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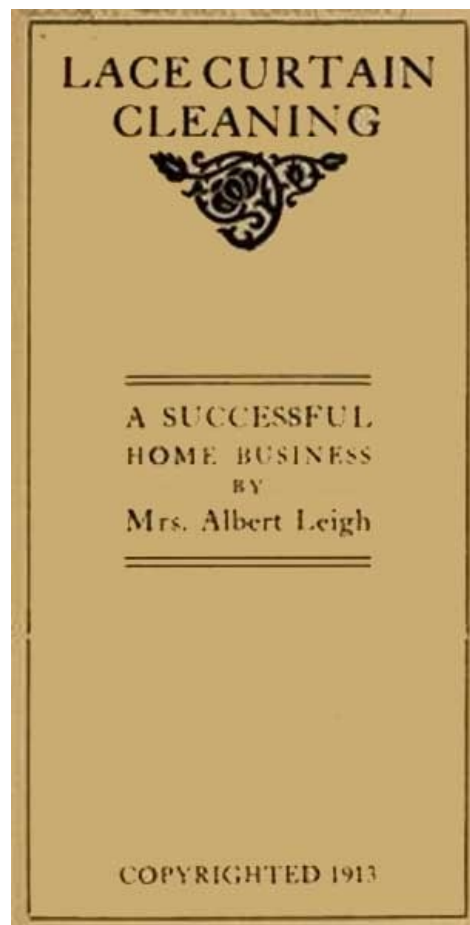
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK LACE CURTAIN CLEANING: A SUCCESSFUL HOME BUSINESS ***



LACE CURTAIN CLEANING



A SUCCESSFUL HOME BUSINESS

BY

Mrs. Albert Leigh

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How I Started A Successful Home Business



In the following pages will be found valuable instructions to all who have applied for them. They are for your own use, and should not be given or loaned to others, if you wish to succeed yourself.

My advice to all is to begin this little book at the beginning, and read it carefully to the end, then begin work in earnest—experience is the best teacher, and I wish to show you, from my own experience how I succeeded in building up a successful business right here in my own home, in spare time only. For the first year my profits were over \$200.00.

There is no royal road to success, nor do I know of any in which patience and perseverance are more requisite than in the Lace Curtain Laundry Business, though the work is easy, pleasant and to all who master these instructions and apply them persistently, should not fail to achieve the success that I have, and more.

Illness in my family first inspired me with the ambition to help keep our home together, and I shall never regret the thought which prompted me to start the Lace Curtain Laundry Business, which has proved such a success to me.

There is no profession where the beginner can learn so quickly, none in which the financial returns are so liberal, so I, being inexperienced, took courage, patience and perseverance for my motto, and the result is a nice home business built on the inspiration of a thought.

Business enterprises that women can successfully engage in are very scarce, but as this business is so easily conducted in the home, any woman with a fair amount of ambition, who wants to earn her own living, or who desires to assist with family expenses, in spare time, or who wishes to increase her spending allowance and does not wish to leave home in doing so; "this business offers the opportunity." Make your strike for independence now, by following my instructions, you will never regret it; for in a few months' time you will own a business of your own—a business that will remain permanent for years to come and will become more profitable, the longer you operate it.



MY METHOD

As this business requires little or no capital to start, I lost no time in making a beginning, having all the necessary appliances, such as Tubs, Boiler, Wringer and Stretchers, in my own home use, adding two new pair of Stretchers with the first money earned at my business, and taking my parlor for my work shop, I was ready to begin.

In the first place I mentioned my proposition to a few friends, who gave me every encouragement, and in a few days I received a few orders, which netted me \$10 clear for the first week.

In the evenings, I wrote down fifty names and addresses of the best residents of our city, having borrowed an old phone book from my next door neighbor for this purpose, then I wrote each a polite note stating my business, and soliciting their patronage, promising to give special care and attention in Laundrying without tearing, also guaranteeing points and Curtains even.

This brought me many orders, as also did a polite note to the President of our Civic Betterment Club, who very kindly read my note to the members at one of their meetings. The following week I sent a note to the President of the Auxiliary of the Y.M.C.A., with like results.

At this time, fall cleaning being about over, I set to work to form a plan for spring work, which I knew would be heavy, as my business increased right along as it become known, so I visited all the Hotels, Apartment Houses, Clubs and Dr. Offices soliciting their patronage also, and the result is; I had more work than I could do; now I have to systemize my work by taking in only what I know I can do in a week without over-lating myself, as I employ no help whatever.

THE SECRET OF MY SUCCESS

When the curtains first come in I look them over, if torn or worn, my aim is to not make them any worse; I measure each pair of curtains, length and width, marking it down in a book, for the purpose, with the owner's name, how many pair and the price charged, this keeps me posted for future reference.

Most people put their Lace Curtains in cold water over night to extract the dirt; I find this takes out a little of the smoked lint, not the dirt, to me it seems to fasten it in, it certainly takes more time and labor to get it out, besides being harder on the hands and the curtains also. Try this way: take your largest tub, fill to the top with luke warm water take one large cup of my excellent soap solution and mix in the water thoroughly, now fold each curtain to about a foot square, put into this tub of water until the tub is full, leave for half hour, pressing them down occasionally, you will see the dirt fairly drop out, at the end of half hour take one or two out at one time into fairly hot water unfolding them a little while washing them, you will find this process not only protects the curtains but is easier to laundry, put them through your wringer gently, never wring them with the hands as this tears them.

If the curtains are pure white I boil them a little, if Ecru I merely scald them sometimes they don't even require scalding, but must be rinsed thoroughly; sometimes when the curtains are very frail I don't put them through the wringer, I squeeze them with my hands in a ball, after they are all clean. I dry out of doors if possible, then if it is wet the next day I can starch and put them on the stretchers indoors, in a vacant room kept for the purpose, and with a stove in it for cold weather, it dries quickly. I find by drying all my curtains first I can make the starch the right consistency, that is, most people want them just stiff enough to hang pretty, so I try to get them about the same weight as when new; if the curtain is of a heavy make less starch will be required, but if they are of a net or some other flimsy material it takes more starch—after doing a few pair it is easy to guess just what you require for all curtains.

The first curtain put on the stretcher is always the most tedious, but after that it is easy. I never put on more than one pair of heavy; if of light material I get as many on as the pins will take, providing, of course, the curtains are all of one length; and I always try to make the stretcher fit the curtain, not the curtain fit the stretcher.

To begin with you will need 3 pair of stretchers, two of the adjustable pin and one of the stationary pin kind, the first named are for the scallop edge curtains as they can be placed at correct distances apart—this is important—the stationary pin stretchers are for the straight edge curtain, these must be stretched from the four corners, working them on perfectly even and straight, never try to put a scallop curtain on these stretchers, as the pins are never the same distance apart.

When I first commenced my Laundry Business, I found great difficulty, and wasted much time in trying to find the right figures on the stretchers, so I invented a scheme which has saved me hours of time, and a great deal of patience: I simply went over the figures with pen and ink, now I can see them at a glance.

I often have curtains come in which require some mending; if I have time I do this at night, before starching of course; I charge extra for this and according to amount of work required, the ladies are more than willing to pay for this, and it adds to your work too; makes it look

so much better.

When taking the curtains off the stretchers, unscrew each corner a little and raise the lower bar, this will bring the curtain off easier and without tearing. Sometimes the edges and joints require pressing, I do this as I take them off the stretcher, or at night, if I am short of time. I charge 10c a curtain extra for this, when ready to send home I fold them as little as possible, the fewer the creases the better they look. After wrapping them nicely, I write a note to each, in which I ask, should the work just returned meet with approval, to kindly hand my enclosed card to one of their friends, this invariably brings me a new customer. The card enclosed is simply a plain neat card with name and address only, this with my note I enclose in an envelope addressed to my customer and fastened to the parcel.

Most of my work is brought to me and called for, this saves me a great deal of time and trouble, but the ladies are more than willing to do this, if their curtains are done satisfactory.

Since commencing the laundrying of curtains I have been asked to laundry many other articles, such as shirtwaists, fancy lace dresses, jabots, dinner mats, doilies, scarfs, laces of all kinds, bed spreads and even blankets, but working only in my spare time I have confined myself to curtains and door panels only yet it goes to show that the woman with more time at her disposal could do all this kind of work, including the mending and make a splendid living, more especially when there are three and four in the family.

In conclusion I must say I find that politeness, cleanliness and neatness of person in approaching the people adds a great part in the secret of success in all trades.

Enclosed with these instructions will be found my price list for all curtain work and from which I never vary. For any other information a two cent stamp enclosed will bring it to you by return mail.

For success,

I am very sincerely yours,

MRS. ALBERT LEIGH,

30 Bullett Ave., S.E.

Roanoke, Va.

POINTERS FROM INSTRUCTIONS AT A GLANCE

1. Before wetting curtains measure length and width.
2. Don't put curtains to soak in cold water over night, one half hour in the morning in luke warm water will be better.
3. Don't be afraid to use the soap solution, it won't injure the curtains or the hands.
4. Don't wring the curtains with your hands simply squeeze them or put them gently through the wringer.
5. After washing them clean dry thoroughly all your curtains, you will then know just what consistency to make your starch; make them as near their weight as when new, they hang better.
6. Prepare your starch the night before, this will save lots of time, and you won't have to wait till it cools.
7. Make a straining bag of one yard of crash toweling and strain all your starch before using as sometimes it lumps and sticks to the curtains.
8. If any mending is required do it before starching them and when clean.
9. Don't forget to charge extra for this, according to amount of mending required.
10. Get the adjustable-pin stretcher for scallop curtains, and stationary stretcher for straight edge curtains.
11. Go over the figures and lines on your stretchers with pen and ink, you will then see them at a glance.
12. For narrow curtains and short lengths, bore holes in your stretchers to meet the requirements.

13. When the curtains are ready to fold, don't fold them too much, the fewer the creases the better they look.
14. Don't forget to enclose with each parcel your card, asking to kindly hand it to a friend.
15. Always give a receipt in return for payment, this protects you and your customer too.
16. Don't be afraid to approach the people, they are only too glad to know of you and that their curtains be cared for.
17. Go to the best houses, to the hotels, apartment houses, clubs, doctors' offices and anywhere where curtains are used in public buildings.
18. Your clean and neat appearance will count for everything in this business.
19. Make your prices the same to one and all, with no favors, and terms strictly cash.
20. Be polite to all, even if you are annoyed sometimes, it will pay in the end.



MY EXCELLENT SOAP SOLUTION

Three pounds Fels-Naptha Soap, One Fourth of a pound Mule Team Borax, One pound of Sal Soda, One cup Turpentine, Six quarts of rain water—Into the six quarts of water add the soap cut into small pieces, boil till thoroughly desolved, then add the Borax and Sal Soda, let this desolve also before adding the Turpentine, then boil for 10 minutes, altogether, keep in gallon jars.

MY PRICE LIST

Battenburg Curtains	75c to \$1.00
Frilled Muslin, ironed all over	75c to \$1.00
Heavy Applique	75c to \$1.00
Irish Point Net Curtains	65c to 75c
Oriental Curtains, pressing and cleaning	65c to 75c
Fish Net Curtains, long	65c
Plain Nottingham Lace Curtains	65c
Panel Curtains of all kinds, each	35c
Short Muslin Sash Curtains, each	25c
Door Panels, cleaned and pressed, each	25c to 35c

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