

"More's the pity, as he can't make a living off it. Do you mean to tell me you would come here amongst all my clerks and work at the post your brother held? It's absurd—the idea is madness!"

"Nothing is madness, sir, if you have not a penny in the world, and there is no one to help you."

"I can help you, if you will marry me? I have made you the offer before, and you scorned it. You are old for your years, why not marry?"

"Because under the circumstances, I prefer to remain penniless. I will not marry you, sir, because I do not love you."

"Isn't love rather an expensive luxury for a beggar? But there is nothing more to be said. Wife of the owner and manager of the firm is the only position you shall ever find in my business, so good-morning."

Helen sprang after him, and called out—

"Stop a minute, you must hear me. All our life you have bought us up. As children together you bought every treasure I possessed, for even then money was horribly scarce, and mother was ill. Ah, how well I remember the day you bought my rabbit with the red eyes, and my canary, my carving tools and paint-boxes, and you paid me a few pence for my childish treasures, when you would not have missed a few pounds. When father died you bought our home, and now you want to buy me. But even for my brother's life I will not sell myself to you; but if he dies, you will have his death at your door, and all your thousands a year will not chain his ghost in your strong room; it will haunt your footsteps—"

"Indeed; so this is the character you give me. It is true, when we were children I was rich and you were poor. What you had of childish treasures to sell I bought and paid for. Was there anything unfair in that? Your old home I took over as a bad debt. What more could I do?"

"You could let me have my brother's post for a few months, and I promise you the work will be well performed!"

"I have already offered you the only post I wish you to fill, and you have refused it.

You say a few months. What does your brother propose doing while his sister keeps him?"

"My brother, as you know, is an extremely clever black-and-white artist. He studied in Paris for a year before he came here; if he had only a little spare time he would soon make a good position for himself."

"Then why has he not already done so?"

"Because he has had no time, he dared not give up a certainty for an uncertainty." Helen's eyes had lost their anger, and were full of entreaty, but the falsetto voice said slightly, while he bowed her good-morning: "Then he will have plenty of time in the future. I wish him great success," and there was nothing left for the girl to do but to accept her *congé*.

On her way back to her lodgings, she stopped at an odd-looking block of buildings, and turned down a dark passage which had rooms opening off it on one side only. At number 28 she stopped and knocked twice. A pleasant voice quickly answered "Come in," and Helen opened the door and entered a comfortably-furnished studio.

"Oh, you're the very person I wanted to see, Miss Churchill. Can you come tomorrow at ten o'clock; it's rather a difficult position for you, but you are very strong, I know, and you've got just the figure to suit me."

A flush mounted to the very roots of the girl's glossy curling hair, and she stood before the critical eye of the artist.

"I shall be very pleased to come, sir, but you know I have never stood in a difficult position. You have only painted my hair and complexion before."

"Well, I won't tire you out, I promise you, and you must come, for I can't find a suitable model. I want someone who will look a lady in a simple frock, and that's what is so impossible to find. I've only six weeks before the Academy opens to paint the picture in, and my mind is full of it at the present time."

Helen smiled at his impetuosity, and said brightly: "Then I'll come, sir, and I'll try and stand properly."

He was going to ask her to stay and make a cup of tea for him, as he would have done to an ordinary model, but he checked himself and let her out of the studio with the same ceremony as he would have shown to a wealthy visitor to his studio.

Just as he was saying good-bye, Helen mustered up courage and faltered out—

"Would you mind paying me for my last two sittings, sir; I am sorry to trouble you, but you had no change the last time, you remember, and I want some money very badly just at present."

When Helen walked down the long dark passage with the money safe in her pocket, the artist's eyes followed her.

"Poor little girl, I should think she's jolly hard up. I wonder what her story is. I wish I could get Nan to call on her. I'm sure she's in awful trouble, and Nan's such a brick." Nan was his young wife, who was also his devoted friend and lover.

When Helen got back to her lodgings, her brother was awake and asking for her. She adroitly evaded his questions as to where she had been by busying herself in making him a cup of tea.

"And now I must leave you again, dear, for I have promised to go downstairs and see Mrs. Larkin on business. Harold thought that the business meant making arrangements for shifting him into the front room. He stroked her hand gently, and drew her face down to his.

"Chum, darling, you're such a brick. I don't know how to thank you, and I don't know where you get the money from, for when I try to think my poor head aches so, and I just give it up. I'm so selfish, dear, and you're so good; but I'm going to write and ask James to lend us ten pounds."

Helen promptly sat down on the bed.

"Promise me you won't do that, Harold. He wouldn't lend us a red cent, and it is no good humiliating ourselves. Promise me, Harold."

The girl's earnestness startled him, and as he was accustomed to obey her he acquiesced, and she went away downstairs to help Mrs. Larkin.

(To be continued.)

## HOUSEKEEPING IN LONDON.

By A GIRL-PROFESSIONAL.

### CHAPTER I.

#### A TURN IN THE TIDE.



Necessity calls out invention it is certain that there is nothing like it for showing up our true colours and the real value of the attainments we may pride ourselves upon possessing.

For instance, I had taken credit to myself for some small skill with paint brush and pencil, and my modest literary efforts had met with unqualified encouragement, but when it came to deciding whether these could be relied upon for rent, for daily food and clothing, as well as for the other expenses which make up what we call "living," I must confess that I first hesitated, then decidedly said "no." The more decidedly, perhaps, that another's maintenance, besides my own, depended upon such earnings.

Then came the question "what can I do?"

"Well," suggested someone, "you can cook!"

"Yes, but cookery lessons are not a very paying undertaking—that is, they pay well for a period but the appointments do not last long."

"True, but why not make your cookery pay in a home of your own, by cooking for others at the same time as for yourself. A good cook is a *rara avis* in these days, despite the cookery schools, and as much of the comfort of life depends upon cooking, there are many people who will pay well to ensure their comfort in this respect."

I pondered over this advice; there was common-sense in it certainly, and Necessity was ever at my elbow urging me to remember that she might soon teach me a difficult lesson.

A few days later a letter came to me in our little country home, which we must soon vacate, from my sister, a typical girl-bachelor who lived in the "dwellings" that typify London Bohemian liberty. She wrote, "that very desirable residence," which you and I have so often envied is actually To Let, I wish we could take it."

"Now is your chance," said a voice within me; but yet I hesitated. Visions of rent, taxes, rates, and what not loomed large before me, besides the possible repairs that might be required inside, although outside the residence was attractive enough.

Was it chance again, that, while waiting for a local train the next day, a bill announcing "excursion to London" caught my eye, and reading it, I found it to be for the next morning, returning the same day. Surely the Fates were conspiring together!

It was true that to avail myself of this projected trip meant leaving home at the early hour of six, on a November day, and the return three-mile-walk would be at the still earlier hour of three o'clock the next morning, but that was no great deterrent.

Therefore, not knowing what good thing might be missed if this chance was lost I did not hesitate here, but when the next morning dawned, set out post-haste over the deserted fields, in the grey light, to meet the train which all but waited for me, as if determined to take me whether I would or no. By ten o'clock we drew up in St. Pancras station; a cup of hot coffee there raised my courage again,

and a wash in the waiting-room helped to complete a somewhat hasty morning toilet. Out in the road the maze of traffic seemed bewildering, but the right "bus" was soon hailed; once on that I felt secure, and gave myself up to half-an-hour's enjoyment of a busy London scene. Who has not felt the fascination that this thronging city holds? A fascination that is particularly attractive to country birds.

The sun was breaking through the grey gloom of the morning fog, glinting on the harness of the horses, reflecting itself in the shining windows of the shops which were undergoing their process of "dressing." Costers were bringing along their carts of produce fresh from the markets, and street stalls were being set out. In Piccadilly it was brighter still; hansoms going briskly by, few carriages as yet, but several riders on their way to the Park, everywhere a bustle of life—the West-End type of life. Involuntarily Frederick Locker's lines came into my mind:—

"Piccadilly! Shops, palaces, bustle and breeze,  
The whirring of wheels and the murmur of trees;  
By day and by night, whether noisy or stilly,  
Whatever my mood is, I love Piccadilly!"

The neighbourhood of Sloane Square was the direction I sought, a neighbourhood whose quaint landmarks are rapidly being improved away by the modern builder. Here old Chelsea ends; if we want to find Carlyle's Chelsea we must follow the King's Road and work our way towards the Embankment through one of the old-fashioned streets which the sage must often have trod. Even now, in spite of the modern builder, Chelsea appeals to one's sense of the picturesque, and seems to link one with past generations as no other district of London does; the scarlet-coated pensioners belonging to the Royal Hospital meet one at every turn, and the bugle calls from the Military School close by keep the hours of the day as punctually as the chimes of the Greenwich clock. I am happy to think that the "desirable residence" I have come to visit is strictly within this parish, still happier to find that it overlooks the broad court that stretches to either side of the avenue leading to the main gateway of the Pensioner's Hospital.

My "Bachelor Girl" greeted me with surprise; this was a more rapid move than she had quite calculated upon, but I did not think it any the less necessary when I noted the effect that bachelor living was making upon her health. It was plain that another three years of Bohemian life would effectually banish all remnants of youth.

It was close upon the luncheon hour when she was able to set out with me to inspect the house we sought; we were both in a frame of mind that we meant to be critical, anxious not to be "taken-in," and not to let pass any details that might be important afterwards; but as it was our first experience of the kind we very likely looked as nervous as we felt. Looking back after a three years' trial of London life, I think it was a special Providence that gave us an honest man and a kindly one to deal with.

This man—the then tenant—opened the door to us himself, and we briefly explained our errand. We learned that there were others in the field before us, although there was still a possibility of our securing the lease if we could decide quickly. Then we made a free inspection of the premises, the fixtures, etc., and, as far as we were able, of the drainage. Everything seemed satisfactory, and the price of the fixtures, which comprised spring blinds and cords to every window all nearly new, gas brackets, curtain poles and rings, a splendid linen cupboard, and several other things, was a very moderate one. What pleased us even more than all was to find the wall-papers in every room clean and fresh and in excellent taste, the paint too only needed to be washed to come up like new. Some of the ceilings would need to be whitewashed, and the kitchen walls would need fresh distemper, but this was not a great outlay.

The house was a comparatively modern one, that is it belonged to a time when houses were well and solidly, if somewhat plainly built. The doors were thick and fitted easily, heavy window-frames and deep-skirting boards, good pantries and cellars, and marble mantel-pieces in every room, showed sound workmanship. But the charm was its outlook, and with every floor it grew better.

The grey-roofed buildings that reminded one strongly of Hampton Court Palace faced us, the fine trees surrounding them, and the stretch of green grass adding to their quaintness. From the upper windows one saw the columns of the beautiful suspension bridge over the Thames, beyond that the trees of Battersea Park, and a faint outline of Surrey hills. It was a lovely view indeed. At the back too we were open, having a long line of back gardens, with here and there a fine tree growing, and a glimpse of the lime trees of the royal avenue.

"It's worth an effort to secure a house like this," I whispered to my companion, and she assented, as anxious as I was to clinch the bargain.

The lease, we ascertained, had still eighteen years to run; a decided advantage in a neighbourhood of rapidly-increasing rents; it could be taken on transfer and there was no premium to pay.

We explained that in the event of our taking over the lease it would be with the object of sub-letting a part of the house, as we could not afford to occupy the whole of it.

"That is precisely what I do myself," said our cicerone, and gave us substantial evidence as to what his own success had been with such attempts; they amounted to the fact that applications had always been more numerous than he had accommodation for. A rapid calculation showed that it was possible, granting that all circumstances were favourable, to make the house pay well.

"We must think it well over," we said at last, having completed the tour of inspection, and we left, promising to send in our final decision by the end of the week.

Together, in the bachelor's bed-sitting-room, we went over every detail afresh, planning, calculating, weighing the pros and cons of our project.

The little furniture that we could count upon was far from sufficient, although it included such essential things as a fair supply

of house and table linen, plate and cutlery, with some china, still it was a hopeful beginning. Even counting that we let some rooms unfurnished, we must still lay out some twenty or thirty pounds in the purchase of carpets, mats, curtains, beds and tables, to say nothing of stair-rods and other minor items. Besides this we must pay for the fixtures, any law expenses over the transfer of the lease, and we ought to have a quarter's rent ready.

"And we have absolutely no capital!" we groaned. We thought of the alluring advertisements put out by the loan offices, and decided that a loan of fifty pounds, repayable by monthly instalments, was not an impossible thing in view of the success we were going to ensure.

"I think I must first tell Uncle B. all about it," I said. And this was agreed. Uncle B. was a good friend and kind to us girls.

My train left St. Pancras at midnight, so at eleven o'clock I bid good-bye to my bachelor girl.

"I don't half like turning you out of doors at such an hour," she said regretfully.

It did seem eerie truly, but ten times more so to be set down at the lonely country station at 3 A.M., where all was dark, no moon, no lamps, only a few pale stars lighting faintly the black sky. However, I shook myself together and set out as boldly as I could; there was one cloud in the sky that caught a red glow from somewhere, it outlined the tops of the trees, and I thought of the pillar of cloud and fire which guided the Israelites of olden times.

The wind whistled and rustled the branches of the trees and hedgerows, bringing down showers of dead leaves, and startled rabbits shot across my path, making me give a frightened jump—they seemed uncannily big in the dark. But the longest journey comes to an end at last, and, as the last wicket gate closed behind me I heaved a deep sigh of relief; a few moments more and I was inside our own garden and a lamp shone through the window.

A lamp's light, a cosy bit of fire, a singing kettle and a supper (or breakfast) tray soon banished the last trace of nervousness, and I barred the door and went to bed glad and grateful, only pausing to whisper as I passed one door:

"All right, mother, safe and sound," and to hear her answer, "Thank God, dearie."

About one o'clock I awoke to find the sun flooding my room, and someone saying, "Are you ever going to get up to-day?" then remembered the duties that lay before me.

The first thing to be done was clearly to consult Uncle B.; he might think I had been on a fool's errand and my project a wild one; men—especially business men—have but a low opinion of women's capabilities.

But when instead of ousting my scheme and putting it to ridicule, Uncle B. said, "Well done, lassie, I'll stand by you!" I was too glad almost to properly express my gratitude; and especially when he offered to be surety instead of allowing us to have recourse to any loan office whatsoever.

And that very day a telegram went up to London with the fateful words, "Secure house at once without delay," and then, for good or ill, the die was cast.

(To be continued.)



## HOUSEKEEPING IN LONDON.

By A GIRL-PROFESSIONAL.

## PART II.

## NEW BROOMS.

It was New Year, a day in January which was the beginning of a quite new life. I remember that it was a mild day, so mild and so green and promising, it seemed as though spring was already come. I turned away from our garden gate feeling confident that good fortune lay before me, and the peaceful life of the past two years slipped into the background of my life, to be regained never.

My hand was fairly set to the plough now, there could only be one object in view, and to that every energy must bend, no looking back or regretting could avail, however difficult the task might prove to be.

The carrier had taken quite a load of luggage. I was to claim it at the railway station, and like an emigrant I was taking my bed and its furnishings along with me, likewise many household stores of linen, china, silver, and the less valuable, but equally necessary articles that adorn a kitchen shelf. I fear those who were left behind missed me considerably after I had cleared off!

But when my thirteen pieces of luggage were deposited in the middle of the dining-room floor of that desirable but sadly empty residence, and I stood surveying them and the dreary place they were to fill, how very forlorn they looked. However, this was the time for putting on one's rose-coloured spectacles, and fortunately I was able to put them on.

My bachelor-girl put her key in the door and came in with a brisk step even as I stood pondering on my next move.

"Isn't it jolly," she said, "to think this is our house? I feel so proud every time I come in, and do you see I've bought a door-mat?"

So she had, a miserable little bit of a thing that went slipping and sliding along the floor as if protesting against its utter loneliness. I pointed to the door-mat which was in company with various other trifles of a like kind, and my best umbrella, but she was not snubbed.

"Come upstairs and I'll light a fire, then we'll fix up your bed and get supper." So upstairs we went, each carrying as much of the luggage as we could. She was occupying the front room at the very top, and rejoicing in its space and airiness which as yet there was nothing to hinder.

"There's ever such a view from these windows," she went on, "I can see the Surrey hills on a fine day, and always see the sun rise."

I peered out, seeing nothing but blackness and twinkling gas lamps, and shivered. The crackling of the fire and the candle-light was more welcome than the finest view just then. These revealed too that a little table was ready prepared with a cloth and some tea-cups, and a kettle was put on the oil-stove close by. It was not so very forlorn after all.

When our supper was eaten and the fire had burnt cosily we held a review of troops as it were.

We had £50 at our back by Uncle B.'s kindness; I had a £5 note in hand and as much again in the savings bank, and she had her weekly salary of 30s. Twelve pounds of our fund was already spent in paying a lawyer's fee and in the purchase of a carpet, a bed and mattress, some chairs and a couple of little tables for the room in which we sat; and I had previously laid down £1 for some useful pieces of furniture left us by the late tenant. We took comfort in thinking how much that £1 had done; in reality we owed the good man a big debt of gratitude, for he

must have felt for our position and done his utmost to help us, covertly. Who ever heard of twenty shillings purchasing all the furniture for a servant's bedroom, a large-sized chest of drawers besides, of excellent quality and nearly new; two mahogany swing looking-glasses (one very large), three baths, two bedroom chairs, a large square stained table, a fender and odd useful articles besides? Every one of these, however, became of distinct value now.

We could not hope to furnish much of the house now out of our slender store, therefore we must decide how many rooms we could possibly let unfurnished. The drawing-room floor with its two spacious rooms was settled without much deliberation, also the floor above it, with rooms almost as large and a box-room between. We would keep the ground floor and this one at the top, which had three rooms, for our own use, or rather as my plan was to provide a late dinner for our tenants with ourselves, we should require the dining-room for this purpose, of course. The back room on the ground floor we did not absolutely want, but it was put out of the calculation as not being lettable at all.

Then we had the basement, which, when examined by daylight, seemed appallingly extensive, and yet, if I was to provide board, I must retain the kitchen, and indeed I had visions of possibilities for the future which made me loth to think of letting this roomy kitchen. Ought it not to become the "house-place," which I had always claimed a kitchen should be.

It took up the basement at the back of the house, and a scullery with stone floor, sink, etc., was between it and the steps which led up to a small square garden. Level with these steps was a little larder which would delight any housewifely soul. Between the kitchen and the housekeeper's room was a pantry with slate shelves, then came a room into which the morning sun shone full and bright, revealing its capabilities to the full. One side was taken up by cupboards sunk into the walls, well fitted with shelves above and box-room below; on another side stood a fine linen press in polished wood that had been counted among the fixtures which we had to pay for out of our capital. The fireplace here was a corner one, and the window took up another side leaving only one blank wall. In the middle of this room stood the large table before mentioned. It was a capital table, stained legs, its top covered with American cloth, and it was fitted with two large drawers. Very little more furniture would be needed to make this place a cosy sitting-room, after we had remedied its one defect—a disagreeable paper, the only one in the house. But this defect was one that came within the compass of our own remedial powers.

We dubbed this the "breakfast-room" of our mansion; doubtless it would prove to have other purposes to fill as time went on, but that would distinguish it sufficiently well. A wine-cellar and a large coal-cellar opening into the area, which latter had a nice flight of steps and gateway into the street, made up the extent of the basement. After every examination we always came to the satisfactory conclusion that we had secured a bargain; the house was a good house, solidly well-built, well-drained, and well fitted in every way. Its only drawback was the want of a bath-room, but the range was not fitted to supply the necessary water; however, we had no explosions to fear on this account.

A good deal of whitewashing and cleaning

must be done, and that without delay, as the time must not be allowed to go by leaving us unsettled. We were fortunate in meeting with a contractor who was moderate with estimates and reliable, he was himself a young man starting in business and desirous of getting a good reputation. As he undertook plumbing as well as decorating, he ended by becoming our general factotum, although after a couple of years of paying even his small bills we learnt to do much of his work ourselves. It had been very easy to call in Mr. Clay when a leakage broke out or a lock refused to work, but when the half-crowns and three-and-sixpences had to be paid it was another matter. However, he and his men were not long in giving us clean ceilings and walls in these first weeks, and by the time February was in we were clean and trim throughout. I myself worked steadily every day, washing paint and cleaning rooms, and in the evening the bachelor lent a hand at the same employment. Between us we repapered our breakfast-room with a pretty light paper, a "Knowles" remnant; it took us four evenings to do, and when not too closely examined looked very successful. It might not have taken so long, but we had cut the lengths off first, then found the pattern had to be matched, so much piecing was necessitated. All is well that ends well, however, and that sunny paper has given us continual satisfaction since. The frames of the window inside and the skirting board, mantelpieces, etc., I painted with light brown enamel; we bought some olive-green serge for a pair of long curtains and a cover for the table, as the carpet which was to come from the country home was olive-green also. These, with an easy chair, a camp chair, and four small light wood ones, made up the furniture of this apartment. Afterwards it was greatly added to by having my large writing-desk placed here, where it proved so useful, as when a few moments could be snatched from other duties I could come and sit down to writing or reading and yet keep a watch on "the pans," as we generically described our kitchen performing apparatus.

No tenant having yet appeared, as soon as the rough cleaning was through we inserted a tentative advertisement in the *Morning Post*. About eleven o'clock on the morning on which it appeared I was called to open the door to the first applicant, an elderly gentleman and his niece. These duly criticised the rooms upstairs and down, professing themselves very satisfied with everything, "and they would come again."

When they were gone there came a fashionable dame of imposing appearance who almost insisted on being taken in at once with a dog, a parrot, and a nephew to boot! While she was loudly urging her claims, another knock sounded and another lady entered, one who was a distinct contrast in appearance and manner to the second comer. This later applicant had one son, a young man of nineteen, and would require three rooms. She took my fancy and seemed suitable, but alas, the terms were too high. She appeared charmed with the plan I intended adopting with regard to meals, etc., and apparently was the very tenant for us, and went away sorrowfully to think the matter over. Others followed every day of that week, but none seemed better than the first applicant, and as he returned again and yet again, we felt drawn to a decision in his favour, the more so that he offered himself to draw up a written agreement between us, which, if we found it just, was to be signed, and a copy retained by both parties.

While negotiations were pending with him, whom for convenience sake I will call Mr. Charles, I received a visit from a clergyman who had come all the way from Acton in response to our first advertisement. He professed himself so thoroughly satisfied that he would have relieved us of almost the whole of the house, if in return for his generosity we would give him service, board, and all other etceteras. When it entered his reverend mind to inquire into terms, which were to be "by the year," he brusquely declined to pay anything like the price we asked, declaring he might as well take the house himself and have done with it. However, as I stuck to my guns, metaphorically speaking, he was obliged to go at last, though very loth. On the doorstep he turned round, and as a parting shot, intended doubtless to make me regret my exorbitancy, said impressively—

"Yes, I like the house, I like the situation, and I like you; but mark me, you'll never, never get what you're asking."

Let I should give my reader the idea that this dubitable price was really a fancy one, I may here mention that it had been fixed (after due inquiry into prevailing charges) in pro-

portion to that which our predecessor had always obtained, and did not leave a great margin for profit after all expenses were deducted, so that it could not well be reduced. Everyone, even Mr. Charles seemed to think it behoved them to beat down the terms, till at last we began to fear we should gain nothing at all.

When this agreement was given us, his ultimatum was practically this; for the two floors of four rooms he would pay quarterly what was an exact equivalent to the rent of the house and a part of its rates. For this we were to give all service and cooking, but to find no food. These terms were not unfair, and they insured us a home, but left us more houseroom than we needed, yet not such as could very well be let, and gave us no "living," and shattered our dreams of monetary profit; yet, fearful of losing all, we had almost closed with his offer when Providence stepped in and saved us.

The widow lady had returned, and making us a better offer for three rooms only, to include full board for herself and her son, we felt better able to stand and consider. Mr. Charles also seemed to be dallying with

us, and, on pretext of his extreme delicacy of health, was anxious to have the drainage tested by the sanitary authorities. Willing to satisfy him we made application to the vestry, but were assured that unless we could positively complain of a nuisance they were not empowered to make an examination; as there was no nuisance to complain of, and we decidedly objected to have the flooring taken up for his pleasure, negotiations came to an abrupt conclusion and his agreement was as abruptly cancelled.

Then, to her delight and to our relief, Mrs. Norris and her son became our tenants in prospective. She could not enter into possession at once, as her house could not be given up until quarter-day, but compromised matters by paying a fortnight in advance, taking her rooms from the middle of the month. In the meantime she paid us several visits, and we liked her better as we saw more of her. Our minds thus far relieved we were able to consider what other available space we had to spare, and continue our furnishing operations. Also a maid, a domestic angel if such could be found, must be got without delay.

(To be continued.)

## COOKERY RECIPES.

### LEAVES FROM AN OLD BOOK.

**Rice Sauce.**—Wash a quarter of a pound of rice very clean, then put it into a stewpan with one pint of milk, two onions, and some white pepper and mace. Let it stew until it will pulp through a sieve. If it is too thick, put a little milk or cream to it, add a very little nutmeg, and a teaspoonful of salt.

**Rice Cutlets.**—Boil a cupful of rice in milk until quite soft, then pound it in a mortar with a little salt and some white pepper. Pound also separately equal parts of cold veal or chicken. Mix them together with yolk of egg, form them into cutlets, brush them over with yolk of egg and fry them. Send them up with a very piquant sauce made of good stock thickened, and flavoured with lemon juice, lemon pickle, or Harvey's sauce. The cutlets may be sent to table covered with small pickled mushrooms.

**Oxford Sausages.**—One pound of nice pork, and one pound of beef suet chopped finely together; put in half a pound of bread-crumbs, half of the peel of one lemon grated, and some grated nutmeg, six sage leaves, and some finely-chopped thyme, one teaspoonful of pepper, two teaspoonfuls of salt, and a little onion shred very fine. Pack them all closely down in a crock, and when wanted roll them into any shape you please, and fry or boil them over a clear fire. Serve very hot.

**Turnip Soup.**—Peel and slice some turnips, put them into a stew-pan without any water with a slice of ham, a head of celery, a pint of batter, and a piece of bread, also a few onions. Cover it closely, and let it stew slowly. Have a stock of plain soup made, and add it to it by slow degrees as the turnips soften. Then pulp them through a hair sieve, add a little catsup and serve very hot.

**Irish Sally Lunn.**—One pottle of best flour into which two ounces of butter have been rubbed. Beat two eggs, yolks and whites, with two spoonfuls of good beer barm. Wet with as much milk, warmed a little, as will make it into rather a stiff dough.

This will take three hours to rise and one hour to bake.

**A good Cream.**—One quart of very thick cream, such as is used for churning, juice of three lemons, a small quantity of the peel, and sugar to taste. If you like it you can add raspberry jam. Whip it up well and let it stand until the next day, when all the thin part will fall to the bottom of the pan. Then take off the top which should be very thick, and put it in a glass bowl.

**Potato Pudding.**—Take an equal quantity of the flour of roasted potatoes, and the meat of cold fowl, rabbit or hare, well chopped and pounded. Pound them well together with a little butter, season with salt, pepper, and spices. Moisten it with yolks of egg one after the other. When all is well mixed, whip the whites and add them. Roll them in flour into shapes, and then when rolled in bread-crumbs broil or roast them in a Dutch oven. Make a gravy from the bones of the fowl and serve it up.

### SOME INDIAN RECIPES—HULWA.

SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD is of opinion that this favourite confection among the wealthier classes in India was introduced into this country by the soldiers of Alexander the Great. It will be remembered that that monarch carried his conquests as far as Multan in the Punjab—the Pentapotamos of the ancients.

*Hulwa* is supposed to be very strengthening, and Indian *hakeems* recommend it for weakly patients just as an English doctor would order egg-flip and strong beef-tea. The varieties of *hulwa* are numberless, and some of the recipes are trade secrets of the *hulwais* who make the manufacture and sale of it a speciality. I shall give a few recipes to show what the thing is like.

1. **Hubshi Hulwa.**—Steep half a pound of wheat in a pan and let it sprout; when the shoots come out to the length of an inch, dry the sprouted wheat thoroughly in the sun, or by artificial heat, and grind into fine flour. Take two ounces of germinated flour, four ounces of ordinary flour, and a quart of milk,

and simmer over a slow fire till the batter begins to granulate, then take the pan off the fire and gradually add a pound of sugar made into syrup, half a nutmeg, and some sliced pistachio nuts. Then cook again with four ounces of melted butter gradually added to the *hulwa*, stirring it the whole time till it thickens. Pour out into a flat dish to cool. It should be of the consistency of damson cheese, and firm enough to cut in slices.

2. **Sujie Hulwa.**—One pound of Indian *sujie* or semolina, two pounds of sugar, half a pound of butter, cardamom seed. First make the sugar into a syrup, then mix in the *sujie*, and, after a while, the butter melted; when almost done, add the cardamom seed. The *hulwa* must be stirred the whole time; when it begins to get brown, pour into a buttered dish to cool.

3. **Nis-astha Hulwa.**—Steep a pound of *sujie* or semolina in water for a night; next morning strain through a cloth, adding a little more water so as to extract all the starch, which must be set aside in a shallow pan to settle. Pour all the water gently off from the surface, and cook the liquid sediment on a slow fire; add sugar to taste, a tablespoonful of butter, and almonds blanched and split in halves. Flavour with nutmeg or almond essence. Cook till the *hulwa* thickens and is transparent.

4. **Carrot Hulwa.**—One pound of carrots, one pound of sugar, two quarts of milk, two tablespoonfuls of butter. Boil down the milk till it is thick, then add the carrots (unboiled and grated fine), sugar, and butter. Cook till of the proper consistency. Flavour with musk.

5. **Cocoa-nut Hulwa.**—Grate the meat of two large cocoa-nuts, and pour over it a quart of hot water; let it stand for half an hour, then strain through a cloth to extract all the milk. Put this on a slow fire to simmer, then gradually add a breakfastcupful of rice flour, half a pound of sugar made into syrup, and two tablespoonfuls of butter. Stir the *hulwa* till it is thick enough to set.

FENELLA JOHNSTONE.

## HOUSEKEEPING IN LONDON.

By A GIRL-PROFESSIONAL.

## CHAPTER III.

## CLEAN SWEEPING.



N the four weeks which preceded Mrs. Norris's entrance we were busily occupied in buying and fixing our furniture, and in unpacking and placing that which came to us from the country home which by then was being

vacated. Also, as I mentioned before, a domestic angel had to be sought and found. As this latter quest had something of the amusing in it, I may be here allowed to digress a moment from sober details and tell our experience.

As we had planned the house, we had left out of calculation a room for a servant to sleep in. The smallest of the three rooms at the top could only be entered by going through one of the other two, and it seemed as though this put it out of the question for anyone's use but our own. My bed had been fixed here, and our mother was to have the larger room next this, while the bachelor kept the front one. Such a lavish spreading out was of course a folly, but we had yet to learn that. The last-named individual suggested that the maid should have a bed in the kitchen; it was certainly big enough. But against this I set my face like a flint, having far too exalted a conception of my future kitchen to admit of its being so desecrated. The next suggestion was that she should be one to sleep out and come in by the day, and this plan seemed most feasible; so feasible indeed, we felt we had alighted upon a most practical solution to the great vexed servant question in general!

Accordingly we inserted an advertisement in the local weekly paper, which was published every Friday evening. We asked for a "Superior general servant, well accustomed to wait at table." The paper was supposed to appear at seven o'clock; by five there came a smart knock at the door and I opened it to a much-befringed, rather lackadaisical "young lady." We duly questioned her, took her reference and then sent her away, promising to let her hear in the course of a week if her reference proved satisfactory. As she turned away from the door another applicant knocked, and the same performance was gone through again. And so it went on until, tired out, we turned out the lights and went to bed, having interviewed about twenty-seven applicants in all. Indeed, we had had to take turn about in answering the repeated knocks, and at last had curtly informed the later comers that we were "suited," though which to choose from them all we could hardly say. They were not taking specimens, many of them, all the charwomen of the neighbourhood seeming to see their chance in our offer; so we finally decided in favour of the first applicant, especially as the reference she gave was to a house quite near, and, when tested, proved satisfactory.

As I wished to get her into training, it was agreed that she should begin the next Monday morning, and she duly appeared about eight o'clock. Her dress was poor and much patched, but her fringe was more than enough to make up for all deficiencies! My heart was not very light as I set about the task of drilling her, and I was glad there was no critical stranger to note defects. It was not altogether a disappointment when, before the middle of the week, she announced her

intention of leaving, as she had a better offer. We parted company with little regret on either side, I fancy. I paused after that to enjoy freedom for another fortnight, then we advertised again, this time limiting the hours to the afternoon between three and five o'clock.

On this occasion the applicants were much less numerous, but of a decidedly better class; ultimately the choice was left between three, "Florence," "Rose," and "Nellie." Florence was little, fair, and very quick and bright; she seemed capable, but rather small. Rose was a decidedly pretty girl; her manners were taking and her complexion was dazzling. As she inquired what her duties would be, I incidentally mentioned that window-cleaning was not one of them, as I employed a man for that purpose; whereat she said, very demurely, there was "a very nice man, a friend of mine, who cleans windows beautifully, ma'am." I suspected that it was possible he might do other things as well, and mentally decided against this attractive Rose.

The last one of the three seemed a girl of quite another order, tall, rather plain-looking, very reserved and short in speech, and somewhat ashamed of taking a situation at all. She said she was an orphan, but wished to keep a home for her brother, and must get some work to do in the day. Asked if she was used to housework, she informed us she was "thoroughly domesticated and could do everything." As she stood high above me, it seemed to me that she might soon tower over me, so I somewhat reluctantly informed this paragon that her services might find a better market elsewhere, and decided in favour of the little maid who came first. Fortunately for me this proved a happy choice. Though small in body she had a fine spirit, and there was nothing she resented more than a hint that her work might be better done. Under her care our door knocker shone like gold, and the doorstep was a model to its neighbours, while we laughingly declared we were tempted to dine off the kitchen floor it was kept so white. She was deft in waiting also, and altogether proved as nearly like the treasure we sought as we could have wished. The one drawback was that it was against her parents' wish that she was out in service at all, and they gave her no peace when she reached home at night, naturally somewhat tired after her day's work and an hour's brisk walking. But she was a plucky little soul and determined to have her own way; had not circumstances turned against her she would probably be with us still.

When she had been with us four months her mother met with an accident which broke her leg in two places; she was taken to the hospital, operated upon, and all but died under the treatment. For this Florence was greatly blamed, and her family persecuted her so that at last she was compelled to give in, and I was left to "suit myself" again.

After this came a long unsettled period; they came and they went; three months was the longest "stay" we had, and I was beginning to feel life very wearying with its continual fret and friction. Some came so late in the morning I had to make all the fires and get breakfast before they appeared, and those who came the latest were the earliest to go away at night. At last, after many trials, we concluded that the servant problem was not solved, and as the opportunity of a vacant room came we decided to go on the ordinary lines and sought at a registry office for a general to "sleep in."

As the one who eventually arrived to fill the post stayed in it a year with varying success, I

will hark back to the beginning and recount our furnishing experiences.

We had three large pieces of furniture coming from home: a chamber organ, an airtight bookcase-secretaire and my own secretaire, which was the case of an old-fashioned cottage pianoforte transformed. This latter went downstairs to the breakfast-room where its use was most required, and it made a handsome object to look at. The other secretaire was placed in the back dining-room; it was too large and heavy to be in the front, and our thought was to make a sort of reading-room of the smaller one eventually. The organ we placed cornerwise to the left of the dining-room window, where it looked handsome and was not in the way of the chairs or table. Then the opposite corner cried out to be filled. We had two shelves with embroidered borders which had fitted into recesses in a former home. These placed to form a cosy corner looked very well, as their colours went with the wall-paper, and we got a carpenter to come in and fix them with brackets. They held some of our best books and a bit of china. Underneath these we placed our large morocco-covered armchair, a small octagonal table to hold a palm stood in front of the window, and afterwards a nice bamboo-table took up its position between the armchair and the fire-place.

We had no fender or fire-irons, and when we came to calculate the price of these we found it would cost us but very little more to lay down tiles and a curb. Accordingly Mr. Clay was requisitioned again, and he laid a hearth of small tiles of a deep yellow tint with a plain black curb, and the effect was good in the extreme. For the back room we felt we were not warranted in incurring the expense until necessary, so contented ourselves with placing a similar curb there and having the hearth nicely whitened.

In the drawing-room no change was needed, Mrs. Norris having fenders for every fireplace. This good lady was rather anxious we should take in all her goods and chattels, as she was resigning an eight-roomed house and was loth to store any of her furniture. But we held off, debating in our minds the wisdom of so doing, as she owned they wouldn't sell for much. Shabby second-rate things would not accord with our ideal of fitness. However, considering the slenderness of our means and the many necessary expenses, we were glad enough to take in her dining-table, a solid mahogany one, and a flat-topped cupboard which served as a sideboard *pro tem.*, and to these she afterwards added two leather-seated chairs, much worn.

Carpets and curtains were our first and principal outlay, entailing many measurements and much thought before we finally decided where to go and what to buy. For the dining-room, with its paper combining yellow, green, and grey, we decided that green of a soft quiet shade would be the most harmonious colour, and brown in furniture and ornaments. Before going to the larger furnishing warehouses we took a look about us, and in going up Regent Street saw the very carpets for our purpose in the window belonging to a firm whose name is incontestable where good taste is concerned. So we ventured in here. It was the manager himself who waited upon us, and he entered very kindly into our plans and gave us very helpful hints. We ended in purchasing a Roman carpet for the dining-room, self-coloured and reversible, of a soft, green shade, and sufficient serge of splendid quality to make a pair of curtains and a table-cover, with

ball-fringe and galloon to match. These we made up ourselves. The prices quoted here were rather lower than above those in the catalogues we had consulted, so we asked to look at stair-carpeting also.

"Roman" was strongly recommended for this, but it was too costly, as we required close upon forty yards and stair-rod to boot. So we came back to a plain felt which had been our first thought, and in the best qualities found an exceedingly pretty shade of chestnut brown which would suit our walls and contrast well with the white painted sides of the staircase. It was agreed that a man should be sent to take exact measurements for these and for the brown paper which was to go underneath before this was cut off the piece, that there might be no mistake, and the same man was to lay them down for us when we were ready.

After this we had the distractingly important purchase to make of a new dinner-service, and also some tumblers and water-jug, and an umbrella-stand for the hall which we wished to be in the form of a terra-cotta jar. For these we betook ourselves to the china department. The final result was the selection of a complete service of seventy-two pieces of the "York" design; may-blossom and roses in grey on a white ground and a fine gold edge.

It was somewhat thin and very pretty in shape, but would not prove the more breakable on that account; the joy I had in unpacking and arranging that dinner-service no one knew; to this day it is the pride of my heart, so dainty does it look, and it has suffered but slight damages, so far all repairable.

Our umbrella jar of glazed brown clay we found at an art pottery dealer's in the Queen's Road. When all these purchases came in we began to realise the joys of possession, tempered alas, by the realisation of how little money remained in the fund. Some Mungh mats for the hall we bought at two shillings each, and very excellent we found them in wear and in appearance. Here also we picked up a bright Jap rug for our breakfast-room. We had two or three brown sheepskin mats for the bedroom doors among our home goods; odd pieces of carpet also, all of which found a happy resting-place somewhere, as this mansion took a deal of filling.

The home things arrived about a week before Mrs. Norris came in, and we had a busy time in placing them and arranging all our belongings. How homely a touch they gave, seeming to breathe a spirit of comfort into the barrenness, almost like the presence of mother herself. There were a few pictures, a fine set of engravings for the dining-room walls, my

own drawings, and a few older odd ones, some ornaments and clocks. Of clocks indeed we had a grand supply, very nice ones too; we had been noted for timepieces in the olden days, but I fear we were not any the better timekeepers for all that, at least we of the younger generation were not!

One of the small cases contained jam, a part of the supply which we had made during summer days. I remember well how nearly I broke down when I opened that case. Wedged in between the jars were all sorts of odd little things such as only mother could have thought of putting in, and as I came across these fresh evidences of her loving care the tears streamed down my face. "There is no one in all the world like my mother!" I cried. One of the jars, a tall, glass one, holding some five or six pounds of jam, had broken into splinters, but the jam itself remained in a solid column not a bit the worse! With these jars the larder shelves looked quite "fit," as in addition I had a small stock of orange marmalade made in one of the spare weeks while we were waiting for the tenant to come.

We were quite straight, delightfully straight by the time Mrs. Norris made her entry, but the manner of that I must tell in another chapter.

L. H. YATES.



## HINTS ON HOME NURSING.

### EYE DROPS.

If you are told to drop in any application to the eye, to be of any use it must have access to the surface of the eye-ball. The patient should sit down with the head held well back, the lids should be separated widely with the fingers, and the drop placed in the outer corner of the eye and allowed to run over the surface of the eye-ball. One drop of castor oil or olive oil is very soothing if an eye has been inflamed by something flying into it.

In bathing the eye where there is any discharge, care should be taken to see that all rags or pieces of wool used are at once burnt, as discharge from the eye is frequently of an infectious nature.

### INFECTIOUS DISEASES

are those which are carried from one person to another by the breath or emanations of the person. Isolation from the rest of the household is necessary at once to prevent the further spread of disease. For this reason a room at the top of the house is best if possible. Remove all unnecessary furniture, carpets and curtains, and hang a sheet outside the door, large enough to cover all the crevices of the door when open, and to allow of a few inches to lie upon the floor. The sheet must be kept wet with carbolic, one in forty, or some other disinfectant. The easiest way to keep it wet is either to syringe the sheet with the fluid or to have one corner of the sheet kept lying in a basin filled with the

disinfectant, the whole of the sheet will be then kept wet by the moisture being drawn up by capillary attraction. Visitors should not, on any account, be allowed to enter the infected room, and the nurse should be kept away from the rest of the household as much as possible, and only mix with others after she has used some disinfectant for her person and changed her dress. A cotton washing dress should always be worn in the infected room, and calico sleeves drawn over the dress are an extra safeguard; the sleeves of an old night-dress may be used for this purpose, and taken off when the nurse leaves the infected room. The floor of the room should be wiped over with a cloth damped with some disinfectant. All linen or clothes for the wash should be soaked in some kind of disinfectant before leaving the room. All utensils, jugs, etc., must be rinsed in disinfectant solution before leaving the room, and should be kept for the patient's use alone. The nurse should on no account use the same things as the infected person, and should always stand to windward of her patient when attending to her, and must be careful not to take the patient's breath.

### MEASLES

is infectious some days before the rash comes out, and therefore is more difficult to isolate in time to prevent the spread of disease; the same precautions should be taken as to isolation. Avoid trying the eyes with too much light at first, and be careful as to keeping the

person in a room at an even temperature, as the lungs are easily affected by any cold in a person who has measles.

### AFTER INFECTION IS OVER

the room must be thoroughly disinfected. If you do this disinfecting yourself, sulphur gas is best to use to disinfect an uninhabited room. Paste up all crevices of doors, windows, fireplace, etc., with paper. Put one pound and a half of sulphur in an old iron saucepan, which should be stood for safety on bricks placed in a pan of water, the sulphur should be lighted (a little methylated spirit poured on it makes it light more easily), the person should then at once leave the room, pasting up the door by which he has made his exit, on the outside. The room should be then left to fumigate for twenty-four hours, after which it should have a thorough airing; all bedding and blankets, etc., must be sent to be baked, and the room cleaned, some disinfectant being used in the water. All drawers, cupboards, etc., should be left open during the fumigation.

### IN CONVULSIONS,

a common occurrence with children when teething, remove all tight clothing, and if convulsions continue, place the child in a hot bath for ten or fifteen minutes, or until movements cease. Then put to bed in a hot blanket. Give an aperient, such as one grain of grey powder.

## HOUSEKEEPING IN LONDON.

By "A GIRL PROFESSIONAL."

## CHAPTER IV.

## SHAKING INTO PLACE.



N experienced landlady would have found cause for amusement in our state of order and expectancy. Upstairs, all was spotless, downstairs equally so, mistress and maid both on the alert; this was well in theory, but it did not dispose us to give a charitable reception to such a load of dilapidated chattels

as the van brought to our door.

About one o'clock we were called to witness the arrival of Mrs. Norris's belongings; she herself did not turn up until the evening, by which time she knew they would all be inside the door—a wise proceeding on her part—as we had been sorely tempted to break our contract and refuse their admission. The first thing to be taken down and brought into our hall was a perambulator. This surely was an affront, and could never be allowed to remain. But hardly less damaging to reputation was the array of crocks and saucers, all dilapidated, all dirty and all unwelcome. Instead of weeding out and retaining simply the furniture necessary for the three rooms she was to occupy; Mrs. Norris had let her whole household be swept into the van, relying upon our ignorance and lack of many useful things for a willing reception of all. We were not prepared for such an onslaught as this, and at first looked on in helpless dismay as from her own rooms the goods gradually overflowed to the rest of the house, but dismay speedily gave place to natural indignation. However it was no use to make words with the men who were not responsible, nor was it wise to show one's disgust too plainly when we had to meet the owner of these respectable chattels at dinner an hour later, so we made as much clearance as was possible and swallowed our wrath. The next morning, however, I insisted that a buyer of second-hand furniture should be sent for, and the bulk of these superfluous articles got rid of. Mrs. Norris protested. She was sure there were many things that would prove useful, and that cost a good deal to buy; but I held to my point. Then she took shelter in the chaotic confusion upstairs. How was it possible for her to go in search of a probable purchaser when there was so much to be done? So I went downstairs again.

"Florence, would you go and find a man to fetch away this rubbish?" I asked.

"Ay, that I will, miss, and be glad!" the maid answered promptly.

In the course of an hour she returned with a respectable man in her wake, and a hand-cart also. Then Mrs. Norris was requested to come down and make her own bargain with him. Very reluctantly she came, and with most unwilling hand, sorted the miscellaneous collection.

I stood on one side with folded arms and stern countenance, the bachelor doing the same; Florence did her best to get on with her accustomed work and keep a grave face.

Mrs. Norris looked from one to the other in faint hope of finding mercy, but there was none; she suggested to me that this or that would be very useful, but I would take no hint. Finally everything was swept away, and the sum total realised by their quondam possessor was exactly three-and-sixpence! This she showed me with something like tears in her eyes, but, so virtuous is youth, even then I did not relent.

After this, however, we gradually shook down into our respective places; the poor lady got into order by slow degrees, leaving the bulk of the work to be done by her son when he returned in the evening. The patience and kindness which the young man showed speedily won our respect, and we liked him thoroughly. He was gentlemanly and courteous towards us, and we felt all the safer for having a man in the house. When Mrs. Norris found she had absolutely no housekeeping duties to tax her, that she could rise to find her sitting-room with a bright fire and breakfast ready, and could saunter out as soon as the latter was eaten, knowing that a tempting dinner would await her return, she showed us her sunny side, and was the charming creature we had been led to expect. Her good points were those of education; she was clever in conversation, a fair linguist, well-bred in manner and not ungenerous; but she was fond of ease and luxury, a bad money-changer, and very far short of the standard of motherhood which we had always had before us—yet her children were devoted to her.

When Mrs. Norris was finally settled in, and our household restored to order and regular routine, we had leisure to consider the desirability of finding another tenant. Our mother came to us and took possession of the little bedroom upstairs, and downstairs she found many a gap to fill and duties such as only such well-trained and experienced eyes could see. We felt great comfort in having her to turn to in any perplexity, and she on her side seemed to feel it behoved her to stand up for our rights, somewhat to the disgust of Mrs. Norris, as the latter found her landladies grow less malleable as time went on.

We had one bedroom and small sitting-room to let, both furnished; for these we must find an occupant, or very soon find our expenses far exceeding our income.

The first quarter's rent and expenses had been paid chiefly from Uncle B.'s money; the housekeeping now required nearly the whole of Mrs. Norris's payments, leaving us to face the next quarter's rent with not much besides our own slender earnings, so another tenant was an imperative necessity. While on the look-out for a permanent inmate we had a temporary occupant in the person of an acquaintance of Mrs. Norris, a young German student. He was with us three weeks, but as he required only a bedroom and was able to consume a full equivalent in food for the amount he paid in cash, he could hardly be called profitable, and accordingly we had to intimate that his room would be required by a certain date.

One fine morning at the end of May I happened to answer the door myself, and opened it to find a dapper little lady on the step.

"You have some rooms to let, I believe?" she asked.

I answered in the affirmative and invited her to inspect them. She was exceedingly taken with them and with the look of the

house, but as she was seeking for her sister as well as herself, two bedrooms and a sitting-room were necessary.

I reflected while she chatted, and concluded that as it was imperative we should have someone directly, and this seemed to promise a better income than we had hoped for, it might be well to see if we could not come to an arrangement.

I suggested that it might be possible for us to put ourselves into smaller compass upstairs and set at liberty the room which our mother occupied. This met with approval, and it was agreed that if found practicable the two sisters should come and give their final decision the next day. When this was mentioned to mother she was only too glad to give up anything which would help us, and we arranged for her to have the smaller room, while I flitted into and shared the bachelor's big apartment.

The two sisters came punctually at the time named the next day; the elder I found somewhat imperious in manner and very decisive. They took some measurements and confabulated together as to the fitting in of their belongings, and then, to my relief, the elder sat down at the open secretaire and wrote, "I take your three rooms from the First of June, signed D. G."

Short, sharp, and business-like; but I liked her on the spot. They were very well-dressed and dainty, evidently with a comfortable income, but also careful to exact the fullest value for every penny; this was my first impression, and it never changed.

They had lowered our terms by a few shillings, and we had given in rather than lose good tenants; but after experience showed this was a mistake, for having gained one point they were always on the watch to gain in other points, and thus made encroachments which sometimes grew to be trespasses.

For the practical help of other beginners, situated as we then were, I may here lay stress on what is a main point to bear in mind, and that is that all regulations, limitations and expectations should be explained in detail at first, or before a tenant enters. What they agree to then they will abide by, but what is left unexplained is apt to become very much a matter of personal convenience afterwards. In these matters, as in all our life's training, we find it true that "experience keeps a good school, but the school-fees are very high."

It does violence to that beautiful faith in human nature that we would all fain keep, when we are forced by degrees to reluctantly confess that ideals will not work, or at any rate they will not work out as we hoped. As the *raison d'être* of writing this almost too personal history is to show the practicabilities, as well as the besetting difficulties, that lie about such a scheme as we were striving to develop, I have been explicit in detailing actual occurrences. From the actual I must now pass on to more general description, but in doing this I would not imply that the ideal was swamped or lost to view—far from it.

After several years' trial the belief still remains that it is and should be possible for ladies to take up the *rôle* of landladies (and with that *rôle* the rendering of personal service from one to another) and yet retain their own dignity and ladyhood undiminished. Nay more, that from the daily contact with others, and the many pleasant helps that one party may give to another, a brightening and helpful influence may arise. But I would not disguise the undoubted fact that it takes a

lady to appreciate another lady; and if by daily wear the gold should rub off, showing a clay foundation, there are sure to result frictions, jars, and a variety of small crosses that are as hard to carry as bigger ones.

Where the party is restricted in numbers, as ours was, these frictions become all the more noticeable. A larger household is in some senses easier to manage, in that a balance can be preserved and jealousies are not so manifest.

A club of twenty or thirty members, with rules applying to all, and agreed to by all, would be less troublesome to deal with than the comparatively small household of two parties, often opposing factions.

If we are honest with ourselves we are forced to admit that all these difficulties (and particularly the factions) are most pronounced when the members are all of one sex—our own sex.

As a sex we lack breadth of view, and lacking this we magnify details. Taking our cue from one another, we do not always wait to see whether the example was itself a just one.

A mixed household is far better in many respects than one confined to members of one sex only. We soon learn why it was that "the solitary" were "set in families" when we come to deal with them on a wider scale.

(To be continued.)

INFANT'S HEM-STITCHED SHIRT.

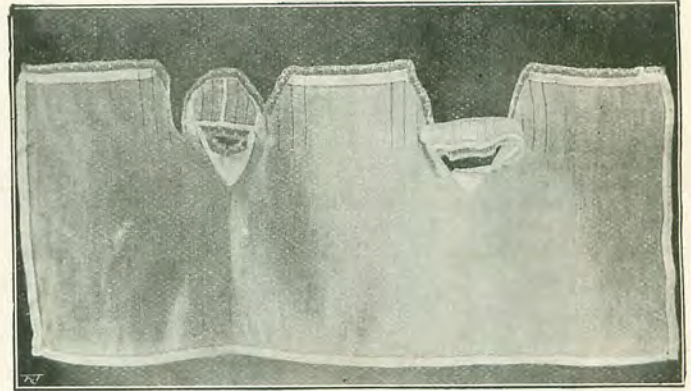
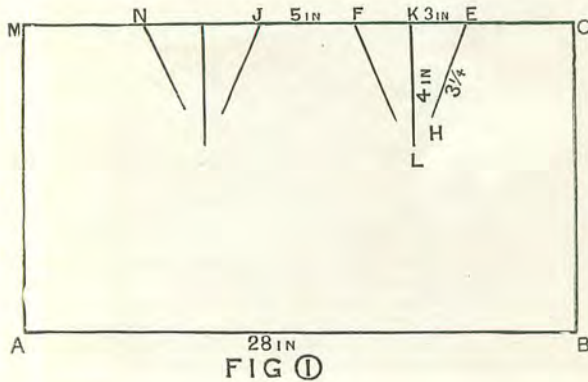
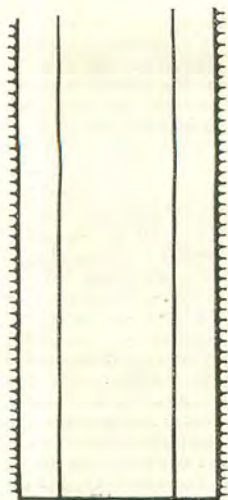


FIG. 3.



A FIG 2

Now, "girls," bring out your finest needles and No. 100 cotton, combine them with plenty of patience and nimble fingers, and produce the result to be seen in Fig. 3 for some favoured morsel of humanity.

I take for granted that you know how to hem-stitch, if not, ask a friend to show you, it is very simple. For materials you will require three-eighths of a yard of fine Irish lawn at about three shillings and sixpence a yard, and two yards of narrow Valenciennes lace at about eight-

pence. The first thing to be done is to make the cut edges of the lawn absolutely even by drawing a thread. You will probably find the lawn is about thirty-three inches wide; the

piece for the shirt requires to be twenty-nine inches, so a strip must be cut off, by the thread of course; take care of it, it will be wanted for gussets.

The preparing and drawing of threads is always somewhat tedious; in all work of hem-stitching it seems to take nearly as long as the work itself, but do not grudge the trouble, it is absolutely essential, and the whole beauty of your result depends upon it.

The measurements given in Fig. 1 are after the hems are folded, so the threads from A to B, B to C, and A to M must be drawn one inch from the edge; it will be found sufficient to draw from four to six threads. Turn in the extreme edges about the eighth of an inch, and fold the hems (they will be about three-eighths of an inch wide) carefully over to the drawn line, tacking them with fine cotton.

Hem-stitch these three sides, but do not work quite up to C and M.

When attacking the top of the wee garment, be careful to notice on which side the hems should be of those parts that fold over.

Now draw the threads for the lines of perpendicular stitching, half an inch apart, in the flaps, as seen in Fig. 3. Experience taught me the wisdom of doing every bit possible before cutting the flaps and sleeves, as the edges are liable to stretch and fray. Having finished these twelve perpendicular lines, cut down the flaps, Fig. 1, E to H, draw

the threads, turn down, tack, and hem-stitch from M to N, J to F, and E to C. Cut down by the thread from K to L, place F and E together, one over the other, and make a hem-stitched seam, as shown in Fig. 3; these directions, of course, apply to both sleeves. Then do the perpendicular rows of stitching on top of sleeves.

Fig. 2 shows the base of the arm-hole, where it requires to be cut horizontally to allow of the hems lying flat; these hems are only a quarter of an inch wide. A gusset made of a piece of lawn an inch and a half square is folded and inserted under the arm, the point coming at A, Fig. 2; the edges must be hemmed until they reach the hem-stitching, where they are worked into it, as seen in Fig. 3.

This somewhat large gusset was suggested by a mother of experience. It is a very great improvement on the usual tiny arrangement. In putting on the lace, the edges cut on the cross must be "rolled" between finger and thumb.

Have the shirt washed, ironed, and prettily folded before presenting it, and then do not be surprised if you are told "it is so beautiful, it must be worn outside."

"COUSIN LIL."

NOTE.—Correct position of A in Fig. 2—half an inch below drawing.

HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

WHAT is taken for "housemaid's knee" is often a simple dislocation of the knee-cap which can easily be replaced by a surgeon or bone-setter; but if wrongly treated may develop into serious mischief. It is often caused by the servant kneeling on the edge of a step when cleaning.

TEA-LEAVES that are to be used for sweeping carpets should first be placed in a colander and clean water run through them several times; they should then be used when damp but not wet. Tea-leaves should not be used

on a carpet with a deep pile. On wet and cold days, when scrubbing of boards cannot be done, a room is wonderfully freshened up by sweeping the boards with damp tea-leaves.

BLACKBEETLES rarely come where a floor is kept well swept and where no food is left about.

ONE of the best ways of cooking dried haddock is to boil it in water in a large frying pan. When done, drain off the water and serve hot with a little butter on the top.

To preserve cut blossoms of hard wood trees or shrubs, such as lilac, laburnum, apple blossom, roses or hydrangeas, the stalks should be stripped of the bark a good way up at the ends so that they can suck up the water, and the water in which they are placed should be warm.

A PIECE of perforated wire nailed on outside a larder or pantry window is very useful, for it can then be left open all night with no fear of cats getting in to steal the food. Larger thieves can be kept out by a strong iron bar inside.



The great blood-vessel that supplies the scalp, namely, the temporal artery, lies against the projection of the temple. If you force a stiff hat on your head this artery gets compressed between the hat rim and the bone. More than this, the veins are also pressed upon, so that the blood supply to the scalp is seriously interfered with. The result is that the hair is not properly nourished; it becomes brittle, or very thin and soft; the hair follicles strike work, and baldness ultimately ensues.

The fact that some men who wear top-hats become bald while others do not, though at first apparently contradictory, the above statement really goes far to prove it. Those

whose heads are broad—that is, those in whom the temples are prominent and the temporal artery exposed—are the more likely to become bald. The fact that baldness is common amongst the “top-hat-wearing” class and comparatively rare among “cap wearers” also favours this view. There is another point that I have often observed among gentlemen who are not bald; that is, that there is often a distinct line of demarcation in the hair corresponding with the rim of the hat. Above this line the hair is soft and thin, below it is thick and hard.

When I went out yesterday afternoon I saw a woman with a veil of a most remarkable pattern. It represented a web spun by a

spider. Two flies and a something—I do not know what—were represented on that part of the veil that covered her right cheek, whilst an enormous spider quite concealed her left eye. Now this may be a great novelty, and perhaps an object of admiration and envy for some of her friends; but, as far as I am concerned, it was the ugliest thing I ever saw disfigure a lady's face. But it is not for its beauty or ugliness that I call attention to it, but because the great spider over one eye is injurious to the sight. It is often stated that veils are bad for the eye-sight, but this is not the case, a simple, slight veil doing no harm to the sight if it is not worn too close to the face.

## HOUSEKEEPING IN LONDON.

By “A GIRL PROFESSIONAL.”

### CHAPTER V.

TURNINGS AND SEAMS.



It may pass by a few months, as, though full of many changing and varied experiences there were few of them that need to be recorded here. The most noteworthy of these changes was the bachelor's loss of her

post, which happened in the early part of that summer, and so cut off one of the few resources we had, and made it more than ever necessary to bend every energy to maintaining the house and keeping its inmates. Feeling how greatly we depended on it for the chief part of our income, I endured many smaller trials and put up with a good many things of which no one else knew; it was worth something if only to preserve a home, at least until other ways and means of maintaining one should open out.

There was no thought of taking holidays that year; a Saturday to Monday trip to the seaside had to suffice; indeed we had no opportunity for holiday-making, as early in August Mrs. Norris received the visit of another son, a student in Germany, and his “visit” was prolonged until the beginning of October. He added considerably to the work of the house, and only very reluctantly could be persuaded to add to its funds, indeed, if he had not been cornered and forced to pay up, we should have been left with nothing but the doubtful honour of having entertained a defaulter—unawares.

The other ladies were both away for a short time, and their board money was accordingly stopped; but as our receipts had been fairly regular up to this time we were able to lay in a few tons of coal in August before the prices were raised. It gave one a certain feeling of security to feel that the coal cellar was so well stocked, and it was fortunate for us we had it so, as the winter proved to be exceptionally severe. After Christmas the weather set in for keen frost that intensified every day. One after another the pipes were attacked, and the water-supply gave out as the main became frozen in the road. We were compelled to have our water brought by cans from the stand-pipe in the road at stated hours in the day, employing a poor man for the purpose to whom the few pence he could earn in this way represented his whole living. There was much distress abroad in those weeks, and if we could keep a warm fireside and a well-supplied table, we had cause

to be thankful. We were well into the middle of February before the frost broke up, and it was March before our pipes were restored to use again; like every other householder we had a plumber's bill to pay, but our damages were less serious than might have been expected.

To add to the difficulties of this time, which now, as we look back upon it seems like a nightmare, the influenza claimed us amongst a host of other victims. Mrs. Norris was the first to be laid up, and she kept her bed for a fortnight, and her room for nearly a month; requiring our constant attention by day and her son's devotion in the evening.

She was barely convalescent when our mother was attacked and took to her bed, and the very next day I succumbed myself. The bachelor, who had a temporary appointment in the North of London, was compelled to give it up and act as nurse and housekeeper, and for convenience sake mother and I shared one room and one fire. Our doctor was called in and seemed to find it rather a joke at first and chaffed us on our miniature hospital. But by the third day it was no joking matter as far as our mother was concerned, and I was compelled to leave my bed and take up the reins again, as she required constant watching and care. When the crisis was past there followed seven long weeks of anxiety; such very slow progress was made, and what was gained one day seemed to be lost the next. It was close upon Easter before she was able to come downstairs again, and so soon as she was fit she left us to pay a long visit into the country; this, happily, putting the final touches to the cure. As I accompanied her down and stayed a few days, the rest and change completely restored me also.

After this long and trying winter the house needed a thorough turning out and spring-cleaning. We were fortunate in having met with a woman for day-work who proved a veritable treasure, and has been a stay ever since. We called her *La dame Blanche*—a play on her proper name of White—and she truly worked like a good fairy, quietly, unobtrusively, and conscientiously. Under her care we speedily regained spotlessness, and when the summer sunshine came were able to enjoy something of a respite, especially as Mrs. Morris departed with her married daughter and children to a house by the sea, leaving us her son-in-law as her representative, and he, being most frequently out in the daytime was less trouble than herself. We rather enjoyed the three months of his stay with us; he was very good company at table, and made a better balance of parties, as young Mr. Norris brightened up when supported by one of his own sex, and the other ladies, though professing to think Dr. A. a humbug, were on

their mettle with him, so to speak, and exerted themselves to be as charming as they could. We ourselves, as lookers-on at the play, often found it highly diverting.

Both gentlemen took their holidays in the month of August, and as the ladies also happened to be away by the middle of the month I was persuaded to join my brother's family at Deal, and spent with them a very happy and restful week. The bachelor kept house meanwhile, and at the beginning of September went down to the country to spend a few days there; thus we both had a break in the routine of daily life, a much needed one too.

With mother's return a new difficulty arose. Having a servant to sleep indoors had, of course, taken off one of the bedrooms on the top floor; we did not wish to lose the maid as she suited us very well and wished to stay; but mother's comfort must be studied too.

Mrs. Norris had been very trying lately, and had taken advantage of us in so many ways, that as we happened then to make acquaintance with another possible tenant—through a mutual friend—we thought seriously about giving her notice to quit.

The new applicant was a single lady of very uncertain age but of good family, a family of whom we had had some previous knowledge, and when she finally agreed to terms and settled to come to us we approached the difficult task of telling Mrs. Norris to go. I should explain that by taking one tenant in place of two our difficulty about rooms became settled, as the two sisters moved on to one floor, and left us the top of the house entirely to ourselves; as this arrangement was also made with but a slight reduction of terms in the case of the new-comer, it was apparently a very wise move. I say apparently, for alas, it proved a very mistaken move and one we had sincerely to regret ere we were much older. But though wisdom comes to all with experience, we can only pursue what seems the best course at the time.

Mrs. Norris was much aggrieved and taken aback by such an unexpected move, she professed herself utterly *désolée*, as indeed I truly believe she was. Doubtless she foresaw that her easy times were drawing to an end, as she might not meet with a home so much to her mind again; moreover, having been born and bred in this neighbourhood she had a genuine affection for it. When she finally departed it was with tears in her eyes, but after we had got rid of the last of those debatable goods of hers and swept up the *débris*, we on our side heaved a deep sigh of relief. Altogether there could not be much regret for us to feel.

The new inmate began to prove less eager to come after the coast was clear; she was touched

with the craze of æstheticism, and found it imperative to have the walls repapered and the floors repolished, etc. As the paper was still good and little damaged we naturally objected to removing it, whereupon she consented to do it at her own expense, and chose *her own colour and design*. All her furniture was new, much of it costly, and she ransacked the warehouses in search of it, while we had to endure any amount of bell-ringing and carrying in and out of goods, besides the needless trouble and expense of having workmen indoors for nearly a fortnight. However, by the end of the month she was safely established and we had got somewhat used to her ways. With regard to these, if Mrs. Norris had been trying this lady was doubly so, and expected attention during every waking hour of the day. The maid was nearly run off her legs, and I could hardly secure an hour to myself many days. Still, as her payments were good and she was more profitable on the whole, we might have endured her idiosyncracies hoping to run more easily as we grew accustomed to the effort, had she not proved treacherous as well. Full of freaks and fancies she pined for incessant change, and quickly wearied when she found herself one of a quiet and regular household.

In the first weeks of her stay a grown-up niece paid her a visit, and together they interviewed a physician on her niece's account. The latter, apparently a most robust young woman, was supposed to be in the preliminary stage of consumption, and a voyage out to Australia and back was advised for her, to be taken without delay.

This suited the tastes of both ladies exactly, and they were in high spirits at the prospect, losing no time in booking their passages as they wished to travel in one particular ship. That she was leaving us in the lurch and breaking up her newly-made home seemed of no consequence to Miss A. She was careful to give her due notice when paying her monthly rent, so that we might not legally claim more than that from her, but to our appeal for compensation for the expense and the trouble to which we had been put on her account, she was completely deaf. Unfortunately we had no written contract to bind her, and so could not force her in any way.

In another month she was gone, her furniture also, and we were once more left with empty rooms, that, too, at a time of the year when very few people care to move, and though we advertised and answered advertisements, and put up a card over the door in orthodox fashion, yet we had four long months with those empty rooms haunting us. Not that there were no applicants for them, but very few who came found them suitable. This was a hard time and a difficult lesson to learn. We were sorely put to it to make our expenses and meet rent and rates with the small income which was ours, and it seemed but little short of miraculous that we did meet and fulfil them as they fell due. No doubt it was a lesson we needed to learn, and the forty pounds it cost us was perhaps not too dearly paid, but it was a hard time indeed, scarcely less hard, though in a different way, than the preceding winter had been.

It is, however, a long lane that has no turning, and in April we received an application that was almost a demand for these two rooms. The applicant was an elderly lady, tall, imposing, by no means handsome, but evidently not ungenerous and seemingly well-to-do. She was so charmed with her first inspection of the rooms that she came again the following day bringing with her a relative to give an opinion. With the latter, a truly bewitching old lady, we fell in love at first sight, and had she been the negotiating party she might have carried everything before her. We were much amused with her advice as she gave it; her friend was somewhat against joining us at table for dinner, seeming to prefer the idea of having her meals alone.

"No, my dear," the elder lady said, emphasising her words with her fingers; "no, it will do you good to have company and conversation, better for you in every way."

Within a week this lady was housed with a quantity of what she called "charming" furniture; it seemed that whatever she took it into her head to do she would do, in spite of every difficulty, so that she had paid heavily to clear out of her flat without staying out her notice, and she also paid us a month's rent in advance on the day she arrived. Being quite unused to doing anything for herself, she sat in the midst of a chaos of chairs and tables

for several days, waiting for workmen to come and fix up her belongings. We offered our help many times, and sent the maid to her assistance, but it was of little use, nothing could be done right, so she was left to bring order out of the scene as she could. When tired of bewailing the unfortunate circumstances that obliged her to do without a maid of her own, she set to, and finally emerged triumphant over her difficulties, when she invited us all to pay her a visit of inspection. Certainly there was some praise due to her, for the quantity of china and bric-a-brac was exceedingly well arranged, and the room looked well and handsomely furnished. Her bedroom was not so satisfactory, indeed that bedroom has always been more or less of an eyesore, and seems as though it always will be. A good many chests and large pieces of furniture had had to be stored, other things had been sold, and she had given us the use of many things that were really helpful, notably a servant's wardrobe, which being nearly new we put into our own bedroom, and there was a nice linoleum which just covered the kitchen floor; for these we felt duly grateful and gladly found her storage room for a quantity of smaller articles.

When she was at ease in her mind and satisfied that we had no intention of imposing upon her, we found her to be by no means unpleasant company. When it suited her to be so she could be most entertaining, and having lived much in society, being indeed a member of an old county family, she was full of anecdotes and stories. At other times she was the very opposite—obtuse, hard of hearing, and exasperating to a degree. Though at present she is still with us and apparently quite content, we are quite aware that a small offence might be enough to turn her affection into enmity and cause her to leave us on the spot, so though we run along very smoothly there is never a great feeling of certainty to be depended upon.

As this brings our history up to the present time my next chapter must deal with the practical working of such a "business" as this, as the motive in writing the history has been the hope of being truly helpful to others in similar situations.

(To be concluded.)

## THE FIERCENESS OF GLOUCESTER.

### A STUDY IN THE TAMING OF SQUIRRELS.



If any one wishes for a fund of never-failing amusement, let her cultivate and tame wild squirrels!

It takes some years of patient feeding and coaxing, but when the confidence of the graceful little animals has once been won, they reward their friends with never-ceasing antics and gambols, fierce little scrimmages and fights amongst themselves,

and with a succession of such charming attitudes that one longs for them to sit still quietly enough to allow one to sketch them.

Very frequently I am visited at breakfast-time by as many as nine or ten of these active little rodents. They well know it is feeding-time for them, so they congregate outside the window waiting most impatiently until it is opened, then they are rewarded by

a shower of nuts. Soon there are ten little furry people thoroughly happy, each flinging his nut-shells about with saucy abandon, keeping his black beady eyes fixed on his neighbours lest they should be meditating a sudden aggressive assault if opportunity occurs.

All this is charming, but the real amusement begins when the store of outside nuts is exhausted and the squirrels come trooping into the room to see what they can find. They spring upon a table, where my doves Peace and Patience reside in their large cage, and scout around to find more food.

Several of the squirrels are tame enough to take the nuts out of our hands, others boldly run off to the cupboard where their food is stored, and they have taught themselves to leap, first up to a shelf, and then into a box, where we soon hear the little marauders cracking the nuts.

But how shall I describe the amusing squabbles that go on?

One, sitting on the window-ledge, is knocked over by another leaping in; both

reach the ground together and have a tussle, squeaking and grunting the while, others join in the fray, then there is a race round the room ending with a dissolving view of squirrels' tails disappearing out at the window. It is all play, for no real harm is done, it is only the effervescence of high spirits and keen appetite.

Some years ago a tame squirrel was sent to me from Gloucester to be let loose in the garden. For some time we could not feel sure of her identity, she mingled with the others and did not show any special tameness.

Of late, however, "Gloucester," as we have named her, has become a very marked character, tameness has merged into a more and more defiant aggressiveness not altogether to be desired. Whilst I am peacefully writing my letters, Gloucester springs suddenly upon my table, walks over my note-paper, regardless of the smudges she leaves behind her, leaps on to my shoulder, and with an angry growl the small tyrant intimates that nuts must be forthcoming instantly or else she will

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PART VI.  
MONEY-CHANGING.

HERE are few enterprises of which their success or non-success is judged otherwise than by financial results; indeed, it seems as though finance were the foot-rule by which we measure everything, great or small, in these latter days.

Even in such a business as housekeeping when undertaken with a view to profit-making, the first judgment pronounced upon it would be one relative to its profitable or unprofitable returns. And yet, when these returns are the most discouraging, it does not follow of necessity that it is unsuccessful, or that failure must be written over the door. With many newly-established businesses profit is not expected to be shown for the first two or three years; if such pay their way while gaining a foothold they are thought to do well. Might we not claim the same leniency here?

The fact that at the end of the first three years there are no household debts behind us, that current expenses are met as they become due, and that we have a thoroughly well-furnished and well-repaired house which speaks in its own favour, and that our tenants are content and comfortable should surely stand for some measure of success as issue. My hope had been to have reported the complete repayment of the loan which started us and the opening of a household banking account, but this was not yet, and perfect truth demands perfect honesty. A fifth part of the loan was paid nevertheless, and more would certainly have followed had it not been for the constant drain kept up on one's resources by the monthly payments for furniture, etc., and the frequent deductions to be made for absences of one or another.

I omitted to say that when Mrs. Norris left we were under the immediate necessity of buying some more furniture in place of that we had had the use of while she was with us. Of these a dining-table was the chief, a side-board next chief, some more chairs and a few smaller articles as coal-scuttles, dish-covers, trays, etc., all much needed. As we were unable to lay down the amount required for these in ready money, we had recourse to a furnishing agency, and after giving satisfactory references secured their assistance. The sum required was about £23, and the interest was

five per cent.; this we repaid by monthly instalments, and though it was sometimes very difficult to raise the money by the necessary date, still we did complete all the payments in the twelve months, and greatly rejoiced when that burden rolled away.

The most trying hindrance to progress, however, was the frequent absences of one and another of our tenants for two or three weeks at a time on visits to friends and relatives. It was delightful for them doubtless to have these breaks in the monotony of their lives, and they came back cheery and full of talk, but to me each absence meant a dip into my own pocket to supply the deficit caused in the exchequer, lessened my chances of laying by, or even of using my money for myself, and effectually prevented all hope of making a margin of profit. Had they all been absent together the deficiency would have been less noticed, as we could have reduced our expenses accordingly, but this never happened, save once or twice in the holiday month; usually there were two left behind, and invariably one, necessitating the same observance of routine, and therefore but little reduction was possible. It became plain too that the house, though a fairly large one, was too small to admit of making more by than its actual expenses. Another floor would have made all the difference, as another mouth to feed would have made no perceptible increase in the amount of food and the payment for board or rent would have been actual gain.

It is generally understood in all such cases, that a number pays where a few prove costly, and experience only confirmed this axiom. Still it was not in our power to add to the number of rooms and to take in more guests, therefore a more careful looking round the corners became necessary, and a continual watchfulness against waste or imprudent spending. Saving could only be effected in small items, and must be done without giving rise to comment. If we could bring our expenses strictly down to the level of our actual receipts we thought ourselves fortunate, as, of course, in the said expenses were included the board and lodging of our own selves. This, we had not yet been able to do owing, as I have said before, to the frequent deductions that had to be made in the income, and to the heavy loss caused by the rooms remaining empty so long. On my own side alone accounts showed that I had actually paid for my board at the same ratio as the strangers; as during three years over £150 of my literary earnings had been swallowed up; until this drain was stopped it was impossible to feel any profit from the results of work. To set against this there is, however, an excellent home, an abundance of good food and home comforts; perhaps, as the trial term is scarcely yet expired, more than this ought not to be looked for.

I have been thus faithful to truth in order that the difficulties of such an enterprise—should any of my fellow girl-housekeepers care to take up the same—might not be glossed over; now lest it should be thought that we have lived at too expensive a rate, I must conclude by giving a few practical details of the actual "keep" of the house, more especially with regard to its table furnishing.

To secure variety and yet keep expenses within bounds is ever the problem; often it seemed that far too much is expended on the food, yet where to curtail it is impossible to say. Game and poultry are too costly for more than occasional use, pork is disapproved of, veal not much liked, therefore we are reduced to chief dependence on beef and

mutton, with rabbits by way of change when in season. I found the most economical things to be soups made entirely from vegetables, and they were always much liked. Of these we have a good choice—chestnut, tomato, potato, artichoke, haricot bean, peas, vegetable marrow, etc. Next to the soups, dishes of vegetables with appropriate sauces take rank in point of economy, and salads of different kinds. Jams are all home made, marmalade also; we have no wines or spirits, but in summer we drink fresh lemonade and in winter water.

The butcher's bill, the bugbear of every housekeeper, is mine no less; the only way I find it possible to reduce this is by going myself and choosing every joint, and when possible by paying cash for it. Its price is apt to grow when left on the books, and sometimes another customer's joint is added on to my account. The same with fish. Bread is delivered at the door in the morning, I can take exactly what I know will be needed, and have never yet been wrongly charged here. Butter is another difficult item, and where to get it most reasonably and of good quality (as only the best fresh is thought fit to eat) has necessitated many trials. On the whole I have found small pats bought at the dairy ready for the table to be as economical as any other; a cheaper kind served ourselves and for kitchen use. When possible I have endeavoured to buy in larger quantities bacon, butter, etc., from a city firm or the British Produce Company. At the latter place the gain has been in quality, prices being fully as high per pound as at local dealers. Potatoes and vegetables I have tried to obtain from a market gardener, but here again as with eggs, the cost of carriage outweighed the value of the goods. When possible to obtain fish from the Farringdon market it was both excellent in quality and very cheap. When a large number have to be catered for it pays to send for the advertised hampers both of fish and farm produce, but our small party precludes us from taking advantage of such.

Firewood by the hundred bundles we obtain from the workhouse; the order is a benefit to the labour department, and the supply is certainly a benefit to us, as the bundles are large and go further than most.

On the whole my experience goes to prove that housekeeping (professionally considered) is more difficult in London than in the country, and it is still more difficult for a small party than a large one. And yet I would not leave my readers with the impression that it is all difficulty, or that it has been all unprofitable. Looking around us I see the evidences of solid home and house building; looking forward to the future there is experience as a guide in preventing the recurrence of the same mistakes, and also as counselling for better terms when changes are made, and looking backward, there has been the training of character, the acquisition of a certain amount of skill in work, good friendships formed that may prove of great value later, and lastly I trust a fair reputation has been gained.

As the neighbourhood is one that is rapidly growing in popularity, and property is increasing in value, it is quite possible that we may receive an offer for the remainder of our lease that shall make it worth while to give it up. We are in a position to demand a substantial premium and thereby make of it a sound business transaction; in such a case a few years' trial of Housekeeping in London will have proved anything but a failure, even when judged by its financial results.