

THIRD PRIZE ESSAY.*

"WHAT I DO WITH MY TIME."

I AM the eldest daughter of a doctor. My home is in a pretty village by the sea, sixteen miles from the nearest railway station. Since I left school three years ago most of my time has been spent there trying to be the help and comfort that a good daughter ought to be in her home. Our household consists of Father, Mother, six year old Alice, a wee baby of three months, myself, servant and boy.

Now in order that you may know how my time is spent I will commence with my morning's duties which are very much alike all the year round.

I generally rise at half past seven. After dressing myself my little sister, who sleeps in a cot in my bedroom and is entirely under my care, has to be washed and dressed. After going down stairs my first work is to prepare the breakfast, and lay the table in readiness for it in the breakfast room. By the time the coffee, ham, and toast are ready, Father and Mother come down, and we sit down together to our morning meal. Directly breakfast is over, Alice has to be sent to school. When she has gone, the breakfast is cleared, and the dining room drawing room and hall are put in order and dusted. The dusting of the drawing room always takes me a good time, as it contains so many ornaments and nick nacks, that require most careful handling. If necessary I next go out into the garden, and pick some flowers, and arrange them in the vases. We are all very fond of flowers, and like to have a little of their beauty and fragrance in our rooms, as well as out of doors. The next work to be done by me is to go upstairs to make my own bed and little Alice's, and put our room in order. One morning in the week it is my duty to see that the servant girl gives all the bedrooms a thorough sweeping after which they have to be dusted by me. When my work upstairs is finished, I go down again into the kitchen to assist in the preparation of the dinner; or should the servant be busy with other work, to take the entire charge of the cooking of it. Any pastry or cakes required for tea are also always made by me during my morning's cooking. Mother having been unwell during the preserving season this year, all the jam and jelly were made by me. As our large garden supplied us with an abundance of fruit for the purpose, I was able to make quite a large quantity of preserves. If there is any time left before dinner after finishing my cooking, it is spent in changing

my dress, and in making Alice also presentable to appear at the table. My afternoons are spent in various ways. In the summer weather the first part of my afternoon is often spent doing some darning or sewing on a shady seat in the garden, where Father and Mother often join me. Whilst Mother and I sew, Father reads aloud from the newspaper anything he sees likely to interest us. After going in from the garden, unless Mother wishes me to take the baby for a while, I practise my music, which is always a source of great pleasure to me. Father and Mother are also very fond of music, so I try to devote a certain part of every day to a steady practice of scales and difficult pieces, in order to improve my playing. But it often happens, that my afternoon passes without my being able to do any practising. Some of our friends may call, and in that case the rest of the afternoon is spent in helping to entertain them. If they are musical like ourselves, we generally manage to have a little music before they leave. Of course Mother and I have to give an afternoon now and then to returning these calls; and seeing other less fortunate friends, who may be in sickness or sorrow.

When 'tea is over in the summer months, I generally go out of doors. There is nothing I enjoy better on a fine evening than a row in our little boat "the Daisy."

Two of us rowing, and one steering, we go along the water at a good rate, and soon leave far behind us the stone pier from which we started, and the little town with its white houses ranged in terraces along the side of the hill.

As the boat dances gaily over the sparkling waves, and the fresh sea breezes play about us, we feel our spirits rapidly rising, and one of us may break out into a song, which is joined right heartily in the chorus by the rest of the company. We pause now and then on our oars, to admire the scenery along the shore, where we see a coast bound by layer upon layer of stratified rock broken up into all kinds of fantastic shapes, and here and there into islets and caves. In this way time passes very quickly and pleasantly, and before long we are back again on the stone pier, talking over our evening's experiences, and making arrangements to meet again another evening for some more boating before we separate to go to our various homes.

Another evening Father may take me out for a drive along the pleasant country roads bordered by hedgerows which are in the summer time gay with honeysuckle, dog roses, and other wild flowers. We drive on

past waving cornfields and green meadows, or sometimes over moors on which nothing grows except heather and gorse. Presently we may see before us a cart in which a farmer and his wife are jogging along slowly and contentedly, with whom we exchange a friendly greeting in Welsh as we pass them by. Occasionally I have to wait outside a farmhouse or cottage, whilst Father goes in to see a patient. It often happens, that before I have been long waiting, an old Welsh woman appears in the doorway making a quaint picture in her short striped skirt, check apron, little red shawl, and clogs. In her hand she carries a glass of fresh milk, which she smilingly offers to me. Of course I have to accept it gratefully. When Father comes out he finds the kind old woman and myself having a friendly chat together in Welsh. On returning from my row or drive, Alice has to be given her supper and put to bed, also our supper prepared. The rest of my time until bed time at eleven o'clock is spent in Reading, sewing, answering letters, or copying Reports etc. for Father.

Girls used to the bustle and gaiety of large towns, would perhaps think my life here during the winter was rather a dull one; but having always plenty of interesting work to occupy my time the winter months pass very happily by. I go for a brisk walk every afternoon, after which the remainder of my day is spent indoors, unless I attend a Public meeting or concert in the evening. The long winter evenings when spent at home were employed in practising my music and singing, sewing, or reading my books from the Home Reading Union by whose guidance I followed an instructive and interesting course of reading in History, Literature, and Science. Any spare time in the afternoons was given to painting, and working for a bazaar in which we had a stall.

Sunday in our home is always a quiet peaceful day. In the morning and evening I go to chapel to a Welsh service, and in the afternoon to the Sunday School, where I teach a class of little girls. As I sit there trying to teach the little ones around me to read and understand God's word, my thoughts often carry me back to that time in my own childhood, when a dear one whose voice is now silent used to talk to me of Jesus and heaven and a great desire fills my heart to lead a better and more Christ-like life.

I declare the statements in this paper to be true.

"ANEMONE."

Cardiganshire.

CHIEFLY ABOUT RHEUMATISM.

By GORDON STABLES, M.D., R.N. ("MEDICUS").

ONE should never boast about one's health and strength. Though, like Mark Twain, I cannot say that I have suffered from every ailment under the sun "except house-maid's knee," still I have during my wanderings here and there in many lands, and at home too, had numerous illnesses. Also I do not think that I could write so well on troubles I had not experienced the *pains* of. Experience gives an atmosphere of reality to whatsoever an author writes. For example, in writing serial novels, or stories, I never depend altogether on my imagination for any scenes, and

selldom for any human character. I have never gone through any part of my life with my eyes and ears shut. I have never travelled anywhere by sea or land, in America, India, Europe, Africa, or even in the Arctic Regions, without two friends—a note-book and a drawing pencil. And whatever of interest has appeared before me is at once transmitted to paper. I do not profess to be an artist, I only just possess the knack of catching salient points and lines. But a sunrise, a sunset, a wild romantic scene, or storm of any kind if sketched by pen and

pencil on the spot, comes in wonderful handy when writing fiction. So too do droll faces, and while travelling in my caravan "The Wanderer" I meet many, many curious-faced folks on tramp and by the wayside.

Here is a hint anyhow to girls who would become writers. Unless you are acquainted with human life and nature, you can no more write a good story than you could paint a decent picture *minus* a model. I know many young ladies who write short stories, or rather try to, which no editor outside Hanwell would look at. These stories are destitute of reality