

which brought the tears into the eyes of his auditors. Playing the piano, and listening to the playing of others were his great delight, and he would often be seen with his slate or book quite forgotten, drinking in the pleasant melody that to him replaced the boyish games of his companions.

An old lady, aged ninety-four, lived for a long time at Northlands. Although she had attained to such a great age, she was generally cheerful and chatty. She had been accustomed when young to a very stirring life, and at upwards of ninety years of age would sometimes be up at five o'clock on a summer's morning, busily occupied with some needlework.

Another aged lady of eighty-six years retained her memory in a wonderful degree. An uncle of hers having been a "King's messenger" in the reign of King George III., had consequently travelled a great deal, and the relation of those travels was a great source of pleasure to his aged niece and to her auditors. She would also love to tell interesting anecdotes of the old coaching days, before the iron horse was thought of, and when it took days, instead of hours, as it does now, to travel from one end of England to the other.

One lady has been there for twelve and a-half years. She has epileptic fits, but her attacks now, owing to care and attention, are not only fewer in number, but are not of so violent a character. Having been so many years a resident at Northlands, this lady is looked upon with affection as "the old lady of the house," not from age, but from her long residence in the Home, and her opinion always carries great weight with the other ladies, her companions.

Mrs. Rutley will be pleased to answer any inquiry relating to the Home, and to give any information on any matter connected with it that may be required.

G. K.

WOMEN AND THEIR WORK.

LADIES AND LAUNDRY WORK.

STEAM has revolutionised everything, even to "this is the way we wash our clothes." The large steam laundries which are now so much in vogue are very different buildings from the little cottage homes where the poor widow used to "take in washing." Airy, well arranged, commodious, and built with "all the latest sanitary improvements," they compete favourably from outside appearance, but whether these new iron hands do the work as thoroughly as those real ones of the best toilers is to be doubted. At least they have taken away the little breath of poetry which

formerly hovered around the wash-tub. The village children on little stools blowing soap-bubbles and watching the fragile balls as they float away towards the low white-washed ceiling; the neighbourly gossips, busy with their tongues as well as with their hands; the hearty shake of the well-rinsed clothes; the "lines" in the little garden without, waving in the breeze which comes from the furze-laden common, bringing now and then a big bumble bee, who, seeking sweetness amidst the swinging garments, finds only disappointment—where are they now? But this is, after all, a thought of the country. What have the great cities made by man to do with such like things? The noise, the bustle, the dreariness of the great steam laundry suits them best after all. Many ladies, forced to earn a living and not taking kindly to the "woman's peculiar groove"—*i.e.*, teaching—have accepted posts as lady superintendents at these vast establishments. The pay is good, being from £70 to £100 a year, and there is nothing *menial* in the work in the sense *menial* is used by the young ladies who advertise for places, yet consider themselves above doing a servant's work, and who forget that a true gentlewoman's character is shown, not in what she does, but how she does it. The work is only, in this instance, superintendence—overlooking the clothes when they are received and seeing they are rightly returned, keeping order, and also watching that the women and girls under her do their work well. All this can be done without any special training—a great advantage to ladies not so young as they once were. The hours are, however, very long, and the constant standing is a great trial to those unaccustomed to "being on their feet" all day. Only lately I heard of a lady who died of an illness brought on by the long hours of standing; but then beggars cannot, alas! be choosers, else surely—

"If wishes were real things,
Beggars would ride on horseback."

Lady clerks are much employed in these large laundries; they receive from £40 to £80 a year. They have the usual clerk's duties to perform, and generally are supposed to know double entry, so as to keep the books.

BUT spite of steam laundries and laundries big and laundries little, many, especially in the north of England, either from economical or old-fashioned ideas, still persist in washing at home. They may be glad of a few hints for "washing made easy." If the clothes are left to soak for an hour or so in a copper of boiling water, in which are placed half-a-pound of soap, and a couple of small tablespoonfuls of paraffin; then taken out

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