THE DUTIES OF SERVANTS.

By SOPHIA F. A. CAUFIELD.

The question of the respective duties of all classes of domestic servants to their employers, and those of these employers to their paid dependants, is one which often supplies a subject of painful disagreement between the two parties concerned. Unhappily for them, they are too much disposed to regard each other as opponents, actuated by conflicting interests. On the contrary, the well-being and peace of the household forms an important point of interest to each. They have it equally in their own power, respectively, to promote, or mar their mutual comfort and happiness, and to confer more substantial benefits. In the execution of their various departments of duty, money could either purchase or reward. All antagonistic feeling should be extinguished on both sides, and this can be effected without in the least degree interfering with the order of society and those distinctions of position which exist by the ordinance of God. It is to be recognised throughout, from the humble "byslop on the wall, to the cedar of Lebanon;" "one star differing from another star in glory;" one faithful servant being "ruler over ten cities," and another "over five hundred," only. "The head cannot boast itself;" we are told, "against the hand" or the foot; nor can they be envious of the head. For all know that a head has a place, and is an honourable work to do; and of every arrangement of divine appointment we may be perfectly sure that all is well and wise, as laid down to us.

In giving a general summary of the duties devolving on those employed in every department of female domestic service, I propose only to make the suggestions here and there; for all that I have to say has been previously expressed in print.

THE HOUSEKEEPER has the entire direction of all the female servants, with the exception of the lady's maid and the head nurse; receiving the orders of her mistress and acting as her deputy. Excepting where a house steward is kept, it devolves on her to keep the weekly accounts, to enter on her ledger the expenditure of each day; to pay all bills and file receipts; to superintend the weighing of meat and fish, and the making of the tickets sent to the house for the table or otherwise. Should there be a man cook he will relieve her of many of her duties, and so much the better if she herself can make all things herself which she would otherwise be charged. In the case of a female cook being kept, the housekeeper should be prepared to supplement her work as may be found necessary, and to make, as well as to superintend the making of all dishes of a delicate or recherché kind, and likewise the arrangement of the bill of fare for every meal. The taking in of the fruits in their due season for preserving, and all the direction and assistance requisite for the making of pickles, jams, and confectionery; the preparation and the bottling of them, and other juices and liquors are also amongst her duties; as also salting of meat, changing of the brine, the curing and smoking of hams, the setting of salted butter and of eggs, the preserving of potted meats, preparation of stock for soup, and, in fact, everything connected with the supply and the cooking of the table, and dairy; as well as the superintendence of the poultry, and all live stock designed for the table, outside the house, all the animals which are the property of the household. All these duties must be regulated in particular in each family, by the establishment kept, and the character of the house, whether a country seat or a town residence. This is the position of trust of her several departments are home-supplied, or a town mansion where the domestic arrangements are of a different character.

The linens they demand her close attention, and she has to give out from the former what is either for use or repair to the under-servants, and to see that the latter is done properly. The body linen she separates from the rest and commits to the hands of the lady's-maid or head nurse, as the case may be. In the evening she has to see the lumps of lump-sugar, washing and stoning of raisins, Blanching of almonds, and general preparation of all that will be required for use on the following day.

The inventory, which she should receive on entering her situation, should be carefully compared with everything committed to her care. She should have, in twelve months, including all the household furniture and kitchen requisites, and a report of wear and tear or deficiencies supplied to her mistress, and entered on the list, if not made good. Her own accounts should likewise be submitted for inspection at least once a month. But all such rules must depend on the wishes of the housekeeper and the wages of the housekeeper vary from £20 to £50 per annum. The "finding" or providing with beer, tea, and sugar, over and above the ordinary food provided for servants, to no more "hard and fast" rule. It varies, according to private arrangements, as regards every class of domestic servants.

The head nurse. If no housekeeper is kept, has a considerable amount of work on her hands besides the cooking of meals, such as the marketing, continual supervision of the laundry, and the keeping of the preserves, and the baking of cakes and perhaps of bread. She must make the study of cookery her continual business, by reading as well as by observation; she should know when meat, fish, and all sorts of vegetables and fruits, naturally devolve on her, instead of on the cook. But private arrangements may be made by mutual agreement, either increasing or diminishing the legitimate work which a mistress has a right to demand of her cook. Her wages vary from £16 to about £20 per annum.

It will be remembered by the reader that a cook is not a mistress, and that the duties which she has I have already stated; be they as those of, or as those of a servant, she is to be directed to do her work promptly and efficiently. She is to be as punctual as she is obedient, and must be a ready executant, with the utmost application in the housekeeper's, or head-maid's, or any other particular domestic department.

The head-maid holds a position next to the housekeeper. Her duties commence before the mistress rises, and it is her duty to bring in the small tray containing it, and the toast or bread and butter she also should prepare. She then places all the under-linen, slips, and dressing-gown ready for her mistress to wear, and remains to assist, or retire for a time, according to her mistress's wishes, until she be desired for the hair-dressing, and to complete her mistress's toilet. Her maid should be proficient in the art of dressing hair, and should learn every new style as it comes in. She must know how to set lilies, roses, and other flowers, and other devices, so as to provide them at home; also such necessaries of the toilet as perfumes, lotions, and magnum, etc. After her lady has left the bedroom, it is her business to fold the night and dressing-gowns, and place all in order before the fire. She must also know how to throw open the bed and the window, taking out such articles as may need repair or alteration, those requiring fresh lace and frills, and the linen that should be aired. Gloves and boots should likewise be inspected, that buttons may be supplied and small rips sewn up as required. The jewel-case and all private dresses should be put away before leaving the house.

Not only reparations and alterations of dresses come within the limits of her duties, but she should know how to cut out, fit, and make them. She should have a good knowledge of blending colours, so as to become a light or dark complexion; and her mistress, whether tall or short, stout or slight, fair, dark, or brown, she must be an object of study; as it is her duty to make her appear at all times to the best advantage. In many houses we have the lady's maid is kept, and the private butler. The former is one of her duties to understand the cleaning of lace, "getting up" of fine things, clearing and gathering. Also how to prevent dust from forming.

A lady's maid should likewise understand millinery, how to make a bonnet, cap, or hat, and should study all the new fashions in their current expenses. It is her duty to count all the body linen on its return from the laundry, to divide all requiring buttons and strings or other repairs from the rest, and put them in a separate bag. She should wash, or work-basket, after all have been well aired. An inventory should be kept and notice given to her lady when the wardrobe first sets in. Having informed at what hour she proposes to go out, it is her duty to be again in attendance at the appointed time, having to place all that is needed, whether for driving, riding, or walking, in readiness for her; and on her return her lady should find the suitable change of dress prepared for her, and the maid awaiting her arrival to attend upon her. A knowledge of folding and packing closely, so as to make a tight space, without injury to clothing, is another of her essential duties, and one in which much delicacy is generally required amongst them. At a suitable time before dinner the maid should again attend on the bed or dressing-room, and lay out all she may require for her evening costume, and be prepared to dress her on her leaving the room she extinguishes the candles or lights them as may be necessary. At bed-time all required for night should be put out in readiness, and she should be in attendance until dismissed. In case of going out, or any other entertainments, her mistress has a right to expect that she shall sit up till her return, and see that she has all that she may require, such as tea or fruit, and that all is prepared as she desires. As a maid is an invalid or an elderly person, the
maid would be required to act more or less as a nurse, and would have to read aloud, which she should study to do agreeably, and to write letters at dictation, on which account her writing must be thoroughly good. But under these circumstances, the management of the duties required of her by a younger mistress, and one in good health and going into bed, would not be required of her, so that her work would not be excessive. Small families some of the duties of a housekeeper are united to those of the lady’s maid; her wages vary, according to her efficiency in all her duties, from £5 to £20 per annum.

An Upper Nurse should have a thorough acquaintance with the infant’s habits, and a good deal of patience. She should have had experience of the subject of the nursing the sick, and children in particular, always by her, and keep her personal appearance spotless at all points, so as to recognize the first symptoms of every complaint, and be prepared for all emergencies. She should also attend all questions relative to the comfort of the nursery, and assist the nurse, and supplement the services of the regular nurse temporarily hired. Her place is in the nursery, for meals as well as for sitting and reading. It is impossible to say when there were no nursery, and what were the charges are set for the night she can leave them in the care of the upper nurse, or housemaid if she is in the housemaid’s room, or with the other servants if there be none. The only female servants who have a right to avail themselves at all times, for meals and otherwise, of the housekeeper’s room, are the upper nurse and the housemaid. The washing and dressing of a young infant must be exclusively done by the upper nurse, and of the older children by the under nurse, who resides in the upper nursery.

The cleaning of the paint and of the windows, the washing of china ornaments, and the polishing of the furniture (if need be) should be the work appointed for a certain day in each week being completed every week. The cleaning of the uncovered portions of the chairs and hangings, and upper corridors and passages with a damp cloth, and the weekly cleaning of the daily work, and about two are kept it develops on the undermaid. The taking out of each rod, one at a time, to wipe underneath the carpet, should be done weekly, on a certain day, and each rod rubbed with a leather before being returned to its place. It is a most inconvenient and unmanageable habit, adopted by half a dozen of the maids, to take up the entire or the entire part of the chair carpet at once. Furniture polish should also be applied to the top of the balusters at intervals, and careful rubbing performed after each use. It is the housemaid’s business to collect and count the linen to be washed, under the housekeeper’s or lady’s maid’s supervision, weekly; to mend and hem the house-linen, and also to count on all its return home. She has to take down, shake, and put up the curtains and hangings; attend also to all the rags and cushions in the house, and destroy all mosses and flies which may be found behind the shutters in the spring or early summer. Of course, much devolves on the housemaid which properly belongs to the man-servant, so that if there be none in the establishment, and she may also be required to assist a good deal in various ways in the nursery, and even sometimes in the kitchen, if only one man-servant be kept. It is also very usual for the office of housemaid to be combined with that of parlour maid, and this demands great quickness and dispatch. It is the duty of the housemaid to see that the cleaning of plate, knives, and spoons are completed on time, and that the kitchen is clean and tidy. The work of the housemaid includes the cleaning of the hall, and the removal of the furniture from the drawing-room, and the cleaning of the stair-carpet, and the study of the requirements of each individual at the table, quietly, and noiselessly. As a housemaid’s duties may be greatly influenced by the circumstances of the establishment kept, she may have, as I said, to include some of those which naturally belong to the lady’s maid, and a servant, and must not be ready to say “this or that is not my work,” but also have to answer the hall door at certain times, if not always. Her wages range from £5 to £25 per annum.

The Under Housemaid, Under Nurse, and Kitchen Maid are directed by the servants holding a higher position in the same department of the house as themselves; and, with the exception of remuneration that the kitchen maid is expected to dress the nursery and kitchen dinner, it is not necessary to enter into any particular details of the work of each respectively. The wages of all these maids vary from £9 to £14.

A General Servant should be very well clothed, particularly active, methodical, and intelligent; yet she is usually more ignorant and more incompetent than any other class of servants. Well-trained and experienced persons naturally object to the almost never-ending work, in which their situation entails; but quickness and a judicious timing of all the work to be done, with the kind of her mistress, enable her to get through her work quickly. She may have to be an early riser, and must not be too late for her own meals or wash the kitchen and the dining-room. She needs only to study the directions given to the cook, housemaid, and parlour-maid to be in communication with all her own work. Her wages vary, according to her efficiency as a cook especially, from £3 to £8.

Upon the duties of the Laundry and Under Mids, the Still-room and the Dairy Mids, it is scarcely necessary to write, and I hope in my next paper to add a few friendly words to those of my readers who have selected domestic service as their vocation.

To be concluded.

USEFUL HINTS.

Ginger Cookies.—Take one cup of butter and three cups of flour, rub them well together, then add one teaspoonful of ginger, one teaspoonful of soda and salt, a quarter of a cup of sugar, and a half cups of sugar. The eggs and sugar must be well beaten together. Roll very thin, cut in small round cakes with a biscuit cutter. Bake in a quick oven.

Claret Cup.—One bottle of claret, one pint of water, a small bunch of bilberry, bis of barley. This is a dish of cucumber, a small glass of brandy, and one ounce of sugar or sugar-candy; stir all together, and place the jug for a few hours, then strain and serve.

Champagne Cup.—One bottle of champagne, one quart of water, two oranges, one small bunch of barberries, one ounce of sugar-candy; mix well, and place in ice for one hour, then strain, and pour into a jug.

Artichoke Soup.—Boil a quarter of aartichokes and two large onions until quite tender; then rub them through a wire sieve; add three pints of milk, one ounce of butter, a little pepper and salt; then boil up, taking care that the soup does not become thick enough, and add a dessertspoon of corn flour.
JACK, THE RAILWAY DOG.

TRAVELLED IN FINE STYLE.

Few people who travel on the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway know what a distinguished character has a free pass on the railway's branch line. Of course, for several years he has taken daily advantage of the service. It is between two and three years ago that his fox-terrier, big, bold, and over-weighted, jumped into a train that was leaving Brighton for Horsham, and settled himself in the guard's carriage. Little notice was taken of him at first, but after he began to be a person of great interest. No one knew where he came from or whom he belonged to, but everyone knew he was quite early in a train in the morning. Sometimes he went to Portsmouth, sometimes to Horsham, sometimes only to nearer stations; but the most remarkable part of his arrangements was that he always got to Brighton in time to go by the last train to Lewes, where he always slept, leaving again by the first train in the morning. When the friend from whom I first heard this story (whom I was writing for the truth) last heard of Jack he still continued this practice, and always spent the night at Lewes Station. About a year and a half ago the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Company begged to look upon him as one of their regular passengers, and presented him with a collar bearing this inscription, "Jack—London, B. and S. Coast Railway Company." My friend told me that on one occasion, some months ago, he traced Jack's movements on one especial day, and probably it was a good sample of many another. He arrived from Brighton by a train which was going at 10:10 a.m. and got out for a minute, but went on by the same train to Henfield. Here he left the train and went to a public house not far from the station, where a bisket was given him; and from Henfield to West Grinstead, where he spent the afternoon, returning to Brighton in time for the last train to Lewes. He was neither fond of the Portsmouth line, but never, I believe, has come so far as London. He generally takes his place on or by the guard's wheel, and sits looking out of the window. It would be very interesting to know how much of the fascination of this perpetual railway travelling consists. It certainly shows an immense amount of instinct and observation, and the regularity and punctuality of Jack's daily life are a lesson to many a two-legged traveller. When he is invited to the guard, or director, or general overseer, no one can tell, but there is, it seems, an idea of duty in his movements: what he has to do (or thinks he has to do) he does so promptly, no matter how far it is a telling tale to his fellow travellers on the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway. The last piece of information received about Jack is that a lady has presented him with a silver-mounted collar, with which he seems much pleased. On it is inscribed:—"I am Jack, the L. B. and S. Coast Railway Dog. Please give me a drink, and I will then go home to Lewes." This collar was presented by Mrs. J. Knight, Brockley. On the day Jack sat for his portrait he left Lewes by the first train for Brighton, and then found that he had business in Portsmouth, and continued by the first train of the day.

THE DUTIES OF SERVANTS.

PART II.

While the world lutes there will be the rich and the poor, the well-to-do and the poor, the rich and the poor, the rich and the poor, the rich and the poor. The duties of the employer, the employer and the employed; each with his rank, his privileges, and responsibilities. Those employing your labor, if possible, fellow-workers, even if not for hire, and to have the care and anxiety which belong to their position, many of which are far heavier than your own, and with which you have little or no acquaintance. But if you wish to exchange your lot for theirs, you can elevate your position and gain the respect of your employers as well as your fellows by your propriety of conduct, manners, and dress. Common, vulgar style is as little suitable as it is unsuitable, and those who wear it are not those who obtain first-class situations and become elevated to confidential positions amongst their employers. The common, vulgar style of wearing a low-class servants' uniform in lodgings-house a call a "flag" at the back of the head stamps them at once as belonging to the lowest stratum of constrained and cheap servants. A real cap is pretty and becoming, and is suitable to those whose work must make their hair dusty, and the exposure to druggists disfigure the most respectable and high-class race of servants who use to live from twenty to fifty years, or longer, in the same family—that is, in the home of their adoption, beloved and respected; or else were pensioned on the death of their employers, to enjoy independence in a home of their own, these were not people who wore a cap so much as a dandy head. They had no desire to look "shabby gentile." Then they wore good, plain dresses and pretty white caps. And so in the present day, in all high-class houses of travelling servants are dressed as in olden times, following the steps of those who rose to positions of competence and future independence. The lady's maid alone is exempt from wearing a cap, simply because she is always about her mistress, and her work does not expose her to any chance to look shabby. But as she advances in life she also adopts a cap, as looking more respectable and becoming when the hair becomes grey and possible thin.

It is said that "there is honor amongst thieves." If not influenced by better and more sacred motives, at least you might be ashamed to degrade yourself to a lower standard than theirs. Yet, rightly or wrongly, young servant girls are accused of being very dishonourable, in being much given to what is called "little-tattle," as well as charged with trying hopelessly to look like what they are not. It should be regarded as a point of honour among you to have your inside the house, nor even in the servants' hall nor kitchen, what you were trusted to hear at your master's table or in your mistress's confidence. It is the same with conversation (which you might misunderstand if you did), but give your whole attention to your own business. With reference to the respect due to them, the following is a "snowing court," in the terms of to-masters and servants. Having known of several instances within the circle of my own family and connections of those who have lived in five and twenty of the fifty years in the same family, deservedly beloved and respected, I know how to appreciate the faithful and high-principled amongst them, and am ready to believe in the extensive existence of such, in the class to which you, my readers, belong. Strive early to emulate such bright examples, and ever remember that amongst the most humble in birth and circumstances there is such unremitting nobility—the highest sentiments of honour and feelings of propriety, combined with the greatest humility and modesty of demeanour, which are the good sense of man or woman know and live according to their natural position in life, and are placed in that position of trust and trial only as a temporary institution for a state of service.

"Be thou faithful in a few things, and I will make thee ruler over many things." To the mistresses of families I would now mention three rules: to avoid the inefficiency of domestic servants, the rare examples of grateful and loving service rendered, the alms which involves ignominy or abject, to ape a station or temper to your own, and then even throw a doubt on their moral character—all these points form separate subjects of perpetual fault-finding, sour your temper, and prejudice you against the whole class.

Doubtless you cannot "make bricks without straw," and you have much cause for dissatisfaction with the duties and methods of performing them, for which she expects all the wages you may be induced to give, with all the comforts of a home, and you discover that she possesses but a few superficial qualifications. She wastes your provisions perhaps by bad cookery or forgetfulness of them; articles destroyed by neglect, and every description of disaster and annoyance. We all suffer in a greater or less degree, paying honest wages for dishonest service. Alas! that which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is wanting cannot be numbered.

But if we feel so keenly our own wrongs we should apply ourselves all the more zealously to redress them; and if we judge the shortcoming and misdeeds of our servants, let us take care that our own conduct be absolutely above reproach.

If, as a general rule, the young domestic servants of the present day are inferior as regards both their efficiency and manners, as well as devoted fidelity to their predecessors, the fault is not always and entirely to be laid on the charge of the employer. They very frequently show themselves utterly ignorant of their own duties towards them and the great responsibility which lies on their own shoulders. Higher motives, the old saying, "Noblesse oblige," seems little to influence their deportment towards them. There is a petty and most injurious spirit in the ostentatious way in which ladies of no real position in society
themselves will order about their attendants as if they were only automatons, and not persons under their benevolent care and wise judicious training. The more or less uneducated need as careful and considerate training as children.

Every household should remember that by a Divine decree it is the mistress who is to "guide the house," and the duties which this sacred charge involves are to be gravely accepted and prayerfully carried out. It is not to be supposed that she has only to give her servants certain orders, and to scold or dismiss them if they be not fulfilled. In a very extended sense, she has the souls and bodies, health, training, and the present and eternal well-being of those under her authority placed in her charge; or, to say the least, within her influence—an influence for good or evil for which she will assuredly have one day to render an account.

The service which she buys with gold may be rendered for love. How often has this been realized when reverses have changed the order of the household, and the faithful servant has selected to share the scant necessaries of life with the beloved and revered heads of the family; not grudging the least extra service that seems to outweigh the gold in the balance set against it, but, thenceforth, as the tried and tested and deservedly trusted friend, clinging with affection and respect to her unfortunate master and mistress!

But more alone will not purchase fidelity like this. "If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be condemned." Of course, there are the relatives of high principle, as well as the God-fearing, amongst little-educated people, as well as amongst those who have had the benefit of the best intellectual culture. Faithful service, even in little matters—out of sight, perhaps, and unappreciated—will sometimes be found here, even when the mistress—who pays her servant, and gives her a home—is not to be classified among "the good and gentle." But "as a man sows so shall he reap" is a rule of very general application. If kindness and consideration, supplementing honest payment of service, do not always meet a just reward at the hands of our servants, so we have no right to expect a cordial, hearty, cheerful service for a cold return in money only.

To claim unquestioning obedience—a respectful and ANSWERS—a suitable style of dress—a strict conformity to the hours and rules of the house—and of the performance of the work, in conformity with your own directions—are all requirements perfectly within the limits of your rightful authority. But be careful to give each servant, before her entrance into your family, the complete list of the rules by which she is to be guided; so that if she should demur at any of them, she may do so at once. In the same way, make her acquainted with the amount of rest and recreation you can allow her; and after her ready agreement to your proposals, then let her find that—strict as you may be on certain points—you are not a niggard in kindly consideration for her, and that her pleasures are given with an ungrimacing hand. Above all things, remember that if you lose your temper in speaking to her, you lower yourself in her estimation. Speak firmly, and gravely, if need be; but do not forget yourself for a moment, nor lower your dignity by saying anything in haste that you would not like to hear repeated in the servants' hall as a specimen of an ill-governed temper. Such outbreaks, however justly you may have been offended, may make your servants fear, but never respect you.

In reference to the recreations to which I alluded, a few suggestions should be given. Going out after dark is by no means included amongst them, unless it be to take turn with other servants in going to church or chapel. Let no Sunday pass without sending each servant to a place of worship once in the day. They need out-of-door air, as well as their mistress. Send them for their weekly outing while the sun shines, or at least that the daylight lasts, to see their families and friends, or do their shopping. Do not grudge a cup of tea, "once in a way," to the relative or friend who may come to see them when the chief work of the day is over.

Supply them always with some nice book—such as a volume of magazines (for instance, our own paper, the Sunday at Home, or the Leisure Hour), for, apart from the kindliness of the act, it is your duty to educate their minds; and in so doing you are also training them to be more efficient servants.

Some little time should always be allowed—if not every day, at least once in the week—for their own needlework, the necessary mending and making of their clothing and caps. It is equally for your own satisfaction that they should be accorded some time for this, as otherwise their appearance will be unsuitable to your house; and sitting up late at night—as many are obliged to do—is most undesirable on every account.

Remember that while all familiarity should be avoided, there is a quiet dignified politeness of manner and mode of address that invariably calls forth a politeness of response. Do not allow your self-respect and self-control to border upon an ostentatious demeanour. You will never elevate your position in their eyes by so doing. The lady-like politeness of your own manner will invariably be reflected to some extent in that of the servant whom you address.

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