

**THE SERVANT-GIRL OF THE  
PERIOD THE GREATEST PLAGUE  
OF LIFE. WHAT MR. AND MRS.  
HONEYDEW LEARNED OF  
HOUSEKEEPING**

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The servant-girl of the period the greatest plague of life. What Mr. and Mrs. Honeydew learned of housekeeping by Charles Chamberlain

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**CHARLES CHAMBERLAIN**

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INV. 1898.

THE

# SERVANT-GIRL OF THE PERIOD

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GREATEST PLAGUE OF LIFE

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WHAT

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HOUSEKEEPING

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By CHARLES CHAMBERLAIN, Jr.

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## P R E F A C E .

A PROMINENT journalist once, in giving directions to a non-plussed reporter, briefly said, "Find one fact—or two—draw on your imagination for the rest, and make a good story."

The reporter did so—and the account was a success, in a journalistic point of view.

It is not pretended that the imagination has not been called upon for a part of the present volume ; but that Mr. and Mrs. Honeydew, and dear Mamma, and the "ladies of the employment bureau," as a friend once heard the "help" of America styled by one of the "fraternity," are, to a certain ex-

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tent, real characters, is a word of truthful information.

To some, there may be a similarity of circumstance with personal experiences; to others, there may be exhibited a picture of what some one has suffered.

Such as it is, the work is sent forth, clothed in such garments as seemed most becoming to its unpretending personality.

C. C. Jr.

NEW YORK, *November*, 1872.



## INTRODUCTORY.

"If I had servants true about me, that bear eyes  
To see alike mine honor as their profits—  
Their own particular thrifts—they would do that  
Which should undo more doing."

*Winter's Tale, i. 2.*

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GOOD old Sam Johnson, who is more worthily correct in some of his definitions than either of the more pretending lexicographers, who comes closer to Shakespeare in his plain, undressed and fitting similes, gives, in the first edition of his dictionary, a few definitions—such as in 1755, printed in the craziest of crazy antique lettering, he gave to the thinking, writing, speaking world, from which to frame their plainest Anglo-Saxon.

Dr. Johnson was not "up" in the modern improvements in accessories to the servants. No such word as laundress appears in any of the earlier editions of his work—it is so near-

ly a modern invention that we must go to Webster for it; who defines the "institution" thus:

LAUNDRESS.—A washerwoman; a woman whose employment is to wash clothes.

But good Dr. Johnson does find other words, and he defines them, in that same old book, as follows:

COOK.—One whose profession is to dress and prepare victuals for the table.

WAITING MAID,	} An upper servant, who attends	
WAITING WOMAN,		} on a lady in her chamber.
WAITING GENTLEWOMAN,		

NURSE.—A woman that has the care of another's child; a woman that has care of a sick person; one who breeds, educates or protects; an old woman in contempt.

If the definition of good old Dr. Johnson were exemplified in the character of the Servant-Girl of the Period, there would be grand reasons for congratulations; but the distinct classes into which servants are divided are so peculiar in their individuality that it is impossible to draw a comparison.

They do not fraternize with each other. The Irish does not like the German, and the

Ethiopian element does not stand in any direct relationship with either of the others. The latter class may be left out of the calculation in the consideration of the help upon which the housekeepers of America are dependent.

The Cook of the Period is the most important of all the servants. When the wants of the inner man and the inner woman are to be ministered to, and when the plain duty is to "prepare victuals for the table," and nothing more, it becomes a necessity that the persons employed should be cooks by knowledge, and not by accident or prospective instruction, which they expect from the "mistress"—and which, unfortunately, the mistress is too often unable to give them.

The tide of immigration brings to this country a class of people who hope to find in America a solace for the woes of their own land, and they bear with them the seeds of a presumptive arrogance which ripens as soon as exposed to the atmospheric influences of the new social climate into which they come.