

SOME GIRLS I HAVE KNOWN.

By AN EDITRESS.*

PART I.



HERE is no one, I suppose, apart from a clergyman, a doctor, or a lawyer, who makes so wide an acquaintance with the sad things and the humorous things that are in the background of life, as an editor. A large number of the letters and communications that find their way to an editor's office are confidential, and these, of course, are regarded as State Secrets, never under any circumstances to be divulged to another person. But there are other incidents that occur in the ordinary routine of the day's work that are sometimes very unexpected and perplexing, and sometimes curiously interesting. And in these, girls often play a prominent part.

In the course of a year, about four thousand articles and stories pass through my hands, and two-thirds of these are written by women and girls—possibly even more, because some will write under a masculine name, even though their handwriting, their style, and the subject-matter of the article are feminine to the last degree. But although it is usually easy for an editor to detect this little fraud, one is curiously deceived now and again. Three or four years ago, I remember a parcel of neatly-typed stories appearing on my office table. They purported to have been sent by a man with some such harmless name as John Jones. I read the first one: it was good. I read the second one: it was still better. I went through the half dozen; each one was, if anything, more entertaining than its predecessor. They were stories of wild adventurous life out in the far corners of the earth—some in one hemisphere, some in the other—but each plot was laid, and the scenery described, in the most unknown places. That a man had written these, there could be no doubt; they were all about men—rough men, savages, and orientals: scarcely a mention of a woman was made throughout. These stories were so surprisingly clever that Mr. John Jones was communicated with, and asked if he would kindly call on the Editor. A few days later, his name was handed in by the office boy. But—instead of a wild-looking gentleman from Klondyke, or a cowboy from Texas, or a bushranger from Australia, as the stories would have led one to suppose, there walked in a slim pale girl, who seemed at first almost too nervous to speak.

She had chosen the name, she said, because she fancied no one would trouble to read such stories if they knew they had been written by a girl. Of course we were all amazed, and asked how it happened that she knew all about these strange people and their manners and customs, and could describe them more accurately than many Englishwomen could their fellow-countrymen. It seemed incredible that this quiet-voiced girl in a sailor hat, blouse, and coat and skirt could be the one who had written about the remote mountain passes in Afghanistan and the quarrels of the warlike tribes who hide in them, or that she could know all about the Indian jungles, and the lonely parts of the Australian bush! But she explained that she had travelled a great deal with her family, and in this way had seen sights that fall to the lot of very few girls.

At the present moment, a serial story by this same girl is

running through one of the leading magazines in England and also in America, and is being read all over the world; on every side people are saying what a very clever man the writer is, for the stories have all appeared under a masculine pseudonym, and no one suspects that the author is a girl who looks frail enough to be blown away by the first wind she meets.

Of course, it will be easily understood that it is impossible for an editor to make the individual acquaintance of everybody who desires to contribute to the magazine. The usual plan is to write and make an appointment, when a would-be contributor sends a suggestion or an article that requires to be discussed personally. There are some people, however, who will not wait to be invited, and I am sorry to have to confess that women and girls are greater sinners than men in this respect. These energetic ones arrive at the publisher's and ask very courteously, or demand sternly, to see the editor, and then begins a battle royal. Now I myself am very anxious to help any girl who is struggling, and am more than ready to hear what she has to say; but there are times when it is a sheer impossibility to see anyone, when the printers—hard, cruel men—demand all one's attention, or other callers are waiting, three and four deep. On such occasions I am obliged to say No; and then strange conversations may sometimes be heard through my speaking-tube, which communicates with the official at the door.

"I am very sorry, madam," I remember hearing him say, in his unvaryingly polite manner, "but the Editor is engaged, and cannot possibly see you."

"Oh, but I must see her. I can wait"—this in a tone of voice that suggested the lady was going to remain seated on the doorstep all night, if the worst came to the worst.

"I'm afraid it would be quite useless. The magazine is going to press to-day, and she can see no one."

"I can't help that." She seemed surprised that such a trivial thing should be mentioned as an excuse. "The fact is, I don't believe you've even said I'm here."

"I assure you I have, madam; and the reply came back that the Editor is engaged and cannot see you."

"Really!" with withering contempt and scorn. "Then perhaps you'll kindly inform her that I have intimate friends at Court, and I shall make it my business to go straight down to Sandringham at once and explain the disgraceful way I've been treated, and"—evidently shaking her head in a threatening way—"she'll hear of this again!" But I never did.

It is odd how some women will drag the Royal Family to their assistance when seeking an editorial interview. I recollect a lady sending up her name, saying that she had come on a special mission from some Royal personages whose names she could only divulge to me. Now, it just happened that I was expecting a messenger from Marlborough House, and thought perhaps this might be the individual. Accordingly she was shown in to me, though it was one of my very busy days. She began—

"Now I can't tell you what it is I've come about until you promise me that you'll take an article on the subject." I don't know whether she saw a smile creeping out of the corner of my eye; at any rate she continued hastily, to impress me all the more, "You see, it's because our Royal Family are so mixed up in it that I dare not tell anything till I have your assurance that you'll accept the article. It's a matter of such extraordinary interest, that the moment I tell you you'll be hungering to use the information, and I can't afford to risk having my ideas stolen."

"If that is your alternative," I said, "I need not detain you any longer, because it would be quite out of the question for me to agree to such a proposition. You must either place sufficient confidence in me to explain and then trust

* The writer of this article has been editorially connected, since its foundation, with one of the leading magazines of the day, but for obvious reasons wishes to remain anonymous.

to my honour not to use the information if I do not buy your article, or you must take it elsewhere."

"But don't you understand?" She was getting quite excited now. "The Princess of Wales and Princess Christian are all so keen on it; and the Duchess of York would be sure to buy a copy of your magazine if my article was in; she is so interested in this thing."

I shook my head again. Even the prospect of selling that extra copy should not tempt me to betray my publishers. Thereupon the lady rose with much dignity, and looked wrathfully at me, speaking deliberately and with marked emphasis.

"Then—I'll—just—tell—you—what—you've—lost!" I sat unmoved. "It's a coffee-pot I have in here." She indicated a large black hand-bag she was guarding jealously. "Yes, a patent. A wonderful patent! And I've sent a specimen to the Duchess of York, and to—"—she ran through a string of Royal ladies—"and here it is." She opened the bag gingerly for about a quarter of an inch, to excite my devouring curiosity, I presume. If so, I was doomed to disappointment, for the next instant she snapped it in my face, hissing out, "But you sha'n't see it! No, you sha'n't!" and she bounced out of the room.

Another visitor remains on my mind who came on a still more unusual errand. The name brought to me was that of a lady who occasionally contributed to our paper. When the caller was admitted, however, a stranger appeared—a handsomely-gowned, pretty girl who looked about eighteen.

"I do hope you will forgive me," she said with a taking little smile, as she came forward; "but I sent up Mrs. Blank's name because I knew you would not know mine; and she is my sister-in-law, so it's almost the same thing." I did not think it was. Still, she was such a charming girl, I offered her a chair, and said I was pleased to meet anyone related to my friend Mrs. Blank. She sat and talked about the weather and a hundred other topics, and yet I could form no sort of idea why she had called, since she confessed she did not write. At last, as the short afternoon was fast disappearing, I made a move to get a light, hoping she would take the hint. Then she explained, very timidly and hesitatingly, the object of her call. She had come to town to do some shopping, and had run short of money. Could I lend her a sovereign? She was so sorry, and so embarrassed, etc., and at first could not think which way to turn, when suddenly she had thought of me. I felt incredulous instantly. I suspected anyone who deliberately gave another person's name as her own; yet I did not want to judge too hastily.

"But if you are Mrs. Blank's sister-in-law," I said, "why don't you go to Mr. Blank? His office is only two minutes' walk from here. Surely he is the one to help you?"

"Oh, I had forgotten," she replied hurriedly. "I thought he would have left by now."

"It is only a quarter to four. You are sure to find him in." With a few more apologies she made signs of going; and then said, "Would you mind—I'm afraid I'm a terrible bother to you—but I do feel so faint; I suppose I've been overdoing it—but could you give me a little water?" I looked round and saw my own bottle was empty, so I stepped into the next room and soon returned with the needful. She took a few sips, and then said she was better, and, "dreadfully vexed at having wasted your afternoon like this," she went immediately.

I turned on the light and sat for a moment cogitating over the affair. An office-boy came in with a message; the opening of the door blew some papers from my table about the floor. I looked at them. Where was the quaint silver paper-weight that had been standing on them the minute before? Gone! I examined further. My carved ivory Chinese paper-knife? Gone! A new pair of gloves that I had tossed down on the table when I had come in earlier in the afternoon? Gone! And the pretty girl? She was gone too! I have never seen her since. Next time I encountered Mrs. Blank she assured me she had no sister-in-law; and if that were a fair specimen she did not desire one. I could quite believe her.

But there are other girls who have left a very different memory behind them. It was pouring with sleet and snow and a bitterly cold day; a clerk brought in a lady's name, and said she had come with some specimen drawings. I thought that anyone who turned out in such wretched weather, and tramped round with a portfolio of sketches must indeed be in need of work. A delicate-looking girl was shown in; her jacket was thin, and quite wet; she was dressed very simply in black; yet everything about her indicated a gentlewoman—I like that good old-fashioned term infinitely better than the much-abused word "lady." She coughed a nasty cough that gave her a pain, I think: it gave me one, I know.

"Why, you are soaking!" I said. "You must have your coat dried, or you'll catch a cold worse than the one you already possess."

My fire was large and cosy; we soon had the garment toasting in front of it. I looked at her drawings; they were distinctly good; I saw she would improve with practice. I gave her an order for a new one that was to be ready by a certain date. Tea was on one end of my table; I was just pouring out a cup when she had arrived.

"You must have some hot tea while your jacket is drying." At first she protested, but on my insisting she took the cup from me. And then she surprised me by burying her face in her hands on the table and crying like a little child. Experience has taught me that however bad one's troubles may be, they are considerably worse if one goes without food. I made her drink two cups of tea—which was one too many, I know "Medicus" will tell me, but under the circumstances I think it was allowable—and I would not let her talk until she had eaten something.

She soon unburdened her heart. She was only twenty, and had arranged to come to London with a friend, meaning to earn her living as an artist. There seemed to be a large family, with little to live upon, down in Cornwall, and no father. This plucky girl had determined to do something not only for herself, but also for the others, if possible. At the last moment her friend had changed her plans; but, nothing daunted, the girl came up alone to some lodgings that had been recommended to her. Thereupon she began a weary search, day after day, for employment she failed to find, which was not to be wondered at since she did not know the right way to go to work; I doubt whether I myself would have seen a perfect stranger that day had it not been for the terrible weather. All her little savings had vanished; her pride would not let her go back home and announce herself a failure. "And I felt, before I came in here, that I could just give up, and sit down on a doorstep in some side street, and let everything take its chance. I suppose I was feeling a bit weak."

"When did you last have anything to eat?" I inquired. She flushed.

"I had a cup of tea this morning; but I couldn't eat anything, I didn't want it."

Ah! I knew what that meant. I wonder whether my readers have any idea what it feels like to drag tired footsteps, and tired spirits, up and down the long, long streets of London without a friend, and with scarcely a penny in your purse? I hope not, for I can imagine no greater misery for a girl.

By this time the coat was dry, and I helped her into it.

"Now you must go back to your home in the country. You can't start to-night, but you must set off to-morrow morning. You have this picture to paint; when it is finished we can see about fresh work."

I advanced her some money on account to pay her fare back, and she promised she would go next day. She coughed badly as she wrote out a telegram I made her send to her people.

A letter came telling me she had reached home safely, and how proud they were to think she had obtained work, and was now going to be a "real London artist."

A fortnight later they sent me her funeral card. She had died of pneumonia, and the doctor said her illness was partially due to starvation.

ruffles worn with steel armour in the olden days. Gowns of grey cloth, and hats of felt, of a colour to match the skirt, look very pretty, especially when the small jacket is of chinchilla fur. Some of the long coats are of velvet, and others of plush—rifle-green being a popular colour—and cloth and satin-cloth in brown and fawn-colour are also patronised. At the exhibition of pictures by deceased British artists at Burlington House, the costumes which appeared on visitors to the private view were curious and somewhat quaint. But although we write for high and low, rich and moderately endowed with the essential wherewithal, we do so chiefly for the great majority who may be classed amongst the last-named, so we need not waste time over descriptions of dress, which are beyond the means of that greater number to obtain.

I have seen a pretty golf cape of double-faced blue cloth. The long inner cape was surmounted by three short shoulder ones and a high flaring collar. The plaid lining was to the face in full view; the upper and smallest cape was of the plaid, inner side of the cloth; the next small cape was of the blue side of the material, and the lower one of the plaid, the corners of all three being rounded. This design may be adopted for cheviot, broad-cloth, serge, and any other kind of warm material of any colour. I should have thought that a warm jacket-coat would have been

more suitable for a golfer, or for wear in any kind of sport, as giving freer action to the arms; yet such is the garment called.

For young girls in their teens, I have seen a very pretty Russian blouse-jacket in velveteen (or plush). The overlapping front continued the whole way down, buttoned back on the left shoulder. The collar was *deep and turned* over (flat). The sleeves were rather loose, and rather belled at the wristband. The latter, the collar, and the lapping front were trimmed with a broad decorative braid.

I do not see anything specially characteristic of this mid-winter season in our exhibitions of bonnets and hats. The varieties are very great, but the fancy for any particular style does not seem very marked. One little recent improvement, which may be regarded as a boon, in the way of securing a hat or bonnet from the intrusive attentions of the winter winds, appears in the form of what has been called a "slim hat-pin." Why "slim?" my readers may ask. I cannot tell. I can only describe its advantages. It has no point, by which our heads are so often wounded, and it always remains in the head-gear; thus the latter is not torn and filled with holes, as in the use of the ordinary pin. This little appliance was recommended to me a few days ago, and with much approval, and I hear it may be obtained from any draper.

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PART II.



HERE is one beautiful trait in English girls that is noticeable wherever our language is spoken, in America as well as on our islands. When misfortune unexpectedly comes upon the family, it is invariably the girls who are the first to pull themselves together and energetically seek a means of making money. The boys—well, very often they prove themselves noble and manly, as we believe every Englishman should be, but sometimes they fail hopelessly at a crisis, or, at best, look mainly to their own well-being and grumble generally, while the

girls put on a plucky front and work to very death itself. This, I am sorry to say, is one of the tragedies of life that I encounter most frequently in my daily work. The result is that one is besieged by girls who are suddenly thrown on their own resources—splendid, loyal girls who will not let the smallest complaint pass their lips; only the misfortune is they have received no adequate training for the work they want to take up, and alas! in the great whirl of modern life there is no place for "second-rates."

Speaking of the skeleton that is sometimes hidden away in the cupboard, I am reminded of another girl who asked very urgently to be granted an interview. Her errand was a pathetic one. We had just published in our magazine a photograph of some royal procession—I think it was at the Jubilee time; naturally an immense crowd was included. In the very foreground of the picture was a shabby-looking young man, merely one among the crowd, but he had evidently turned and looked at the photographer, as his features and every detail about him were wonderfully distinct.

"That is my only brother," said the girl. He had left home some time before, having had some disagreement with his father, I imagine. At any rate, they had heard nothing more from him, though they had advertised repeatedly. And here he was, dejected and down-at-heels, yet the same brother this girl was longing to find. Could

I tell her how to find him? Of course I could not. It was cruel to be so near him, and yet— As I explained to her, there were tens of thousands in that crowd; no one could be traced on so slight a clue. The original photo was much larger and clearer than the reproduction; having a duplicate, I asked her if she would like to have it. "Oh, thank you," she said. "How my mother will value it!"

Quite as pitiful was the case of a girl who wrote, enclosing another letter which was addressed to a member of our staff, asking if we would forward this without delay—"I saw a story in your magazine by a Mr. —, and I feel sure he must be my father, whom we have heard nothing of for fifteen years." I handed the letter to Mr. —, who happened to call an hour later. I knew he was not the father she was seeking, because he was only about twenty-five years old himself. His name was not an uncommon one, though less plentiful than "Smith," for instance; but I suppose the poor girl could associate it with no man other than her father. After reading the letter, Mr. — handed it to me. A lump came in my throat as I read it. The girl was convinced she had found the right man. She told him how they had struggled during those years, heart-breaking things that I do not repeat, as they were written in confidence; but I was touched by one sentence, "If you will only let us see you again, that is all we want. We shall not be any expense to you, as I am now in a good situation, and so is Kitty, and we can keep ourselves, and even help you if you need it. Mother is dead. Of course Kitty doesn't remember you much, but I do. I am always thinking about you, and am sure I should know you anywhere." Her disappointment, when we proved to her that our Mr. — was not her father, was terribly keen.

With regard to a name, a funny little episode occurred not long ago. A clerk came to me and said, "A Miss Jones has just called about a MS. she sent in some time ago, as she has heard nothing more about it."

"Can't you turn it up in your books?" I asked; because a record is kept of every MS., drawing, and letter that is received by a well-organised magazine. The title, author's name and address, date of receipt, and, if returned, by whom and the date, are duly entered in a book.

"She doesn't seem to know what she wants," he said, looking most perplexed. "I can't make head or tail of it all."

A girl with fluffy hair came in, and I remember she had a big bunch of cowslips fastened in her jacket. I tried to forgive her for wasting my time, because I love to see any flowers in a girl's dress, and especially cowslips. "I'm glad they let me in," she said, sinking quite exhaustedly into a low chair. "Those young men downstairs are so stupid"—a wicked libel on the individuals in question. "It's just like this; I sent a story here some time ago. How long? Oh, I don't know; ever so long! I didn't put any address on it! I remembered afterwards; silly of me, wasn't it? Of course, you couldn't write to me about it."

"Still, I think we can get over that difficulty perhaps," I said, turning up another book that dealt with MSS. with no addresses. "What was the title? I think you said your name was Miss Jones?" I had my finger ready to run down the list.

"That's the whole trouble," she said sweetly. "I didn't put my own name on it, as I didn't want them to see it at home if it was printed. And I can't recall the name I did put!"

"What was the title? That may help us."

"You'll vote me a little donkey, I know," she laughed very happily, "but I've been thinking all the way coming here, and I've no notion what I called it."

I hardly knew whether to laugh, or give the fluffy girl a good shaking.

"I think I had better read out some of the authors' names and see if you recognise either." I began, "Helma Trenowath?"

"Oh, no! What a nice romantic-sounding name! I wish I had thought of that."

"Annie Crimmins?"

"No, far too ugly."

I found we should take a long while over it at this rate. I decided to try the titles. I read them all down. She said she wasn't quite sure; it might be either *Gwendolen's Mistake*, or *True till Death*, or *Her Narrow Escape*, or *His Little Wife*; unfortunately she had forgotten what the story was about; but she thought it might be one of these; and she was very fond of the name "Gwendolen." Finally the parcel of MSS. was brought in and we went through them; not any of those she had named proved to be hers.

"Here it is," she exclaimed at last, very joyfully. "Let me see, what did I call it? Of course, *The Spectre of Hangman's Valley*, I remember now. You will like it: it's creepily horrible."

She began to turn it over, and was going to read it aloud, I verily believe, in her joy at receiving back the long-lost child. But I did not encourage this. I said it sounded a very cheerful title, and if she would leave it, I would attend to it later on.

I trust it reached her safely next day.

My space is running away, yet there are so many other girls I would like to describe. There was one who begged an interview because she had such novel suggestions to make that she would not trust them to writing. She greeted me in a brisk, business-like manner.

"Now, to begin at the very beginning," she said, "I want to tell you that I consider your magazine is being run on quite the wrong lines from first to last. It needs to be entirely altered. The public doesn't want that sort of thing at all; not at all," she repeated with emphasis. "Now what it really wants is—"

"Pardon my interrupting you," I said meekly, "but might I just ask: If it doesn't want it, why does it buy at such an enormous rate?"

"That's easily explained," the damsel replied airily. "The public is like a child crying for the moon; it doesn't know what it does want."

This was certainly a mixed form of logic; but I thought I would not stop her to point it out. She continued—

"Therefore, realising all this, and seeing what a failure your magazine would become if it went on much longer like this, I have come to offer myself in any capacity (not a subordinate one, of course) where the publishers might consider my services of value. I assure you, I could alter the whole trend of the paper in no time."

I did not doubt it; but I am afraid the trend would have been downward, whereas the publishers desired it to be upward.

The curious requests girls send through the post would in themselves fill an article. One wrote asking if I would give her the original signature of Queen Victoria which we had reproduced in our current issue, as she did so desire Her Majesty's autograph to add to her collection; and at the same time could I let her have the autographs, or better still, signed portraits of the Prince and Princess of Wales, Lord Salisbury, Ellen Terry, Madame Patti, and a large number of other celebrities she named. If so, she would be pleased to send me a tin of Devonshire cream by return of post. Sorry as I was to miss the cream, I had to refuse this modest request.

A delightful letter came from a schoolgirl in Russia. Could we, would we tell her how the serial story was going to end? Which one did the heroine marry after all? She had not enough pocket-money to buy the magazine, and the other English girl there who used to have it had left; and she was so miserable thinking about the troubles of the lady in the story. As there were still seven months of it to run, we could not tell her so far in advance; but forwarded her a copy every month until it was concluded. The letter she sent each time in acknowledgment showed her to be a very intelligent girl.

A girl in Manchester wrote in great distress; her mother was a confirmed invalid, she had no father, and there were six children to provide for. Could I give her an order for some crochet edging? If I would advance her a little money for the cotton she could do it at odd moments, and thus earn something while looking after her paralysed parent and the young children. The letter was so sad, I mentioned the case at home. "That's strange," said another literary member of my family. "I too had a letter from that address sent to my office." He turned it out of his pocket. It was from the same girl, and stated that her father was suffering from some incurable complaint, and there were eight children to support. Her mother earned a trifle by going out nursing, and she was anxious to do some typewriting. If he would forward a little money towards purchasing a machine, she would pay it back by doing typing for him to that amount. Being interested in this case, we asked a Manchester friend to look up the girl and report particulars to us.

"I could not find the girl herself," he replied, "nor the paralysed mother, nor even six out of the eight children. I suppose the old villain who lodges there all alone was the incurable father. But I think he is cured now—for the time being at any rate. When he heard what I was after, he disappeared. He thought I was a detective."

Nevertheless, a few months later the same "girl" wrote a pathetic letter from a Liverpool address; only this time she was a young orphan, and wanted money to buy a sewing-machine as a means of supporting her helpless brothers and sisters.

I must squeeze in mention of one special girl, among the many who desire to become writers. I was taken seriously ill while in the States last year, and only just arrived at a friend's house in time to be put to bed, before I lost consciousness. When I eventually came to my senses, I saw a small negress sitting at the far side of the room, watching me carefully in her mistress's absence. I tried to recall where I was and how I had got there. The queer little morsel, with her mouth all out of drawing, came forward on tip-toe.

"Is yo' better, ma'am?" I smiled at her, because she had the front of her frizzy, fuzzy head done up in a semi-circle of curling-pins. And I just had strength to say, "Yes, I is!"

During the long convalescent days that followed, we became great friends, and she confided her history to me.

"Yo' make books, ma'am?" she asked one day.

"How do you know that, Samantha?" I said.

"I'm not Samanfy," she insisted; "that name is only good for low down folk, not a coloured lady like me." (She was really the sewing-maid in the house.) "My name's Gloriana 'Tilder—Gloriana 'Tilder Brown," she

added, lest I should confuse her with all the other Gloriana Matildas of my acquaintance. "I'm going to be like yo'. I'm going to make books like missus say yo' do." I expressed delight and astonishment; and after due persuasion, she repeated to me her first and only composition. It was a "pome," she said:—

"It isn't rainin' any more:
The melons is gettin' ripe:
My love is standin' 'ginst the cabin door,
Smokin' of his pipe."

She had really stated the very kernel of the whole matter. I had seen a number of such coloured gentlemen over there, and on nearly every occasion they had been employed in taking care of a door-post, or a wall, or a street corner, while they smoked most conscientiously. "The only thing I am afraid of," I said, "is, that when the melons are quite ripe, that lover of yours will eat them all himself."

Gloriana Matilda showed a wide array of white teeth, and remarked, "I guess not! When I get 'way up' like white folks and English ladies and make books, I guess he dar'sn't!"

HOME MANAGEMENT MONTH BY MONTH.

THE STORE-ROOM AND LARDER.

IN my last letter I gave you some hints about the arrangement of the store-room, and I promised a few more ideas on the same subject, before proceeding to the management of the larder.

THE STORE-ROOM.

Firstly, then, label all the jars and canisters in which you store your groceries, such as currants, rice, etc., and place the jars on the shelves, with the small jars in front (if there is room for a double row), so that all the labels may be readily seen. All brushes should be hung up. If they are allowed to lie on the floor, the bristles become flattened and dirty, the broom does not sweep as well, and wears out much more quickly.

Keep a slate hanging in the store-room, with a sponge and a piece of pencil attached, in order that when you find anything running short you may make a note of it. A small dustpan and brush and also a duster should be kept in the store-room for the use of the mistress of the house. She can then keep everything tidy in the store-room.

Candles keep best if stored in tin boxes; old biscuit boxes answer the purpose very well. The same rule applies to matches. They are less likely to be affected by damp if kept in this manner.

And now I will add a short list of things which easily deteriorate in a damp place, and which, whenever possible, should be kept dry. Sugar, flour, oatmeal, baking-powder, salt, soda, borax, and blue are all things easily spoiled by damp.

Housewives will find it a good plan to set aside a shelf in the store-room for empty jam-jars, and see that as soon as the jar is empty it is washed, dried and returned to the store-room. Corks from bottles of all sizes may also be stored, and often come in useful. They should first be carefully washed and dried before they are put away.

THE LARDER.

The larder now claims our attention. Let us hope that it has been built on the cool and shady side of the house, and that it has a stone or brick floor, because it can then be swilled out daily, which keeps it both cool and clean.

If, however, the floor and shelves are of wood, it is advisable to scrub them thoroughly with hot water and soap, and then wipe them over with a cloth dipped in cold water to which has been added a small quantity of disinfectant—Condy's fluid, Sanitas, or carbolic, as preferred. This should be done at least twice a week.

It is a good plan during hot weather to have a jar of fresh barm standing in the larder; this sweetens the air. The barm should be renewed weekly.

Milk or vegetables should never be kept in the meat larder. Milk quickly takes up germs and becomes sour, and green vegetables soon become stale and unwholesome.

If the larder has only sash windows and no perforated zinc, it is a good plan to stretch a piece of coarse muslin over the open sash. This may be made wet from day to day either with a solution of Condy's fluid and water or carbolic. This keeps out both flies and dust, while at the same time it allows a free passage of air through the larder.

Many larders have not been constructed to allow a current of fresh air to sweep through them. This current

of fresh air is very necessary; so if there is only one window, a good plan is to cut out one of the upper panels of the door, and fill in the aperture with either wire gauze or perforated zinc.

I will now give you a few hints about hanging up meat and game. First, be careful that the hooks on which you hang the meat are scrupulously clean. As meat-hooks in the larder are often fixtures, I prefer to use the double iron hooks to hang the meat on. These double hooks can be



RIGHT WAY TO HANG
MEAT AND GAME.

hung on to the fixed hooks. The reason that I prefer the double hooks is that they can be more easily kept clean and disinfected. Wash the hooks thoroughly in boiling water, then dip them in a solution of Condy's fluid before passing the hooks through the meat.

In hot or damp weather wipe the meat dry, then powder it well all over with a mixture of flour and black pepper, being careful to powder well under the flaps and creases of the meat. The meat should be examined each day, and any part which may have become fly-blown cut away.

The rule for hanging meat is to pass the hook through a sinewy part, and allow the meat to hang with the heaviest part downwards. This prevents the drip of blood which would result if the hook were passed through a fleshy part of the meat. All joints should be hung in an airy part of the larder, not over a shelf or near the wall.