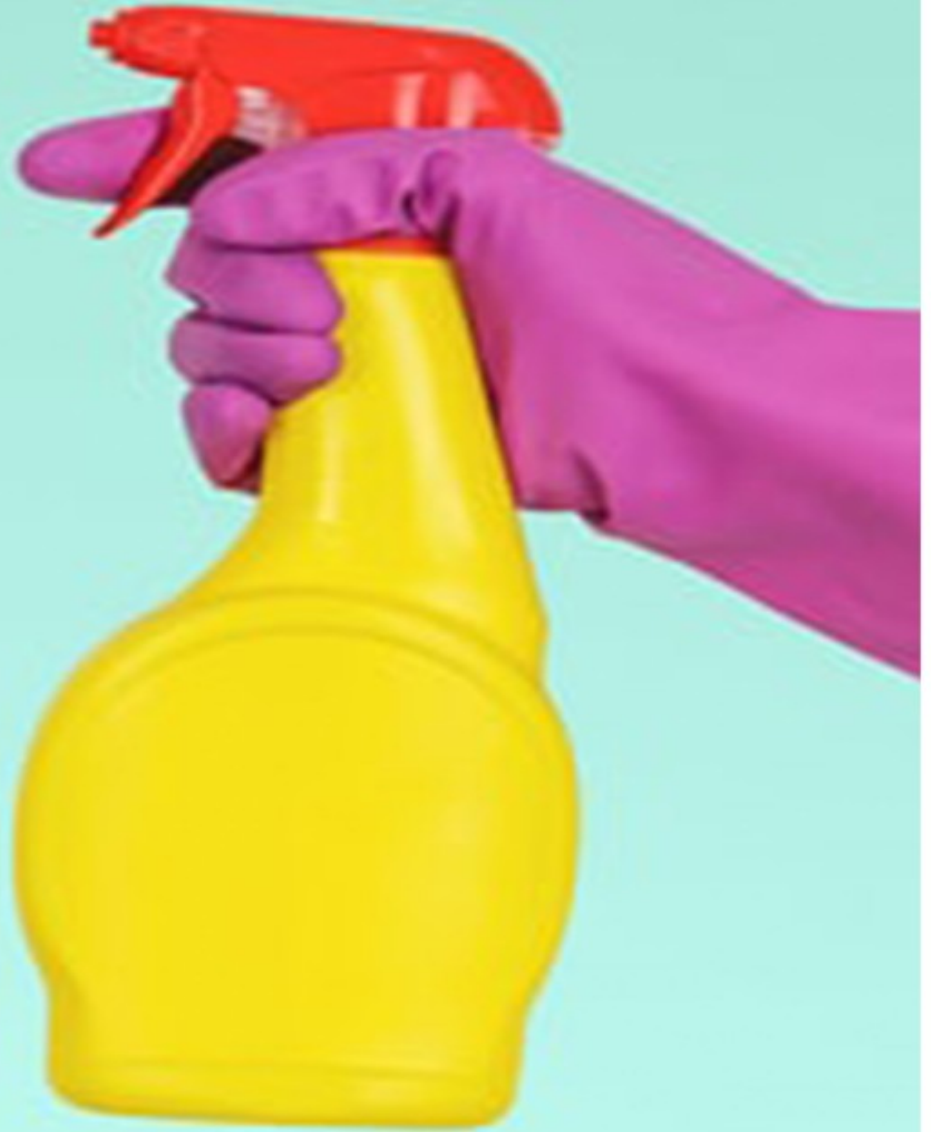


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***COMMON
SENSE FOR
HOUSEMAIDS***

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Common Sense for Housemaids

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EXTRACTS FROM A LADY'S JOURNAL, SHOWING THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY FOR WRITING THIS BOOK.

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Arrived yesterday in Cavendish Square at half-past five o'clock, for a visit of a few days. Much fatigued, but wonderfully sustained in spirits during the journey, by the prospect of seeing a dear friend, the ten thousand comforts of her well-regulated establishment, and the bright visions of the appearance of my accustomed bed-room. Again and again, had it risen before my mind's eye, in all its glory. The inviting appearance of the smooth, flat, well-made bed, with the light night quilt of snowy whiteness (and the heavy creature folded aside); the easy chair, and footstool (with their bright crimson covers), turned towards the clear glowing fire; the dear little kettle of silvery brightness, on the hob, singing its accustomed song to its grateful mistress. A chair before the toilet, with its pink and pure white drapery. The bright looking-glass reflecting crystal candlesticks, wax-lights, and essence-bottles, with all the perfumes of Arabia. The washhand-stand, a perfect picture, surrounded by a hundred towels. The rose soap giving out sweet odours. The additional large tumbler for the saline draft, the cup and spoon, for less pleasant powders. Alas, alas! how are all those glories buried in the dust, and dust is now indeed the order of the day; my friend is the same in heart and soul, but she has sprained her ankle, and changed her *housemaid*.

Hurried to my room to dress, as the dinner was to be at six o'clock; went straight to the accustomed corner, where my trunk, resting upon a stand, uncovered and uncorded, used to be placed in readiness to be opened. The stand was empty, the trunk upon the carpet, the ropes and cover still on and covered with dust. Rang the bell; no one answered, rang a second time; the housemaid entered, undid the ropes, removed the dusty cover, and left the room. Turned to unlock my trunk, found it had been placed with the lock turned towards the wall; tried to re-turn it—found it impossible—rang again for the housemaid, and with our united efforts turned the trunk—stooped to unlock it, and found too late that the dust of weeks was on the carpet—shook it in disgust from my silk dress, and advanced in haste to the washhand-stand, to wash the remembrance from my hands at least,—found no soap, no warm water; fortunately had soap in my dressing-box, and, unwilling to apply a third time to a bell-rope of most frail and suspicious appearance, washed with ice-cold water, and having performed my toilet with inconvenient haste, descended to the drawing-room, and found that the dinner had been on the table some minutes. Forgot my discomforts in most agreeable conversation—but much fatigued, was thankful to retire at night, though with secret misgivings as to the discomforts I might perceive on re-entering my room. Opened the door and perceived nothing, the smoke impenetrable, and the fire out; rushed towards the window, threw it open, a rush also of wind and sleet, and the candle became extinguished; groped my way to the bell, pulled it vigorously, heard no sound, felt only a blow upon my cheek,

and the bell-rope in my hand—wished it around the neck of a fellow-creature, advanced a few steps, got entangled in the ropes and cover of my trunk (still left upon the ground), stumbled and fell—found the door at last, and rushing out upon the landing-place, with the bell-rope in one hand, and all that remained of the crystal candlestick in the other, called frantically, *Housemaid, housemaid!* Mr. B—— sprang from his dressing-room en robe de chambre. “What is the matter, is it fire?” he exclaimed. “Alas, it is neither fire nor candle,” was my melancholy answer, and my dark history was given. The housemaid, half undressed and sulky was brought into the room. The thick crust of small coal, through which no air could penetrate was removed, sufficient wood to light a dozen fires, thrust into the grate, pieces of small coal added, and all was soon in a blaze; the window was shut down, and the water on the washhand-stand, having once been warm, I resolved to be thankful for small mercies, and, pretending not to feel the smoke which lurked in every corner of the room, as well as in my throat, undressed and went to bed—“*To bed, but not to sleep.*” O the variety of *mountain heights*, and the scarcity of *pleasant plains!* fell asleep at last holding fast by the side of the bed, dreamt I was a swift rolling *snow-ball*, and awoke upon the floor.

Two more nights have passed—No, I will not detail them. What is friendship but a name?

I will leave the house——

I WILL WRITE A BOOK!

COMMON SENSE FOR HOUSEMAIDS.

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This little book is intended to convey instruction with regard to a housemaid's duties to the most ignorant in the simplest possible language. Many will throw it aside in indignation, and exclaim, "Does it require a book to be written to tell us that the drawing-room grate should be the first thing cleaned and polished, and not left till a room is swept and dusted, or that if the apartment has not been used for some time, and the carpet carefully covered up, it is better to leave it covered till the walls have been swept down, and the window-curtains brushed?" Strange as it may appear, such advice we have more than once found necessary; we therefore address ourselves to those who for want of regular training, and from not bringing common sense into practice, have fallen into similar errors to those here alluded to, and to a still more numerous race, who are every day leaving their father's cottage with the desire to obtain a housemaid's place, and would therefore willingly learn something of a housemaid's duties.

A housemaid's duties are various, and by no means easy of attainment; for she has to contend against a host of enemies—dust, soot, smoke, rust, insects of various kinds, and bad smells innumerable; let her, however, not be discouraged; all difficulties will give way before early rising, habits of activity, an acute nose, frequent open windows, and a teachable spirit; let us therefore proceed without further preface to give our best advice as to cleaning a house thoroughly after the six winter months of smoke and dust.

Let all the dusters and brushes which will be required, be carefully washed the day before you begin the work of cleaning. To sweep with a dirty brush will do more harm to a carpet than to leave it unswept; and a chair-cover, rubbed with a soiled duster, is injured in a way which no after-dusting can remove.

Let the stair-carpet be first taken up and folded to be beaten with the other carpets. If the family are absent, it is better that all the carpets which require to be beaten should be taken up at the same time and sent away, and all the chimneys swept before the cleaning begins. But if the family are at home, this should not be done, as the cleaning should then only begin in one room at a time, so as to occasion as little discomfort and inconvenience as possible.

Let the stairs be first swept down after the carpet has been removed, taking care that all the bed-room doors be previously shut. If the chimneys in the attics are to be swept, place a mat on the upper landing-place, and if the rooms have carpets, let the carpets be taken up in as many of the rooms as can be cleaned in one day: as the carpets in the upper rooms are, generally small, they are in most families beaten in the court below; the window and bed-curtains should also be taken down and well shaken and brushed below stairs, and the beds carefully covered up with a covering-sheet, well tucked in all round, that no soot may penetrate; then remove the tables and chairs into the landing-place, if there is space sufficient, turning the bottom of one chair down upon the bottom of another; if the landing-place is too small, remove them into one of the attics, and let this room be the last swept and scoured. As