, etc.," as she explained. Then she filled her tin with lukewarm water (one jug of boiling to two of cold), and added enough boiled soap to make a good lather, lathering with one hand as she poured in the soap jelly with the other. Then she added to the water a tablespoonful of ammonia, and completely soused every bit of natural coloured merino or wool she could see.

"Cover every morsel," she explained to Mrs. Bowen, who watched anxiously and curiously. "Any bit that is left uncovered will shrink."

This done, she took up a pasteboard that stood near and carefully covered the pan, "to prevent evaporation."

"Now let it stand for an hour," she concluded, "and we will adjourn for that period to the parlour, or you can order dinner, Annette; I will amuse myself."

"Why, ma'am, all them clothes 'ull be shrunk up to nothing." Harriet the cook

could no longer contain herself. This was a departure from all her notions about woollies.

Miss Bond smiled.

"If they are spoiled, Harriet, I promise to replace every one. Only don't uncover the tub till we come back."

Sorely was the good cook tempted to do this while those sixty minutes flew by. Was some magic at work under her honest pastry-board?

Magic or no, when Miss Bond returned to the kitchen punctually at twenty minutes past eleven, and lifted the tray, a lot of very dirty water greeted her gaze.

"Well, that is wonderful!" Mrs. Bowen could not restrain her admiration as her friend, first gently squeezing and lifting out the wet "duds" proceeded to rinse them thoroughly in another pan of lukewarm water, minus the suds or ammonia.

"Always look at the collars and cuffs before you rinse." Miss Bond had almost forgotten this. "They are the parts that show dirt. If very soiled rub gently between your hands. But as a general rule no rubbing is required."

The rinsing was done as she spoke, and she began to wring.

"Put your elbows against your waist. Have both hands palm uppermost and use force. It don't spoil or pull the things out of shape. Of course a rubber wringer is the thing, but fingers and wrists are handy."

Very dry looked the vests, as Miss Bond, having wrung them, passed all through a mangle and shook them out vigorously, "to restore the hairy surface."

"You have a good drying-ground outside, and the day is fine," quoth the teacher, looking out of the kitchen window as she spoke. "So please, Harriet, will you hang them outside. This slight wind will dry them splendidly."

Harriet took the bundle of slightly damp garments and departed.

"If it had been wet, Bella," Miss Bond was pulling off her linen cuffs as she spoke and folding them away, "we would have hung the Jaegars at the fire. Not too close. The quicker they dry the softer they are, and the less they shrink."

Mrs. Bowen was an exact person.



"But how near, Annette. Your warning is vague."

Miss Bond laughed.

"If ever steam rises out of your woollens they are too near. Remember that."

The two friends were already halfway upstairs when the spinster suddenly turned round and dashed down again.

"I am sure that cook of yours will have hung your precious Jaegers in the sun, and they will be ruined."

Sure enough, there on the line, in the full blaze of a June sun, hung the poor things. Miss Bond quickly changed them to a beech

hedge under a clump of laburnums and syringa, and left them there.

"I can't wait to finish up," explained Mrs. Bowen's friend in need as she popped away. "When the clothes are dry, fold, and run through the mangle. That is all."

She was gone.

That week Mrs. Bowen's face was wreathed with smiles as she sewed tapes and buttons (why do those things so often need replacing?) on to her sanitary clothing. Very soft, very sweet, very clean. Quite unshrunk. Just like new they felt to her criticising fingers. Even Harriet said they were "beautiful."

Every following Monday found Mrs. Bowen in the laundry with her bottle of ammonia (at other times kept carefully out of harm's way in the store-room, as it is poison, and should be labelled so). A few minutes' work a week kept her household like the wise woman's of old (Prov. xxxi. 21) clothed in clean "double garments" (marg.) of Jaeger or Alpine wool, without any great expense.

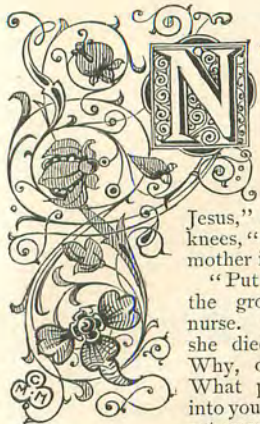
Mr. Bowen's vests are as new, though he has worn them three winters; while the children's combinations descend from one to another.

(To be continued.)

## LIFTED UP.

By the Author of "The Knock at the Door."

### CHAPTER II.



NURSE," said Leslie next morning, when, after being washed and dressed, and having repeated "Our Father" and "Gentle Jesus," he rose from his knees, "nurse, did they put mother in the ground?"

"Put your mamma in the ground?" repeated nurse. "Bury her when she died, do you mean? Why, of course, child. What put such an idea into your head; come and eat your breakfast."

"I thought you said she went to heaven, nurse. Didn't you say so?"

"Yes, and so she is in heaven if anyone ever went there," said nurse, emphatically. "Do you try to be a good boy and go there too?"

"But how did she get out of the ground if they buried her?" asked Leslie, looking up very intently at nurse.

"Why, child, because it's her soul that's gone to heaven, of course, not her body; that's still in the coffin; it's the soul only that goes to heaven. Now eat your bread-and-butter."

Leslie looked troubled; after a few thoughtful bites, he asked, "If they put Herbert into the ground, will his soul go to heaven, too, nurse?"

"Put Herbert in the ground, indeed! You mustn't talk about such things, Master Leslie. It's very naughty. You ought to try and cheer him up, and make him get well, and not think about his being buried. I don't know what Miss Laura would say, I'm sure. Never let me hear you mention such things again!"

Nurse looked very severe, and almost shocked.

"But Herbert was talking about it yesterday, nurse; he said he didn't like it, and I do wish he hadn't to die. Why must he?"

Leslie's lips quivered; he did not know anything about death, which was but a name to him, but he had quite realised that it meant separation for ever, as it seemed, and much chilliness and loneliness, and general discomfort for Herbert.

Nurse opened a cupboard-door and took out a pot of strawberry jam. "There," she said, giving him a good helping, "eat that, it'll do you good, and Master Herbert'll get well again soon, you'll see."

Leslie's eyes sparkled at sight of the delicious rosy preserve, and he ate his bread and jam with great content; nevertheless, as nurse could see, he was very thoughtful.

"Do you think if Moses had been here he could have cured Herbert?" he asked, presently.

"I daresay; all sorts of wonderful things happened in those days," nurse answered, comfortably.

"When the world was young," put in Leslie.

"Yes, when the world was young," repeated nurse, rather sharply.

"Such things never happen now, nurse, do they?"

"No, never," nurse answered with much decision. "But now you're not to speak about such things to Master Herbert, or I shall be very angry, and so will Miss Laura. You're much too little to know what you're talking about, and sick people can't get well if those about them are not cheerful; you must try to amuse him, and cheer him up."

"But I can't be cheerful if he makes me cry," Leslie said; "and I don't want him to die, and he says he must."

"There, there! you be a good boy and keep up his spirits and perhaps he won't—no one can tell. And now finish your breakfast and don't talk."

"May I have that book up again, if I'm very careful?" asked Leslie; "I'll be very quiet with it."

Nurse looked stern, but as she wanted to go out that morning, and it was very convenient to make sure he would be quiet, she relented after a little. "Well, as it's Sunday, I'll ask your papa if you may have it, for a great treat," she said; "but you must be very careful with it, and not put it down on the floor again. I'll bring it up before I go to church."

Whilst breakfast was being cleared away, Leslie went downstairs to Herbert's room; but Laura was there, very sharp and decided, for Herbert had had a very bad night and was weak and more breathless than ever, and she was going to try and read him to sleep with the story-book, and although he looked rather wistfully at Leslie as if he would really have liked him to remain, and even, Leslie thought, glanced with interest at his new top, which he had brought down, there was nothing for it but to retrace his steps to the nursery again, and put the top away with a sigh. Leslie would have had no pleasure in spinning it now; somehow he had seemed to read in Herbert's eyes that he was looking forward to being buried, whatever nurse might say.

However, she kept her promise about the Bible, and presently departed for church, leaving Leslie in high content, with amusement for the entire morning before him, and with Jane the housemaid to refer to from time to time, as she came in to stir the fire and otherwise manage to keep an eye on him.

Down in the street below, at a corner where two roads met, a street preacher had taken up

his stand with a little band of fellow workers, and now they were singing a hymn, a very pretty one, Leslie thought, "Come to the Saviour," with a bright, ringing refrain that sounded joyful, as if they were all very happy out there, in the cold and the east wind, and wanted everybody to know it. They came there very often on Sundays, and Leslie knew them all by sight; sometimes they had quite a large crowd of passers-by round them, and then the singing was very loud and hearty, quite like it was in church, nurse told him; sometimes there were very few, and then they moved on elsewhere, and Leslie would watch them regretfully from the nursery window, thinking how nice it would be to be grown-up too, and sing in the street like that for people to hear.

This morning, however, the book proved a greater attraction even than the window, and he had just had another brief, and rather shuddering glance at the snakes, when a familiar name, spoken in the street below, caused him suddenly to prick up his ears.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, make thee a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole, and it shall come to pass that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it shall live." Leslie almost overturned the book on to the floor in his excitement at the next words, and scrambling off his chair, rushed to the window. "The great Physician provided a cure for the sins of His people in the wilderness and He has provided a cure for us now. 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Look to Him, then, all ye weary and suffering ones, brothers, sisters, fix your eyes on Him in faith, and He will, in His great mercy, cure you. What does He tell us, 'Look to Me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the world.' So 'there is life for a look at the crucified One'; the great Physician has spoken it, and none need die unsaved. Let us all look then and live."

Leslie had dragged a chair up to the window and was now kneeling upon it, his face, red with excitement, pressed against the pane, staring down eagerly at the little group of people below. Where was it, oh, where could it be, this thing they were all to look at? He saw nothing being held up anywhere; the preacher had nothing in his hand but a book; he seemed indeed pointing upward now and then, but though Leslie scanned the housetops and the sky with all his might, he could discover nothing. And now they were singing a hymn about it, all of them, and with such fervour too, as if they all knew about it and had seen it themselves and been cured. "Look, look, look and live! There is life for a look at the crucified One, there is life at this moment for thee." What was it they could look at and live? Oh, if Herbert could only



## A LADY IN THE LAUNDRY.

By the Author of "We Wives."

## PART II.

"LOTS of soda, ma'am! That's the only way with this water. It's as 'ard as flint."

Mrs. Brown looked scornfully at her little employer as she spoke. What could ladies know about washing?

"Oh, well, it can't be helped, I suppose!"

Mrs. Bowen sighed meekly as she remembered the analyst's opinion of their village well.

"Only it seems a pity our black stockings should become green so long before their right time. Also I wanted to ask you to wash the suds out of our flannels, please. It leaves them so hard, and baby's skin is delicate."

"Dearie me, ma'am! Soap softens flannel—makes it like chammy, it do. Too much water just spoils them, it do."

As the mistress—after paying a week's bill—turned to ascend the stairs, Mrs. Brown sniffed audibly.

"Ladies as is ladies," she said, *sotto voce* to the cook, "don't bother about such things! No soda, indeed! As if I didn't know how to wash!"

Mrs. Bowen was so little sure of this that, when next Miss Bond came for a chat, she took out her work-basket, and showed her a number of rusty-looking black stockings.

"Soda," was her friend's one remark, as she took up a needle and began to help the busy little mother with that day's mending.

"So I said to Mrs. Brown this morning," Mrs. Bowen waxed quite valiant when out of sight of that sturdy female who ruled her with a rod of iron. "She said our hard water really needed soda."

"Rubbish!"

Miss Bond's words were few and not elegant to-day, but her needle flew over and under the ladder in Bobbie's little calf as she spoke.

"Do you know about stockings as well as Jaegers?" queried Mrs. Bowen.

"Lukewarm water," recited Miss Bond like a schoolgirl, "melted soap, vinegar and salt—no soda."

Mrs. Bowen laughed.

"Will you give me another lesson, Annette?"

"To be sure I will. Next Monday keep back the black stockings and any white flannels you may have from that harpy—poor Mrs. Brown!—and we'll kill two birds with one stone."

Harriet was quite smiling when the two ladies, armed with a basket of soiled things, invaded her kitchen the next Monday morning. She began to believe in Miss Bond's "notions."

"Lukewarm water and boiled soap! Oh, thank you, cook; you have them ready, I see! Now, please, some salt and vinegar."

"Quare cookery," said Harriet pleasantly, as she handed the salt-barrel and brought out the keg of vinegar; "must it be white, miss?"

"No—brown will do as well. A handful of salt and a tablespoonful of this to every two gallons of water. Are you watching, Mrs. Bowen?"

"Yes," replied that lady, who had been thinking how unpleasantly her stockings would smell. Vinegar always reminded her of brown paper and headaches.

"It won't leave an odour," continued Miss Bond, divining her friend's thought. "Rub the sole on both sides of the foot. But, oh, we forgot to shake well before wetting them! Never mind—do the rest! It gets rid of dust and all white particles. Now, fold by the seam carefully, to keep the shape. Wring—elbows to waist—as before, Mrs. Bowen."

The mistress blushed! she had been caught wringing in a most feeble, unprofessional manner. "Now, rinse, in lukewarm water, keeping seam right way. Wring, and dry. When the stockings are quite dry, press with a cool iron."

The white flannels were next taken in hand. Miss Bond got her washing and rinsing tubs ready before she began.

"The great secret in washing white flannels is speed," she took care to explain. A tablespoonful of ammonia was added to both waters, and into the first she put the petticoat,

bodice, baby's binder, and head-flannel, one at a time. "Knead and squeeze only. On no account rub," she said, giving a practical illustration as she spoke. "Rinse out quickly, pass through the mangle, and shake thoroughly."

Mrs. Bowen began to think her friend's arms would fall out of their sockets before her new petticoat was declared done; but she found Miss Bond took quite as much trouble with the other things.

"It is a wet day, continued the friendly teacher; 'so rub down the maiden, Harriet, and we will hang these before the fire.'"

"W-h-a-t's th-a-t?" drawled cook, putting on her most imbecile expression.

"Oh, the clothes-horse, to be sure!" Miss Bond was impatient. Every moment was precious while her flannel lay in a damp heap. "Now, no steaming, please, and when quite dry iron on the wrong side with a cool iron."

As the twain went upstairs Miss Bond caught sight of a rather Isabella-coloured-looking white shawl on the balustrades.

"Do that crotchet affair. It's Shetland wool, isn't it, like the Jaegers? Steep in ammonia-water for an hour, and dry, pinned carefully out to shape, on a sheet."

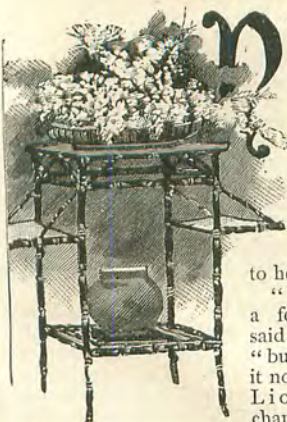
Mrs. Bowen smiled. "That was just off to the cleaner's, Annette. It was too cobwebby for Mrs. Brown's tender mercies, but I will do it at home now."

The baby thought she had a new binder that week; that is, she might have done so, if she had been capable of taking intelligent notice. Grandmamma was delighted to see her delicate, lacelike shawl come out fluffy and transparent as ever. Mrs. Bowen compared her washed petticoat with its new twin, and could see no difference; while the bodice—afortime rather yellowed and thickened by Mrs. Brown's one application of soda and soap—was restored to almost its pristine comeliness. Harriet summed up the general satisfaction in a few words, "It does one's eyes good to see 'em. So it does!"

## A CLEAR CASE OF PROOF.

By K. E. V., Author of "Winnie's Waiting," etc.

## CHAPTER II.



NEXT morning, as Lottie was cleaning the front steps, a hawker came up with some brushes, and knowing her mistress wanted something of the sort she went to her.

"Yes, I did want a feather-brush," said Mrs. Sandford; "but I can't have it now. I gave Mr. Lionel all my change, and have

only got a few coppers. Stay, though! Charlotte, do you happen to have any small money?"

Lottie thrust her hand into her pocket and

brought out a collection of articles, among which was the forgotten threepenny piece. A rush of colour came to her face, but the coin had been seen, and she held it out without a word.

"Thank you," her mistress said. "I'll go to the man, and you had better go and peel the potatoes."

Lottie did not feel so very uncomfortable about the money; it would be gone, but she determined never again to appropriate any she might find lying about.

Mrs. Sandford scarcely spoke to her little maid again that day, and she went out for a little while in the afternoon. In the evening it rained, and Lottie in the kitchen looking out at the sodden garden, felt dull and discontented. This was Thursday, and there would be two whole days before she could go home. It would have been pleasanter, she thought, had she gone to a place where there were other servants to make things brighter.

A ring at the side-door cut short her reflections, and she hurried to answer it, but gave a little cry of astonishment as she saw

her father. "Oh, father, is anything the matter at home?" she cried.

"No, my lass. I was——"

"Is that your father, Charlotte?" called Mrs. Sandford from the dining-room door. "Ask him to come to me at once."

So evidently Mrs. Sandford expected him; it was very strange. Lottie was puzzled and curious till she remembered that not long since her mistress had asked whether she thought her father could make some corner-brackets for her; most likely she was seeing him about them. Perhaps her father might come and sit with her a little while before he went home. The directions were taking a long time, Lottie thought impatiently. Once she thought she heard her father's voice raised as though in indignant protest, then soon after her mistress rang for her. Mrs. Sandford was sitting by the table, and Mr. Vane was standing near. He looked distressed and doubtful, and the look he gave his daughter was one of sad appeal. On the table lay a threepenny-piece.

"Charlotte," said Mrs. Sandford coldly, "where did you get that?"



## A LADY IN THE LAUNDRY.

By the Author of "We Wives."

## PART III.



SOME months ago I wrote, for readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, a couple of articles on Jaeger and flannel washing. To-day, I want to supplement these by telling how Mrs. Bowen learned to clear starch and make up muslins and collars.

The little mistress of No. 17 had never intended to undertake all the family washing. Mrs. Brown, as of yore, was still entrusted with sheets, and pillow-slips, and quilts, and cambrics and shirts.

But one fine autumn morning, woeful tidings came from the cottage. Mrs. Brown's twins had the "scarlet-tee."

This was no reason for giving up her clients in Mrs. Brown's eyes. Any sanitary precautions she might think needful consisted of boiling water, soap, soda, and, maybe, a drop of Condy.

But Mrs. Bowen looked on matters with a different eye. Sanitas, beef-tea, eggs, cod-liver oil, blankets, were all dispatched freely to the Gate Lodge. The washing was kept at home.

Miss Bond, of course, had first to be taken into confidence. Mrs. Brown was the only laundress in the village, and the step was a serious one.

"Never fear," responded that energetic spinster in a hopeful voice. "Neddy's Eton collars will never crumple after an hour's wear now; Flora's muslins will have no wisp in them; as to your laces, Mrs. B., they will be like new."

Of course the master's shirts were sent, per parcel post, to the nearest steam laundry.

"The principle in making them up is the same as for all starched goods," explained Miss Bond, "but our physical strength, and Bridget's"—with a smile at her devoted admirer—"would be unequal to SHIRTS spelt in capitals."

Bridget giggled; she quite agreed.

A little list of requisites for a lady in this particular branch of laundry work was handed to Mrs. Bowen, and the commission duly executed by that matron in the nearest town.

She lay in, by direction, a small stock of best Glenfield starch, half a pound of powdered borax, a couple of wax candles and a few balls of blue.

"I cannot come in till Tuesday, this time," said Miss Bond, "but that is all the better. Soak your white things in clean cold water (table-linen, cuffs, collars, and under-clothing) on Monday night. I will be with you as early as possible the next morning." She had just reached the front door when she flew back. "I am always forgetting some important item," she panted. "Keep out anything stained with tea, coffee, wine, or fruit; we will attack those separately."

Very loose seemed the dirt after twelve hours soaking, as Bridget rubbed each article vigorously in the steeping water before adding it to the warm tub. Then a hot lather and a vigorous boil left everything sweet and clean. A slight blueing in the rinsing liquid, and a quick drying in a strong breeze had everything ready for Miss Bond.

"We will commence with the collars," alliterated that lady as she entered the kitchen in her spotless white apron and big cuffs.

Mrs. Bowen was with her, enveloped in a huge holland overall that draped her from throat to wrist and from neck to hem.

"These ladies meant work indeed," decided Bridget quite respectfully; "they were not going to 'mess up' her kitchen for nothing!"

"We have here eight collars and two pairs of cuffs," counted Miss Bond, "so we will make enough starch just to do them. Two tablespoonfuls of white Glenfield, two teacupfuls of cold water, two small teaspoonfuls of borax. Please, Bridget, melt the borax in a small drop of boiling water while I get the starch ree of lumps in the cold ditto. Thank you. Now pour into my mixture."

Into this preparation Miss Bond put all the dry—bone-dry—collars and cuffs at once. Then, taking one by one into her hand she soaped them all over with a bit of hard yellow household, at the same time rubbing in the thick cold starch vigorously.

"It's just like washing in starch," commented Mrs. Bowen. "What is the good of the soap?"

"It takes the place of turpentine which some laundresses use, and prevents the iron sticking," explained the demonstrator.

"And why are you so careful about rubbing in, Annette?"

"It is to distribute the mixture," was the answer. "If I did not thoroughly rub in the starch we should have air bubbles and creases when we got further on in the job."

All the collars and cuffs having been taken out of the bowl, the lady in the laundry squeezed each one and rolled it up separately in a soft towel.

"Not huckaback, Mrs. B., please to observe," she said, "we want no diapering on the stocks."

After a couple of hours (during which time the friends were employed on a muslin dress of Nellie's), Miss Bond went back to the damp little bundle she had patted and pressed together, and began "making up."

"Rub both sides of your collars with a clean dry cloth," she directed, "then smooth on the wrong side first. Good gracious, Bridget, these heaters need polishing with bathbrick sadly! Scrape a little on that bit of spare board and rub the irons on it. That will do. Then Mrs. Bowen, finish on the right side. Press heavily and keep the shape as you go on."

"Neddy's Etons are more troublesome

than anything else, I should think," sympathised Mrs. Bowen, as her friend leaned heavily on her iron.

Miss Bond smiled.

"Just try clergymen's stocks, my dear. No wonder the poor men so often put up with celluloid monstrosities! Not one laundress out of ten can do up their collars properly!"

"Can you?" Half quizzically the question was put as Mrs. Bowen smoothed the cuffs with a piece of linen dipped in hot water.

"Of course! I am the tenth. The proper mixture is as above, with plenty of elbow grease on your polisher."

By this time the Etons were strung together before the fire, and Miss Bond manipulated the cuffs in the same way, giving an extra glaze with a polishing iron (price 10d.) that she had brought with her.

"I don't like too much 'finish' myself," she said, as Mrs. Bowen and Bridget rhapsodised over the china-like surface of the wristlets. "But it makes them last clean longer and look like new."

Nellie's muslin dress was next taken in hand. It had to be stiffened with hot water or boiled starch.

To every tablespoonful of white starch, Miss Bond allowed two tablespoonfuls of cold water and half a small teaspoonful of melted borax. Upon this "cream" she placed a quarter of an inch off one of the candles Mrs. Bowen had bought, and, while stirring well, cooked with boiling water until the whole was a transparent jelly.

"This would do as it is for making up ruffles or caps, or your white aprons, Bridget, which I know you like very stiff," explained Miss Bond cheerily, "but for Miss Nellie's frock it must be much diluted."

So Bridget poured on cold water while the young lady made "stirabout" of the mixture. Then the frock was dipped in it, wrung out, and left to dry.

"Why cold starch is ironed wet and hot starch needs to be dried first, is for the same reason, viz., to prevent the irons sticking. The scientific reason thereof is beyond me, the fact remains," said Miss Bond as she left last directions with her friend. "When quite dry you may sprinkle the muslin with hot water, cold would spot badly, roll up tightly and iron when evenly damp."

Neddy never complained of his collars being limp after Miss Bond's lesson had been given; indeed, he was sometimes heard to grumble about "boards" and "iron."

Instead of needing a clean pair of cuffs every day, Mr. Bowen wore his new ones with the "china facings" for several consecutive ones, while Nellie was always "the delight of the nobility and gentry" (*vide* Bridget) in her clean muslin pinafores and frocks.

Miss Bond was certainly a genius.

## VARIETIES.

"A good wife is none of your dainty dames, who love to appear in a variety of suits every day new; as if a good gown, like a stratagem in war, were to be used but once."—*Fuller*.

"According to the experience I have learned, I require in married women the economical virtue above all other virtues."

*Fuller.*

"She doeth little kindnesses,

Which most leave undone or despise;  
For nought that sets one heart at ease,  
And giveth happiness or peace,  
Is low-esteemed in her eyes."

*J. R. Lowell.*

"The foundation of domestic happiness is faith in the virtue of woman."—*Landor*.

"She who does not make her family comfortable, will herself never be happy at home; and she who is not happy at home, will never be happy anywhere."—*Addison*.

"'Tis virtue that doth make them most admired;

'Tis modesty that makes them seem divine."—*Shakspeare*.



simple, knelt at the Lord's Table together to celebrate the sweetest of all services of commemoration and thanksgiving, Queen Mab and Bess were side by side as members of the Good Shepherd's flock, black sheep no longer.

Queen Mab was always fond of letter-writing. We will let her tell how all these changes have been brought about. But the day must not be encroached upon for letter-writing, so Mab's missive will be dated the 26th of December.

"We have had the loveliest Christmas, dear aunt Maud, with only one drawback, your own and uncle Ross's absence. However, we were consoled by the thought that you will be here before the New Year. I have just been looking back a twelvemonth and recalling to mind my selfish anger at receiving the news of your marriage. Indeed, I was selfish in everything, and thought only of what would promote my own happiness. Perhaps I should write 'what I imagined once would promote it,' for since then I have learned to look at things in a different light. I could never tell anyone what my feelings of horror of myself, *shame and remorse* were when the water closed over me and I had no hope of my life being saved. It seemed too dreadful to feel that I had been all wrong, and that every chance of righting the wrong was gone for ever.

"You know how my life was saved. I have told you what were the first words I heard, when restored to consciousness, from Bess Cradock's lips, and how painfully I realised their truth.

"It humbled me to think that anyone, much more Mr. Hawtrey, could have risked his life to save mine, and then thank God that I was saved. His prayer for me has rung in my ears many a time, and it aroused an echo in my heart, for I prayed that it might be answered, though I could not think a petition of mine deserved to be. I am different now. Not good, but I long to be, and everyone tries to help and cheer me on. As to Mr. Hawtrey, words cannot tell how I honour and reverence him! When I look at Bess Cradock it seems that a real miracle has been wrought by his means, and when I think of myself the wonder is greater still.

"Poor Bess! People had given her a bad name, and attributed all sorts of wickedness to her, and the possession of uncanny powers into the bargain. She was lonely, miserable, and in despair. It seems, before she came to Braylebridge, she was widowed and had just one daughter. She was very hard on the girl, came between her and a marriage which promised to be happy, and when that was broken off and the man out of the country, she was so jealous even of innocent friendships that Mary was driven to seek a home elsewhere. She worked for her living and gained it honestly. It was Mr. Hawtrey who persuaded Bess to tell him her story, who sought and found the girl and brought mother and daughter together again. The old hovel is swept from the face of the earth, and Bess, now called Mrs. Cradock, lives in a pretty

cottage belonging to uncle Raynor, tended and cared for by her only child.

"I am always finding out what good kind people there are all around me, and learning to rejoice and sympathise with them. There are the Cairns family. What accomplished girls the daughters are, and how sweet a woman is the mother. I am glad the Doctor has come into some property and does not need to work so hard now.

"Even Miss Pottleton has her good points. She does many kindnesses in a masculine fashion, and sweetens her lectures and home-made doses by the gifts which accompany them in times of need amongst the poor folk.

"You see, dear aunt, what a number of mistakes in judgment I made in the old days. I make them still, but I do not wilfully close my eyes and ears against truth and reason as I did then. Jack often twits me about my mistake in taking him for Sir John Hawtrey's elder son and heir, when he was really Jack Meredith, whose mother was a widow when she became Sir John Hawtrey's second wife. Sir John had no child by his first marriage. He and Rex are half-brothers, being the sons of one mother at any rate. So I shall claim Rex as my brother when Jack and I are married. Relationships will be rather perplexing, for when Rex and Elsie become man and wife he will also be my cousin by marriage, and I am afraid confusion will ensue.

"I hope, however, it will be long before Elsie is Lady Hawtrey, for Sir John and his wife are the most charming of elderly couples. Perhaps I should not write 'most' when I remember what a model pair you and uncle Ross make, and how sweet, kind, and forgiving you have shown yourselves to me. Only to think that exactly a year ago I felt that I hated Colonel Gordon Ross above all created beings, and I was wildly and most unreasonably angry when I received the news of your marriage. As though I had a right to decide for those who were so much older, wiser, and better than myself.

"Alas, auntie darling, my conduct then was just another of what my friends here call 'Queen Mab's Mistakes.' It is not so long since I should have resented the word 'mistakes' as applied to my doings. I apply a much harder term to them now, for I see myself with different eyes, and judge my conduct by a higher standard, I hope, though I am really only learning what my horrid, selfish ways must have appeared in the sight of right-minded people.

"How delightful it will be for me to return with you and uncle Ross after your visit to Brayle is over. I have longed to spend just a little while with you between this and April. I want you, dearest auntie, to realise that I can think of, and care for others a little now, instead of being altogether wrapped up in self. But you and uncle must not spoil me. I need a great deal of—I was going to write scolding, but that is not the right word—to keep me up to my present standard, and much help to

enable me to rise higher. What a happiness it is to know that the Best Friend of all is ever within reach and willing to hear, to answer, and to bless all who call upon Him in their time of need.

"What a long letter I have written. Do you remember the long epistles I sent you when I first came to the Manor? Surrounded with everything that was good, overwhelmed with kindness, treated with the utmost generosity, my letters were full of complaints and fault-finding. I just hate myself when I think of them. Oh dear, I hope I shall never again be like the Mab of those days, but I am so afraid, and mistrust myself. Rex says this fear is a good sign, and that if I were self-confident he should fear for me, but since I am doubtful of myself he is hopeful.

"I often wonder that Jack dares to trust his happiness in my keeping, and I feel very humble when I think how much better he is than I am. Still it is cheering to know what a strong nature my weak one will have to lean on, and Jack is not in the least proud because he is miles above me in all that is best.

"When I am with you in town you will help me to choose my *trousseau*, will you not? You will find that my ideas about finery have undergone a great change since I lived with you. I shall be contented with a modest outfit, and your good taste will be of such service in selecting it. Jack is well off, and I suppose I shall always be able to wear handsome garments; but I would rather spend part of my allowance in clothing the poor than in following every vagary of fashion. Only three more days and we shall talk to each other, instead of writing, but though we are to meet so soon, I cannot bear to leave your little note unanswered, so with best love and wishes to you and uncle Ross, I am your ever affectionate Mab."

Of course the two weddings were on the same day, and at Braylebridge Church. Equally of course Mr. Patey officiated, and by the request of all concerned, was unassisted. Rex Hawtrey gained in Elsie Raynor a wife who could enter into his highest aspirations, and help him in his work for the good of his kind, and the honour of his Divine Master.

Strange as it may seem, Mr. Meredith was equally satisfied, for whatever Mabel Barclay might have been when they first met, her character had undergone so great a change that Jack had no doubts on her account or fears on his own.

As to our heroine, now a wife of some years standing and the mother of two fair children, she looks back on that sunny April day as the beginning of a new and blessed life with the husband of her choice. On the last anniversary of her wedding-day she whispered as she hung on Jack's arm, "Dear, how many of my worse than blunders I look back upon. But, thank God, on the day I gave myself into your keeping I did not make one of 'Queen Mab's Mistakes.'"

[THE END.]

## A LADY IN THE LAUNDRY.

By the Author of "We Wives."

### PART IV.

"No, my dear; I really hope such things won't often be sent her! Think of the cost of cleaning them continually."

Mrs. Bowen was looking half-rapturously, half-sadly, at a boxful of little Liberty frocks, richly smocked at neck and wrists, that had been sent Baby May that morning by a fairy godmother.

Her companion laughed. "The cost, in-

deed! When soiled you can have them like new, at the expense of a few minutes' labour, if you go the right way to work. Let Baby May wear them, and I'll see that dyer man does not take shillings out of your pocket."

So the May Blossom looked sweet, and radiant, and dainty very often, and it was not long before Miss Bond's art was requisitioned.

She came as commanded, carrying a small bottle with her.

"Gum water, my dear," she explained, "made by melting one ounce of best gum arabic in half a pint of boiling water and strained through fine muslin."

"Does it keep?" inquired little Mrs. Bowen, sniffing.

"Of course it does; any length of time if well corked, you suspicious person! Here, hand me the frocks and any silk ties you may have. We'll bleach them for a few hours in



cold water previously mixed with a little dissolved borax."

"How much, miss?"

"One tablespoonful to one gallon of water, Bridget. In the meanwhile, we will go upstairs and practice that duet, Mrs. B. The penny reading is to-morrow night."

Bridget had very hot soft water and a soap lather ready (see articles on Jaegar and white flannels in December and January numbers of G.O.P.), but Miss Bond explained that lukewarm alone must be used, anything hotter would spoil the colour of the silk.

"Wash by squeezing and sousing more than by rubbing," directed the spinster, suiting the action to the word. "Silk is a delicate fibre and very frayey. Now these white kerchiefs must be rinsed in blue, but baby's cream frocks in pure clean water. Stay," she took up her bottle and added one teaspoonful of prepared gum to each pint of the rinsing water, whether blue or plain.

"Your silk will look like new, Mrs. B., you will see."

Wrung out of this, Miss Bond pressed and patted the silk in a soft cloth, and then prepared to iron. Very particular was she to have the "Surah" and "Pongee" lying smooth, and covered with a thin muslin before she began.

"Iron on the right side," she pointed out, "to enure a bright and glossy surface."

Very bright, and very glossy indeed, looked those dainty little gowns and necklets when the teacher had done with them. The gum arabic had given a suspicion of stiffness that washed silks usually lack, and the smocking pulled carefully into shape made the tiny garments look like new.

Mrs. Bowen was charmed.

"Godmother may spend her guineas as often as she likes at Liberty's now. Baby May will wear out these frocks after all."

"Do you use your prepared gum for anything else, ma'am, but silk?" inquired Bridget, mightily interested in the whole proceedings.

"Yes, for laces (coloured or white), and small muslin articles like cravats and doyleys. A piece of lump sugar, dissolved and used in the same way, has sometimes a similar effect. But the sugar is liable to catch colour under a hot iron and will then permanently" (Miss Bond was still fond of using long words) "stain the fabric. So I advise the right way of doing things. It is always best in the long run."

With this bit of parting morality, Miss Bond took off her strapped apron and went home, leaving Bridget wondering at the "sugar, and vinegar, and salt," and such-like ingredients required by this lady in her laundry work.

Before the next washing-day came round, a teacupful of strong tea had inadvertently been upset on Mrs. Bowen's largest, very best, most satiny table-cloth.

Miss Bond happened to be at the table when this accident occurred. Directly the meal was over she called for a basin and a kettle of boiling water.

"We must not let the stain dry," she said, "and we do not need to put this otherwise clean cloth in the clothes basket at once. Hold the stained part tightly stretched over that bowl, Mrs. B.; I will melt a morsel of borax in the kettle and pour it through the blemish."

"The wet will spread fearfully," expostulated the mistress of the house. "We may as well send the cloth into our laundry at once, Annette."

"Not at all," responded Miss Bond, promptly. "If you steeped it in hot water, of course the cloth would drink up the moisture. By pouring through it will do no such thing."

Indeed, as if by magic, the ugly brown mark disappeared with the boiling water, and the damp quarter was carefully folded and hung to dry.

An application of the mangle soon afterwards restored Mrs. Bowen an apparently fresh, uncrumpled table-cover.

"Two things must always be remembered about tea, coffee, wine or fruit stains," lectured the family friend. "First, they should never be allowed to dry; second, soap will at once turn them into a fast dye. The plan I have shown you is simple and quick. It is completely successful if done at once. Oxalic acid and chloride of lime will remove even a dry stain. They generally remove the fabric as well. Besides, they are both strong poisons, and dangerous to keep in a house full of children."

Miss Bond delivered her little lecture all in one breath. She was in a hurry to be off. She mostly was, being a busy person. She left an admiring couple behind her.

"I must get a note-book to jot down your wise sayings," called out Mrs. Bowen laughing. "Pearls and diamonds are nothing to what falls from your lips, Annette!" while Bridget whispered as she let their visitor out of the front door, "What clever, clever people yez be!"

## THE GIRL'S OWN GUILD OF SCRIPTURE-READING AND STUDY.

BEING a scheme for studying the Bible day by day for self-culture, with test questions to prove that the reading has not been wasted.

### RULES.

Half-an-hour's study and reading each day.

One chapter a day to be read, the books for the present month being Numbers and Deuteronomy.

A course of Biblical study will occupy three years and three months.

Ten questions to be published each month in the "G. O. P."

Answers to be sent in by the first week in the following month by readers in Great Britain; by readers in Greater Britain answers to be sent within a month later.

Books required for the present year's study:—*The Bible Handbook* (Dr. Angus, R. T. S., 5s.); *Bible Cyclopædia* (Dr. Eadie, R. T. S.); Oxford (or Queen's Printers') *Aids to the Study of the Bible*, 1s. or 3s. 6d.; the *Revised Version of the Bible*.

Prizes will be given at the close of each year (not of the course).

First Prizes will be given to each student who has obtained the necessary number of marks. Also a certain number of Second Prizes, according to the number of the students, will be given to the best of those who have reached the required standard. Hand-writing and neatness in the MSS. will be considered.

First Prizes to consist of books to the value of One Guinea. Second Prizes to the value of Half-a-Guinea. Students who are prepared to make-up the answers to the questions that have gone before may join at any time during the first six months of the "G. O. P." year,

i.e. from November to April inclusive. But in all cases the subscription will be 1s. per annum, payable always in advance, and sent by postal note to the Editor of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, 56, Paternoster Row, London. Each letter in connection with this work to have written upon the envelope "The Girl's Own Guild." A card of membership will be sent to each member, signed by the Editor.

Many questions have been asked with regard to the manner of reading a daily chapter. We can only say that the girls must exercise a wise discretion. What is required of them is, that a monthly reading should follow the questions of the month, and this study should be undertaken as a means of understanding the Scriptures, not as a mere formal task.

The first year's course ends with the volume in the last week of September, at the end of the 1st Book of Samuel,—110 questions and 304 chapters.

The second year's course, ending at the corresponding period the following year, brings the reading to the end of the "Song of Songs"—120 questions and 367 chapters.

The third year's course will include 510 chapters, from Isaiah (inclusive) to the end of the Book of Revelation, giving 120 questions.

Competitors must write the questions as well as their answers; write on one side of each sheet, and fasten all carefully together. The number of the member must never be omitted at the top of the paper, together with the month. The whole three months' answers, if sent in together, must be fastened in separate monthly parts.

### QUESTIONS.

61. Give two references in Numbers in which women established their right to the inheritance of their fathers, and under what circumstances?

62. Give the names and localities of the cities of refuge; how many did Moses institute? who appointed the rest, and for what reason were they ordained?

63. What is the subject of the Book of Deuteronomy, and what is the time occupied in its events?

64. Mention two prayers of the children of Israel in the Book of Deuteronomy, and of what are they the first examples?

65. Why were the Moabites to be protected from the Israelites? What was the name of their country, and by whom was it originally possessed? Name a celebrated woman of this tribe, and two of her great descendants.

66. When, and how were three texts from the Book of Deuteronomy quoted by our Lord, and what sins did they denounce?

67. Give an instance of a law instituted in Leviticus, abrogated in Deuteronomy; and why had obedience to it become impossible?

68. Who, besides Christ, fasted forty days and forty nights; on what occasion, and where?

69. What chapters in the Book of Deuteronomy are prophetic? with what two great events do they deal? and of what nation is the coming to Jerusalem foretold?

70. Mention the names of the four sons of Aaron in whom the high priesthood was vested. Who succeeded Aaron? and give the changes in the priesthood to the time of the captivity?



enforced, and the promenade is also the happy hunting-ground for the youths of the district.

In the villages of Biscay the maidens of the poorer classes wear a distinctive costume from that worn by matrons or widows. It is in the "Valle de Aratia," which is called the heart of Biscay, that the ancient customs are most rigidly kept up. A head kerchief of bright colours, made by the wearer's own hands, is the distinctive mark of the single girl. The preliminary steps of making acquaintance on the *paseo* are similar to those already described, excepting that the man keeps his distance better, and the maiden is more careful to assure herself that the *pretendant* is actuated by deeper feelings than mere caprice. As in Andalusia and other parts of Spain, the lovers are never left alone; all the wooing must be overheard by the *dueña*, who is, however, often very lenient and discreet. As soon as the lovers

are agreed, the family of the man makes a formal visit to the family of the girl, and exaggerated compliments as to the beauty of the bride, and the worth of the future bridegroom, are exchanged. Contrary to the custom in Andalusia, the woman brings all the necessities for the house. In the country, however, and amongst the poorer class, the couple share and share alike, and the two fathers perform a sort of duet together. Says one, "I give a bed." "I also," replies the other; but not infrequently when one father has reached his limit and refuses to follow suit, the match is unromantically broken off. But when no such catastrophe occurs, the parents between them manage every business detail, down to procuring the necessary documents, such as certificates of baptism, of good conduct, exemption from liability to military service, etc. The religious ceremony is upon

the same lines as the Roman Catholic service in England, except that in the middle of it thirteen pieces of money are placed on a plate with the marriage ring, and presented to the priest. This money is locally called *saras*, and varies in value according to the position of the parties. If of silver, the money is kept by the priest, but sometimes *onzas* of gold are presented, and these are *afterwards* withdrawn by the bridegroom, and are usually made into earrings and bracelets for the bride.

It is only their just due to add that Spanish girls make excellent wives and tender mothers. As a rule they take an industrious part in all domestic matters, and are pre-eminently "keepers at home," while their imperfect education and lack of intellectual interests are to a great extent counterbalanced by their natural wit and intelligence, and the fascinating *gracia* of their manners.

## A LADY IN THE LAUNDRY.

By the Author of "We Wives."

### PART V.

#### TAKING OUT STAINS.

"I MIGHT as well use a nutmeg grater," groaned little Mrs. Bowen, one morning, as she rubbed her face gently with a hem-stitched article. "This handkerchief is of the finest linen. What can Bridget do to make these things so raspy?"

Bridget was not offended at being asked about her method.

She willingly owned that all her mistress's kerchiefs were passed through starch water.

"They'd just be wisps if I didn't," she explained. "An' I would have double the number to wash every week."

The offence came in when Mrs. Bowen requested that no Glenfield should be used for the future. Bridget tossed her head and—

Next week a pile of soft rags were laid on the dressing-table in the pink room. At the end of the octave, too, Mrs. Bowen found her sachet empty. She had used all the unresisting wisps in a very short time.

"Of course there is a *via-media*," decided Miss Bond when helplessly appealed to. "Cottony things like Bridget's last venture look soiled before being taken out of the pocket. I will tell her what to do."

The next week, accordingly, Mrs. Bowen rejoiced once more in crispy satiny handkerchiefs. Yet Bridget had been spared any recourse to the starch box.

"Wash the things well." Thus Miss Bond had directed her friend's cook. "Bleach. Then put in blue water. Fold. Pass through the mangle. Iron while wet. That is the little-known secret. Always smooth the edges first (a crookedly folded handkerchief never looks well), and on the right side. Then satin face will be nothing to the surface."

Miss Bond had another word to say about handkerchiefs too.

"They are not altogether pleasant things to deal with at times," she said to her friend. "But washing them need not be a disgusting operation. Soaking in cold water for twelve hours takes out every impurity. A drop of sanitas in the soaking water will also prevent the spread of infection. I am sure the way colds run through a house is often caused by careless laundry work. The heat handkerchiefs are subjected to in washing and boiling does not destroy all influenza germs. We must neutralise them, then, by sanitas. In its liquid form of course. It is quite colourless, and subsequent boiling removes all odour."

"My dear Annette! you are scientific as well as practical," quoth little Mrs. Bowen admiringly. "You have hit on the weak spot in our sanitary code. What is the use of doctors examining houses and dust-bins for microbes, when they let more than soiled clothes go out of a house?"

"I certainly have my own theories how influenza is propagated, at any rate," said Miss Bond, pursing up her lips and speaking oracularly. "It need not spread in your home, Bella, if you follow the above plan with your family. A big bottle of sanitas costs 1s., and is invaluable. In surgery as well as in the laundry. Bind up the children's wounds with a rag dipped in the liquid. No festers or lock-jaw will follow!"

Fortunately the latter misfortune does not often come after a cut or a bruise or a scrape. But Mrs. Bowen found her friend's recipe was a wonderful thing for "skinning" over broken knees and contused elbows.

"It seems to me, a lady who has cookies in her laundry will never be out of vinegar or salt," said Miss Bond one day to her friend as she gave this advice. "Another good thing is, that ammonia—and how would our jaegers look without ammonia?—is the best remedy for wasp stings. A third inducement to have proper laundry necessities at hand is, that sanitas not only purifies linen, but mends up the family in the way of accidents."

"Three reasons for understanding the art of washing," quoth Mrs. Bowen, laughing. "It sounds like the triple heads of a sermon, Annette."

Lecture or not, Miss Bond was always applied to on every occasion that her skill was needed.

Mr. Bowen, I am sorry to say, was a trial to his wife in the matter of "slinging ink."

By a particular twist of his wrist when using a pen he could scatter quite a shower of black spots in an infinitesimal space of time. He was also warranted always to leave an inkpot wherever it was most in the way, and most invisible to the naked eye.

Result—disastrous to all tablecloths.

Now, on an oval table in the big drawing-room Mrs. Bowen had a much cherished oriental square. Foundation, crimson; embroidery, gold. We will say (under protest) that it was more Mr. Bowen's misfortune than his fault that this particular cloth should be visited by a deluge of ink from an open inkstand.

His wife fled to Miss Bond, almost in tears. Her Cairene treasure was surely spoilt.

"Quick—quick!" directed the energetic spinster, putting on her bonnet and running over to No. 17, "our best chance is while the stain is still wet. Oh, Mr. Bowen, how could you?" she inquired severely as she met that poor man.

There was sternness on her tongue but a twinkle in her eye.

"Pure cussedness, I am afraid," responded that gentleman in grieved accents. "I am sorry to say," screwing up his face in anything but a contrite manner, "there is a combination against my literary efforts in this house."

Then he went; very glad to get away from the bustle round the oval table.

"Get me some of the tepid boiled milk from breakfast," directed Miss Bond. "Now I am going to soak this unlucky stain."

With the tips of her fingers she gently rubbed the cloth in the warm milk, changing the fluid every time it grew tinged.

"The two P's—Promptness and Patience," she said as she renewed the milk for the fifth time, "are required with ink. Never be satisfied till the fluid you leave is colourless. There, Bella; now a rinse in lukewarm water and your cloth will be as good as new."

"Will nothing but fresh-boiled milk answer?" inquired the mistress, looking somewhat ruefully at the empty jug.

"Buttermilk is even better if you have it at hand. Warm, and use it exactly the same. Be careful to wash out every atom with water or a sour smell will remain. Finish by pressing with a cool iron."

"Annette, many thanks!"

Miss Bond waited. She knew this burst of gratitude betokened a lively sense of advice to come. She only tarried three seconds by the clock, then—

"If my husband spills ink on a white damask cloth (I hope he will never do so again, but it is well to be prepared) am I to proceed in the same way?"

"Not at all," came the prompt answer. "Salt is usually at hand in an eating room, fortunately. Rub a little on to the spot. Then apply lemon—one cut in half does best—and pour boiling water through. As demonstrated in the past, Bella."

Mrs. Bowen had almost forgotten that gone-by lesson. But she turned up her April "G. O. P." and refreshed her memory.

Anyone who meets with a similar misfortune can do the same.



end. How interminable it seemed, but at last Lake Timsah was reached and the ship stopped to allow of their landing. The sisters were impatient to be gone; they bade their friends on board farewell, and with Mr. Seaton went ashore; the baggage was soon in another boat, and not long after they had landed the *Acegarth* was again in motion and soon out of sight.

Mr. Seaton had orders to proceed up country at once, and he and Constance bid adieu on the little landing-stage, possibly each thinking of the uncertainty of the future and wondering whether they would meet again.

The sisters were not long in finding their way to the hospital, and received a warm welcome from one or two of the doctors who knew how sadly their patients needed a

woman's care; others, as is still the way, thought it a mistake to have women about, and only acknowledged their presence because they could not well do otherwise; these preferred working with the orderlies, and if at times they did doubt that they were not always to be relied on, comforted their consciences by at least pretending to believe in them.

(To be continued.)



## A LADY IN THE LAUNDRY.

By the Author of "We Wives."

### CHAPTER VI.

#### PARAFFIN WASHING.

MRS. BOWEN'S Bridget was an invaluable servant in many ways. Bright, punctual, good-tempered. One fault she had. Her mistress summed it up very tersely—"kitchen-rubbers." Now the said cloths were "lost" by the score. They were "found" behind the oatbin in a most grimy condition.

Then followed violent efforts at cleansing on corrugated washing-boards. Much boiling, with unpleasant effluvia, and many groans on the part of Bridget. All these spasmodic efforts resulted only in dingy-coloured dish- and glass-cloths.

Mrs. Bowen was in despair. Rollers cost several pence a-piece, and come expensive when bought by the dozen.

"Paraffin is your best chance," counselled Miss Bond, when applied to; "in fact I may say the only one."

"My dear Annette! think of the odious smell! It would make us all quite 'sickly,' as Baby May says."

"Best oil and boiling water," gabbled the family friend, stopping in her task of pasting pictures on the nursery wall; "I warrant the result odourless."

"Bridget will never consent," pleaded Mrs. Bowen, seeing a loophole of escape, and very unwilling to experiment herself in the matter.

"Don't ask her. Bridget occasionally gets a day out, I suppose? Prowl round and glean the rubbers till then."

Accordingly, the next time her faithful cook departed, in feathers and glee, our ladies in the laundry found themselves in possession of a heap of pantry-cloths requiring, very urgently, a cleansing process.

"We won't attempt the copper-fire," decided Miss Bond; "I see it is not set. We will fill this big pot. Not quite full, thank you, Bella. Three parts of water, please. Let it come to the boil. Now, Mrs. B—, have you some shred soap? That is right. Add a quarter of a pound to these four gallons of water."

Mrs. Bowen did as directed.

"I did not soak the towels, Annette; Bridget was about."

"Quite right. Our rubbers must go into the mixture bone-dry. Remember, this way of washing is Japanese in its topsy-turvydom. No primary soaking in cold water, no hand-rubbing. Paraffin is a magician, and cleanses with its own wonderful power."

When the soapy water was bubbling and

boiling rapidly, Miss Bond added to it one tablespoonful of best paraffin. Then straight into the pot went Bridget's dusters, rubbers, glass-cloths, and kitchen-towels.

"The one thing most necessary is rapid boiling before the oil is added, and the same afterwards. As your water evaporates you may add a little more to the pot, but let it always be at boiling-point."

For one half hour by the clock, those grimy cloths were left fizzing and steaming away. At the end of that time, with a large wooden spoon, the lady in the laundry fished them out into a tub placed ready and rinsed them several times. The water left behind in the pot was black, the articles taken out white!

A fine beech hedge in the paddock was adorned with a fringe of bleaching articles that morning. When Bridget came home at night, a pile of sweet-smelling, sun-dried, carefully-folded, well-mangled rubbers met her eyes. "The mistress is good," decided her maid, turning over her apparently new cloths with critical fingers. "These are much finer and softer than the last lot she bought." But Mrs. Bowen had not been to a shop that day. She had merely washed the "old rags" Bridget had lost behind the oatbin, in the "cat's hotel" and under the sink in the scullery!

"Do you wash anything else but kitchen things with paraffin?" inquired little Mrs. Bowen as she and Miss Bond enjoyed a cosy cup of tea together over the drawing-room fire.

Strange to say that morning in the laundry had not left behind wrinkled red hands, or cracked sore wrists. The digits of both ladies were as soft and white as ever. Chemical and scientific washing take but little "palm"-istry or elbow grease! Neither a cast-iron back nor herculean strength is required when the laundry is undertaken on modern principles. If a due balance of soap, and soda, and ammonia, and blue, and steam, and water, and irons, and wax, and starch, be maintained by cultivated brains, the results are almost incredibly easy and satisfactory.

Our two ladies had perhaps a keener appreciation of orange pekoe that afternoon than usual. They enjoyed the luxury of a quiet chat certainly better than before.

Something attempted, something done, had earned that hour's repose!

"As a general rule, no," answered Miss Bond, helping herself to a cocoa-nut cracker, "unless superintended by a scientist like you or me, Mrs. B—. Undergarments are better washed in the usual way. Still there

is one thing. If ever you get paint stains on your apron, or on the children's overalls, put them dry into the pot and boil until every mark is gone. There is nothing so efficacious."

"Does the oil never leave a smell?"

Mrs. Bowen was particularly susceptible on this point. Hence her anxiety.

"Never, if properly and carefully rinsed in hot water. You remember doubting my word, Bella, about vinegared stockings (see Jan. 1894 G. O. P.). You have proved it true now."

"Indeed I have, Annette," gushed the mistress, looking at her shapely ankle in its neat balbriggan. "In the case of ammonia and flannels too (G. O. P. Dec. 1893) I can never be grateful enough to you. I feel so independent of Mrs. Brown and her ilk now."

"May you long remain so." Miss Bond was off, as usual. "It is a pity laundry work has been a lost art for so long amongst us. Supposing you and I, Mrs. Bowen, inaugurate a revival in this matter! Let us free ourselves and others from the iron rod wielded by the genus washerwoman. They presume on being indispensable!"

"If you will lecture, I will demonstrate," laughed Mrs. Bowen. "When shall we start?"

The lady in the laundry did not answer. She has not started on that tour yet. She contents herself with sending these articles on washing to the help of her large sisterhood who read our "G. O. P."

\* \* \* \*

"And do you call these six articles exhaustive of the great art of washing, Annette?" queries little Mrs. Bowen, severely, as she scans the proof sheets. "Why have you said nothing of the way to make up table linen?"

"Nor nothing about takin' out mildew, or scorch, or ironmould," interrupts Bridget—privileged member of the committee as she is.

"Nor how to wash work in bran-water," objects her mistress.

"Not even a hint as to poor girls like me, doin' up their coloured print gowns," wails cook.

Miss Bond looks sorrowfully at the indignant two as this duet proceeds.

"Editors are strict," she says at last with her most dignified accent. "Space is limited. I have told about the most important branches of laundry work. I can do no more."

"At present," eagerly interpolates Mrs. Bowen.

"That depends on our Editor." Exit Miss Bond.



dear!" in the most genuinely concerned manner, when his questions elicited a description of those nightly shilling dinners. Before they reached the *entrées* he had called her "Hester" more than once, and when dessert was upon the table she was "My dear," in much the same tone of patronising affection which he used towards Mabel herself.

That dinner in the handsome dining-hall, with its glittering tables, its crowd of gaily-dressed occupants, was a revelation to Hester North. It was her first glimpse into the life of the world, the world of the happy and prosperous who had not been shut up all their lives in boarding-schools and ladies' dwellings. Her innocent enjoyment, melted even Mrs. Ewen's ice of reserve, and filled the soul of her husband with a glow of complacent satisfaction.

This friend of Mabel's was an insignificant little creature, but she had a pretty, shy manner of looking up at him, which went far to compensate for her lack of good looks. Few things are indeed more grateful to a man of Mr. Ewen's type than this tribute of silent deference, with which Hester's eyes were so eloquent. His own children were so accustomed to be considered and waited upon, so satiated with the luxuries with which they had been surrounded from their cradle, that he received little homage of the kind from them. He felt himself expand beneath its influence; he lay back in his chair and beamed upon the company; he was filled with an intoxicating realisation of his own importance, and the poverty and insignificance of the rest of the human race as compared thereto.

Mabel, meanwhile, was filling in the pauses in her father's conversation with her own low-toned confidences. When the conversation was loudest the personal pronoun came into play again, and what "He said" led up to the still more interesting topic of what "We" were going to do in the wonderful golden

future; when, every now and then the babel of voices sank to a lower pitch, she turned adroitly to the safer subject of the tour, of which the present visit to London was the first step. It was not the best season for going abroad, but it was difficult for father and Gerald to get away from home at other times. They, the gentlemen, were only going as far as Brussels, and would return to England the following week, when she and her mother went on to Paris to choose the all-important *trousseau*. There was no place in the world for buying clothes like Paris. Was that not Hester's opinion also?

"But I don't know! How should I?" cried Hester in return. "I have never been out of England. Oh, how I envy you, Mabel! It does sound so,—so enchanting! I would give—anything—to travel abroad like that!"

And then a wonderful thing happened! Mr. Ewen turned his complacent smiling face, and stretched his fingers apart upon his white *serviette*.

"Then why not come with us, my dear?" he said with bland persuasion. "We should be delighted. Mabel, there, has a hundred things that she is dying to tell you. I could bring you back myself next week. Just a few days' run, you know—do all the good in the world—paint those white cheeks of yours a little!"

Hester North turned and looked at him. Such a look! A quiver of intense emotion passed over her features, her eyes were full of a dazzled, incredulous light.

"Go with you!" she repeated slowly. "Go abroad with you! I? Oh, no, you don't mean it! You can't really mean it!"

"But I do mean it—certainly I mean it, my dear. A most charming addition to our little party. You be ready to start at seven o'clock to-morrow evening, and you'll see if I mean it or not! You can arrange to call round for her, can't you, mamma?"

Mrs. Ewen murmured a few words of assent. She was by no means well pleased at this sudden change of arrangement, but she was not cold-hearted enough to be proof against the tremulous, almost terrified expression of delight upon the small white face. After all it would only be for four or five days, and the girl seemed quiet, and inoffensive—

"Only," she said decidedly, an hour or two later on when Hester,—still in a dream of happiness, had been put into a four-wheeler and was being driven rapidly towards the Ladies' Dwellings, "only I do strongly object to dragging a girl about the Continent who is not provided with suitable clothing. Something will have to be done. That dress to-night was preposterously shabby. Mabel, you must take her out shopping with you to-morrow. One hears so much of the disgraceful condition of the English abroad. And five in a carriage, too—such an awkward number! Four inside, and one on the box,—for all the world like a personally-conducted tour!"

"Pooh, my dear, nonsense! We can take two carriages, I should hope. You and Mabel can do the distinguished in the first, and leave Gerald and Miss North to come after. He won't object, never fear. Nice little girl! Haven't seen a brighter pair of eyes for a long time!"

"Who has got bright eyes? Is that the governor talking about nice little girls?" inquired Gerald, entering the room and throwing a crush hat upon the table, displaying short, dishevelled curls of flaxen hair lying unevenly upon his handsome forehead.

"Your father has invited Miss North to come abroad with us. It is her holiday-time, and she will meet us to-morrow evening at the station, and return with you next week."

"Nonsense!" ejaculated Gerald.

(To be continued.)

## A LADY IN THE LAUNDRY.

By the Author of "We Wives."

### PART VII.

#### HOW TO WASH CREWEL-WORK AND EMBROIDERY.



E have all heard of the proverbial bad shilling.

I am much afraid Miss Bond felt like that maligned coin, when, in response to an excited appeal from Mrs. Bowen and Bridget, she once more entered the laundry.

You see she had made such a dignified exit in July!

A visit to a certain old maiden-lady, living in a big house round the corner, called forth a new display of skill on the part of our Lady Laundry. In the pre-artistic ages of culture we all adorned our chair-backs and curtains with webs and strips of crewel-work. Old Miss Vernon still clung to this form of decoration. Mrs. Bowen herself had certain precious heirlooms of her children's work hidden away in a drawer upstairs. Now Miss Vernon's embroidery sadly needed cleansing, whilst the colours on Mrs. Bowen's *couvre-pied* were dim with age and dust.

Of course their kind-hearted, skilful friend

came to their help. She carried off Miss Vernon's antimacassars and dumped them down in Bridget's domain.

"A small saucepan, please, Bridget"—Miss Bond was nothing if not polite—"and measure into it one pint of cold water. No, guess-work won't do! Exactitude, Mrs. B., as well as the two P's mentioned in our article on ink-stains and their cure (see June 1894). Now, do you ever indulge in bran bread?"

"No," answered Mrs. Bowen, humbly. "It is doubtless an omission on my part, Annette, but—"

"Your children would have stronger teeth, firmer limbs, better digestions, if you gave them a loaf occasionally." Miss Bond spoke *ex cathedra*, but added, more kindly, "Doesn't the cow get a mash sometimes? Yes? Then a handful of that wheat bran, Bridget. Boil it in your pint of water for half-an-hour while the mistress and I shake these grimy articles."

There was no soaking of that precious crewel-work and embroidery strips. Although Mrs. Bowen assured Miss Bond that only the fastest of dyed wools and silks warranted to stand washing had been used, that lady was firm.

"Water is such an universal solvent," she explained; "steeping, or even allowing the work to lie damp for any length of time, would

be fatal to texture and colour. In order to have these things done as quickly as possible we will have two waters ready. In these two tin dishes. Now, Bridget, strain the bran water and add another pint to the gruel. The things are so dirty, Bella, that we must add melted soap to this preparation."

Very quickly then Miss Bond immersed the chair-backs one by one, kneading and squeezing each until the material felt quite soft and looked clean.

"This first water is so coloured that we must add vinegar and salt to the rinsing dish," said the spinster; "the former ingredient is only sometimes necessary. The latter always. Now pass through the wringer, Bridget, and hang to dry at once. Wrong side out."

"This is the point where I have always failed," quoth Mrs. Bowen, pounding and kneading cheerfully; "the things look all right when wet, but smear and run before they are dry."

"As much care is needed in drying as in the washing," explained our lady in the laundry; "a windy shady place is the quickest and safest position. When nearly dry, iron on the wrong side."

"How nearly dry?" inquired the exact little mistress ungrammatically.

"Oh! before they look rough and wrinkled."



Miss Bond smiled indulgently. Her friend was but carrying out her own rule. "Don't let the iron be too hot, or the silks will tinge and discolour. Don't let it be too cold, or water-marks will not be obliterated."

"Why do you use bran-water in this kind of washing?" queried Mrs. Bowen, as the two ladies went upstairs after finishing Miss Vernon's treasures.

"Bran has no chemical effect like ammonia," Miss Bond was quite scientific. "It seems to act mechanically as an absorbent. It also slightly stiffens. Sometimes, of course, a greater degree of stiffness is wanted; then you can add boiled starch to the last water."

"And proceed as aforesaid?" finished Mrs. Bowen, placidly.

"Not at all," Mrs. B. jumped at the sudden negative. "Dry the work then very thoroughly. It will look rough, but, before ironing, damp evenly with hot water. You remember, in the case of collars and muslin,

I told you the effect of using cold water as a sprinkle?"

"White spots?" repeated Mrs. Bowen. She knew that part of her lesson well. "It is very hard to carry all these little instructions and differences in one's head, Annette."

"You need not do so, my dear. A bound volume of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER for 1894 will always do as a book of reference."

Miss Vernon was hugely delighted to get back her antimacassars in good condition.

"My dears," she explained elaborately, "I thought laundry-work was a lost art. I am so glad to find a woman who thoroughly understands it."

"A lost art, indeed!" echoed Mr. Bowen from his armchair in the window; "I have writhed under the rule of Dhobies in India, I have basked in the light of the French *blanchisseuse*, only in the middle kingdom of the heathen Chinese have I rejoiced in porcelain shirtfronts and properly stiffened chokers."

"Until now?" suggested his wife, with a depreciative look at the lady in the laundry.

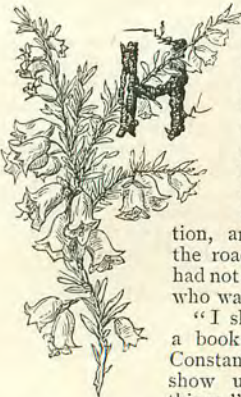
Mr. Bowen rose and made a bow. "Let me finish, my dear. I was about to add, that even under the golden umbrella, Miss Bond, the art you are reviving seems to be a lost one, at least, according to my European ideas. I can hardly believe that the primary, secondary, and final stages in the production of such surfaces should be a sprinkling given through the yellow molars of a Chinaman. You have proved the operation can be successful without any such adjunct."

"Still less do I credit that the ultimate end of silk and linen should be a rending asunder on the boards of our laundresses at home," added Miss Vernon.

Miss Bond smiled. "I believe a new means of livelihood is open before us women. But I cannot stop to explain my plan just now. We will talk over it another time. In the meanwhile good-day."

## THE WARDS OF ST. MARGARET'S.

By SISTER JOAN.



### CHAPTER XXIV.

HOPE and Constance were leaving the hospital together as usual one morning, Constance relating something which had happened in her ward which had roused her indignation, and as they crossed the road to their hut they had not noticed the chaplain who was behind them.

"I should love to write a book if I only could," Constance was saying, "and show up some of the things."

"May I hear what you would put in your book?" said a voice behind them, and turning they saw Mr. Mead.

"Oh," said Constance laughing, "did you actually hear what I said? Well, things do sometimes make one feel angry."

"I can quite believe it," he replied; "we chaplains often feel indignant at things we see."

"But," put in Hope, "you cannot show up things without showing up people, and after all it is from the very top of the tree the system wants revising. Who would read such a book or believe it if they read it? Besides," she added, "things which seem so wrong to us are not looked upon in the same light by those who do them, and in many cases, too, we only see one side."

"I would confine myself to facts," said Constance with some warmth.

"Yes, but if called upon to give the names of the offenders you would not like to."

"No," she said somewhat sadly, "everyone is personally kind and friendly; I should not like to get anyone into trouble. I suppose, after all, if you cannot suffer it, come out of it is still the wisest advice to nurses."

"I think you are right," said Mr. Mead to Hope as they entered the hut; "but for all that, I should much like to know what Sister Wilson is going to write about. You may safely trust me with your secret," he said, turning to Constance.

"Well," she said with a little hesitation, "I will just give you some examples. A few weeks ago a man in one of my wards, who had only been admitted the day before and was

suffering from a bad sore throat, was made a prisoner by the doctor for not having shaved. Every man is expected to shave daily, and anyone who was up and convalescent and had neglected to do it would of course have broken a rule and would naturally have to take the consequences; but, for a poor sick feverish man it seemed very hard, and actually a crime was sent in against him on his return to barracks. I heard of another sick man who was told by some very regimental doctor to lie to attention in his bed. It is almost ludicrous when you think of it calmly, but often very exasperating at the time. Then again no patient is supposed to have money about him, it ought all to be taken away when he comes in and be kept in store till he goes out. One day the doctor spied a purse belonging to a man who was in the last stage of consumption, and scolded the ward-master for allowing him to have it. The ward-master, who should have taken it away, wishing to clear himself, told the dying man to say that his wife had left it when she last visited him. This he did, and the lie was accepted as satisfactory, and the matter ended. Then look at the canteens and coffee-shops," she went on, "which are kept on many hospital premises, at either of which patients can manage to get served though quite against rules, and of course at their own risk of being made prisoners. For months they may go on enjoying their forbidden stores without getting caught, till quite unexpectedly some doctor thinks he will be on the watch, and probably succeeds in catching a few victims, but though they may be wary for a day or two they soon try again, and even the strictest medical officer will tire in time, and in the end leave them to have their way."

"Smoking of course is a thing which is not allowed in the wards, but sometimes men will have a pipe heedless of consequences, if they think they can do it without being found out. A doctor going round one night rather later than usual, and noticing a strong smell of tobacco as he entered one of the wards said, 'Some of you are smoking here.' Probably more than one hot pipe was instantly pocketed. Turning to one of the culprits he remarked, 'You were smoking?'

"No, sir," and the lie dropped out quite fluently, disarming the doctor, who turned to a second with the same inquiry.

"Yes, sir," said the man, who from whatever motive had not chosen to screen himself.

"Make that man a prisoner," said the doctor, turning to the ward-master as he left the ward, and accordingly when he left hospital he returned to barracks as a culprit. Then think of that story Sister Gill told us of only last winter: a man she had in one of her wards in a city hospital was suffering from a diphtheritic throat, and tracheotomy was thought probable. It was a foggy winter's day, and yet ward-master and doctor were going to allow the one ward fire to be put out, as it was the regulation time for the chimney to be swept; and it was with the greatest difficulty and quite as a personal favour, the monthly sweeping of the chimney was postponed.

"Look too, how grudgingly at some hospitals and by some men extras are given to patients really needing them, partly possibly because of the extra work it entails, unless it happens to be a case whom the general might inquire about or the D.A.A.G. himself comes up to see, or of course unless he is a guardsman."

"Oh, there are heaps of things," she continued with flushed face and sparkling eyes, "make one at times feel just disgusted with everything. Rules without end are in force, mostly, one would think, made to be broken, and often it seems as if the really wrong things were passed over and crimes made out of trivial occurrences; yet in spite of all this, take each man separately and you rarely fail to find his good side. It's more the want of honesty and uprightness in small things. Sometimes I think it is wrong to belong to it at all, and yet here I stay on and take my money as regularly as the rest do, and I should regret in many ways to give up the work."

Mr. Mead had listened attentively; he was interested in Constance, her ardent spirit was in harmony with his own: he was middle-aged and called by some an enthusiast; he smiled at her concluding remark, but said very gently—

"One has not far to go either in or out of the army to find men, both dishonest and deceitful, but so long as individually we have not to lower our own standard of right we need have no qualms. It would be a sad state for the army if all the noble and high-minded men, and there are hundreds of such, came out and left it entirely to the evil and the base. They talked on awhile and as he rose to go he turned to Constance saying, "You will let me know, I hope, when the book is published, as I shall certainly get a copy."



doctor's wonderful cures, of this neighbour and that who had gone to him, magnifying their own steadiness by the defection of others; and there were cases which my father had painfully conducted to a happy conclusion, in which the praise and profit were snatched from him by his younger rival."

"If it were so, Rose," said Dr. Browning, "my father, I am sure, was not aware of the circumstances; he always entertained a deep respect for Dr. Whitethorn."

"I know it, Edward, I am sure of it, but it is no wonder that Dr. Browning—all whose feelings found ready and immediate expression—should not have understood a person so self-contained and so sensitive as my father. Matters went on thus for more than three years; your mother's kindness had won my heart, and my father was too just to interpose any objection to my intimacy with your sisters, and I think he almost regarded it as a triumph that you seemed to prefer the quiet evenings here to the lively enjoyment at home, and I am sure that he was pleased that you listened to his conversation with deference."

"Those evenings were the happiest hours of my life," said Dr. Browning, "all seemed full of promise, your father so cordial, you so fair and so sympathetic. I could find it in my heart to wish that I had never lived beyond those days."

"How often has the same wish risen in my heart! but we must look onward not backward. Meanwhile the memory of those happy hours has been a treasure to both of us, with-

out which we should have been less able to bear the burden of our sorrow. It was on the twenty-fourth of October—I have too much reason to remember the day—that my father went to a dinner at Merrington. I did not sit up for him, but I heard him return about midnight; the boy was waiting up to take the horse and put up the gig, for my father, as was usual with him on such occasions, had driven over. When we met at breakfast he looked pale and worn and scarcely answered the questions I put to him. The meal was hardly ended when John Fielding, the shepherd, and Mott, the poor old man who used to do odd jobs about the place—you remember him—came quickly up the garden, and hastily passing through the surgery, tapped eagerly at the dining-room door.

"I bade them come in, for my father looked like one turned to stone and said nothing."

"Oh, doctor," said Fielding pulling off his cap, "there is such a dreadful accident; poor Dr. Browning—they are bringing him here. Mott and I came on to tell you; and let missie here get out of the way."

"At these words a shiver passed over my father's face, and he looked at me in helpless despair."

"What has happened?" exclaimed I terror-stricken and bewildered as much by my father's look as by the man's words, and instinctively anxious to draw attention from him to myself.

"Then he told me that it was just the poor doctor. He never got home last night, but

Mrs. Browning had not been so anxious as most folk would have been, thinking he might have gone off to some case, but some lads who were gathering cresses by the river had found the poor gentleman lying at the bottom of a quarry pit, where he must have been lying for hours, they said. The lads lost no time in giving the alarm, and some half-dozen men were quickly gathered together. They were going to take him home, but some of the men thought there might be still a spark of life in him, and that it would be best to bring him up to Dr. Whitethorn, who could recover him if anyone could. Fielding's narrative gave me time to collect my thoughts; the natural grief and horror with which I heard of the accident were merged in the agony of a conviction that my father, who still sat motionless and with an ashy paleness on his face, was in some way aware, or even guilty of Dr. Browning's death.

"The whole misery of the time, the instantaneous withering of all that made life pleasant, I did not feel at the moment; I knew nothing but the supplicatory look of my father, and the necessity of acting for him, of saving him from these people. I told them that the proper place to take the body was to the inn, but it was too late. The men who carried it on a rude stretcher, with the cloak he had worn thrown over him, and hiding all but his long waving hair, were already at the door waiting directions."

(To be concluded.)

## A LADY IN THE LAUNDRY.

By the Author of "We Wives."

### PART VIII.

HOW TO MAKE UP TABLE LINEN, AND MORE ABOUT A LOST ART.



promised talk over scientific laundry-work as a profession for our couple of million unemployed females took place one morning after

some work done at the tub.

Mrs. Bowen was making a wedding-present for two of her young friends. It consisted of some beautiful Irish napery embroidered in the corners.

In working those elaborate initials one of the table-cloths became a little soiled and dingy.

Miss Bond therefore undertook to have it made up "like new" by the appointed day.

Accordingly, for twelve hours, that oak-leaf damask was soaked in clear soft water. Then it was well rubbed in the same liquid and quite soft was the dim film that had gathered on its satiny face.

Then the cloth was rubbed with soap in a hot tub.

"As hot as your hands can bear it," was the spinster's direction.

Then rinsed in warm water and boiled for half-an-hour. A little borax had previously been dissolved in the pot and of course some shred soap.

"Never use metal for lifting from the boiler," said Miss Bond, looking about for a wooden stick. "Iron-mould might follow. Now we will lay the hot linen in cold water and finish by rinsing in slightly blue liquid. Be careful to wring tightly and evenly, Bridget, to prevent streakiness. Thank you. That will do."

In her zeal the good-natured cook volunteered to carry out the linen and hang it on

the line, pinning each corner firmly. Miss Bond rushed to the rescue.

"The corners are more liable to tear than the straight edge of the material, Bridget," she explained eagerly. "We will allow three or four inches from the selvage—so. Then let sunshine do its bleaching work. Take it down, please, before it is too dry and I will finish it to-morrow."

The next morning, accordingly, thin boiled starch having been added to the linen, Miss Bond ironed it with a very hot iron.

"It is a question of taste whether we starch our table-cloths or not," said the lady as she rubbed her steel-faced heaters on a board covered with powdered bath-brick. "There is something for and something against the practice. If starched, all spots and stains are more easily removed. The starch prevents them taking such a hold on the fabric. On the other hand, starched table-linen wears out more quickly. Stiffening causes the threads to crack in the folds. I personally always use a little. I think the linen keeps longer clean with it."

In the meanwhile Mrs. Bowen was sprinkling the napery with hot water poured through a fine rose sieve.

Miss Bond took it from her hands, and after folding a table-napkin in three, backwards and forwards like a screen (not over and over), she began smoothing with a very hot iron.

"Right side first," she explained. "The pressure of the iron will polish and raise a nice gloss there. If you began on the wrong side that would be glossy and the right side dull. Begin at the edge. Now, Mrs. B., we will air this for a few moments and it will tell no secrets to your bride."

"How could you manage if the table-cloth was a very large one, Annette. Turning would crush it dreadfully."

"Oh! then I should iron only on the right side." Miss Bond was divesting herself of

apron and cuffs. "Folding it selvedge to selvedge, I should iron half at a time. Fold middle to selvedge and iron again. Thus we would have four creases instead of three, and this is preferred by many people."

Mrs. Bowen thanked her friend warmly and led the way upstairs.

"*Revenons à nos moutons*," she said, laughingly, sinking into an easy chair. "Our muttons at present being laundry-work as a profession. Would you really advise ladies to take this up, Annette?"

"I advise nothing," answered Miss Bond, severely. She did not approve of frivolity. The subject was far too serious a one to be taken in hand lightly. "I only hinted that perhaps some of our unemployed women might undertake something of the kind. Amongst us there has been a revival of many things. Matters moral. Matters culinary. Matters æsthetic. Matters economic."

Miss Bond paused for want of breath. Then continued rapidly, "All schemes for the amelioration of the condition of impecunious spinsters" (Annette dearly loved long words), "have one weak point. They demand, generally, expatriation and exile."

Mrs. Bowen was listening humbly. Miss Bond was on the war-path.

"To be sure," she here assented sympathetically, "bee-keeping in America, for instance!"

"Yes! and fruit culture in California. Poultry farming in New Zealand. Ranching in Kansas. Orange cultivation in Florida. Such panaceas have, by turns, been all recommended for the present distress. Now mine is a homely scheme requiring no capital. Very little education. Not even 'a cast iron back with a hinge in it as doth gardening!'"

They both laughed a little. Miss Bond was coming down from her heights.

"Could not the unemployed spinsters organise a co-operative laundry here?"



suggested Mrs. Bowen. "I would send all our wash, Annette."

"Thanks. To start it I should want, say, twelve young ladies; an empty house near a plentiful supply of cold water; a paddock surrounded; some proper machinery; tubs, hot pipes, boilers, and a £5 note from each working member as a loan, to be repaid speedily from the profits of the concern. Then I would start a laundry without a shadow of doubt as to its ultimate success."

"Who would be your clients?" murmured Mrs. Bowen. "The upper ten keep their own laundry maids."

"The curate's wife, my dear. The mother of the bank clerk. The struggling governess. The family of our underpaid doctor. All those, *in globo*, who send out their clothes by the dozen (so pathetically different a thing to paying by the piece) would gladly come to us."

"You would do the work well, I am sure, Annette," gushed little Mrs. Bowen.

"We would do it as well as it can be done."

Miss Bond was emphatic. "We would charge as little as we possibly could, leaving a fair margin of profit to repay us for the loss of time and our outlay in utensils. I have no hesitation in saying such an institution is a social want. Will not some energetic spinster arise and join me in supplying it?"

"We would thus rid our bachelors from the whips of incompetence and avarice that at present rule their intercourse with Mrs. Jones. Our babies, even, would welcome emancipation from the iron-like substances in which members of that sisterhood would array them."

"Ladies as is ladies shouldn't meddle with such things," I believe your particular Mrs. Brown once said to you, Mrs. B. We answer now, 'Ladies as is ladies will gladly deliver themselves from the agony of frayed collars, the ignominy of crumpled cuffs, the danger of infection from half-washed garments.'"

Mrs. Bowen was laughing.

"You speak like a book, my dear Annette,"

"Do you think so, Bella?" Miss Bond

murmured absently. She was revolving something further. It burst out as follows—

"This whole question is a more serious one than you suppose. Look through the most scientific thesis on sanitary matters ever given the world—viz., the purification laws of Moses, sometimes Prince-regent of On, and you will learn something of the importance of properly washing clothes. Moses knew then, or rather God knew"—Miss Bond spoke reverently—"all about the spores and bacillæ and germs in general that attend dirt as a sequelæ. I should be quite contented if I could introduce into every house, and street, and parish, in the kingdom a state of cleanliness equal to that enjoined to the ancient Hebrews."

Mrs. Bowen gasped. This shower of knowledge and theory, and logic and enthusiasm was too much for her.

"Speaks like a book," she murmured, "without a cover—page 44—opposite the picture of boy with a swallow-tail coat."

And Miss Bond ran away.

## WITH ONE HAND OR TWO.

### LEFT-HANDEDNESS AND AMBIDEXTERITY.

By S. F. A. CAULFEILD.

#### PART II.



PROMISED my readers that the second part of my little treatise on the subject above-named should be of a practical character, but I am not thereby precluded from adding a few more facts connected with the

question; and would first recall to their remembrance a remarkable incident in the history of ancient Rome. A distinguished Italian family, bearing the name *Scævola*, or "left-handed," inherited this patronymic as the descendants of the famous Caius Martius, surnamed Cordus, one of three hundred Roman youths, who had banded together to deliver their country from Porsenna, King of Etruria, then engaged in the siege of Rome. But the lot falling on him to penetrate into the tent of the King, he made a mistake, and, entering another, stabbed his secretary instead. On being brought before Porsenna to make confession, he thrust his right hand into the fire on the altar, and held it there, without flinching or change of countenance, to show that no torture could make him divulge the secrets of the plot. Amazed at his indomitable fortitude, the King ordered his release, and he was sent away in safety. But in commemoration of his heroic act, and his having but the left hand, from thenceforth he was surnamed *Scævola*, or "left-handed," which became the surname of his descendants. A few names of very celebrated men occur to me, who were called "left-handed," but were far more deserving of being reputed as "ambidextrous." First on my brief list is a very distinguished man, indeed—a writer, painter, sculptor, architect, physician, and athlete—the Florentine Leonardo da Vinci, whose remarkable career came to an end on May 2nd, 1519. A celebrated contemporary of his, Hans Holbein, the Swiss painter and wood engraver, who outlived him, however, some twenty-four years, was likewise noted for his use of the left hand. The Italian painter Amico

Aspertini, who survived the latter for about nine years, Ludovico Cangiàgo, and "Mozzo, of Antwerp," were all ambidextrous.

To be simply left-handed is by no means desirable. In acting with your fellow-men or women it must interfere with concerted work in a very extensive degree, and must prove specially obstructive in the prosecution of machine-labour; as well as in military duties, shoulder to shoulder with right-handed men, and interfering with the use of right-handed arms.

There are certain acts, as I have said, that even the ambidextrous must allocate to the right hand exclusively, and there should likewise be a means of according a special position of distinction. Thus the reservation of the dexter side for persons to whom a place of precedence is due, is a rule of which all must see the necessity. We follow the custom of the ancient Greeks in passing wine round to our guests from right to left, "following the course of the sun" (as it is popularly said), and to send it round in the opposite way would be a breach of etiquette and an outrage on general feeling.

The Romans—to whose superstitions I have already alluded, regarded it as an evil omen to cross the threshold of a house with the left foot preceding its more honourable fellow; and so strong was the feeling that, it is said, a boy was stationed at the door to see that visitors conformed to the rule. Thus, the order "Right foot foremost" finds its origin in a very ancient custom. Again, to shake hands with the left hand could never be accepted as a seemingly mode of salutation, being opposed to world-wide and time-honoured traditions; as likewise the giving of a benediction with the left hand. You may remember how, when the patriarch Jacob blessed his grandsons, Joseph placed his eldest son to his father's right hand, according to the natural precedence of the first-born; and that, although Jacob's sight was dim, he knew, as a divinely-inspired prophet, to which son the special blessing was to descend; and he therefore crossed his hands, that in pronouncing it he should lay his right hand on that specially-elected son, and this in spite of the remon-

strance of Joseph, who supposed he had made a mistake.

Before concluding my very brief list of exceptions to the indiscriminate use of both hands, I must name one more, in which special employment may be relegated to each. When having to carry a rug, or parcels, in entering a train, steamboat, or carriage, or in going up and downstairs, a standing rule given me by a Naval officer, as being essentially a sailor's rule, was to "carry everything in one hand, by preference the left (being generally the least handy, and the weakest), and to leave your right hand perfectly free, as your protector." It must "hold firmly to rope, bannister, rail, or holdfast before you take one step in advance, up or down, in or out, if not walking on level ground." So long as the right hand and arm are stronger than their fellows, this rule should be kept without fail; and in any case, both hands should never be encumbered, one or other should be free to assist others, if not yourself.

But while granting that certain exceptions must necessarily be made in the exclusive employment of the right hand, I am specially anxious to represent the great loss and inconvenience we experience in depriving ourselves of one hand (more or less) by employing it merely to wait upon the other in a very subordinate way. Nor is it to be regarded as merely an inconvenience and loss of double practical service, but in a still more serious light. The unequal strain in carrying a child, throwing out the shoulder-blade in the effort to keep a fair balance of weight, and the tendency to throw the body on one side in writing, or map- and design-drawing, the danger of curvature of the spine is imminent. All this kind of one-sided action is destructive of health and beauty of form, and results in loss of power to follow many bread-winning vocations. You have all heard of "writers' cramp," otherwise known as "scriveners' palsy;" how many have been laid up by it unable to follow a profession on which their subsistence depended. Violinists, telegraphists, stenographers, type-setters, dancers, cigar-makers, engravers, painters, and many others are victims to this complaint, and to the baneful habit of employing the right hand to