



Conducted by "ISOBEL"

Service the Sure Road to Happiness

William Hard, in *Everybody's Magazine*, writes a strong sketch of the slow growth of the varied work of the Chicago Women's Club. What is true of the Chicago Women's Club may be equally true of any other Women's Club in any city, and to a certain extent of any other Women's Club in the land. Mr. Hard traces this Chicago Women's Club from its very inception on through the various stages of evolution up to the present.

It would seem that man himself is primarily responsible for the club organization, inasmuch as he has taken the loom, the baking oven, the laundry, the soap-boiler, the sewing machine and many other industrial features of housekeeping into great collective centres, with himself as manager-in-chief. This leaves women with more leisure on their hands. What shall she do with that leisure? Much culture may result. Shall humanity remain uninfluenced by it? How shall it operate? Mr. Hard thinks the leisure that makes women's clubs possible is doing an inestimable amount of good to mankind.

Twenty-seven years ago when the first Chicago Women's Club was formed, on Michigan Avenue, in the Fine Arts Building, their first work was a kindergarten school. They provided the money, the materials, the teacher, the energy. Because of their understanding of Goethe's assertion that "activity without insight is an evil," they took nearly seven years of study, discussion and consideration before entering on the kindergarten work. The value of kindergarten work in populous districts need not be estimated; it is so fully known.

Strangely enough for some years certain topics were excluded from discussion in this club, particularly was women's suffrage tabooed. As they hesitated for seven years before deciding to do really practical work in the kindergarten, it will surprise no one that they hesitated twenty-five years before working practically or rather specifically on women's suffrage.

The Juvenile Court

No one mentions women in connection with the development of the juvenile court, yet it resulted from a club woman's visit to a jail where delinquent children and grown criminals were found herding together, the consequent injury to the children being very apparent. Women do not mind that open credit is not coming to them for the inception of so many improvements; they work for the benefit of man, not for praise of themselves. However, the sceptic who considers this statement heresy, would do well to look into the work that women have been doing and notice too, particularly, that in every instance they are not in any case competing with any organization of any other body. They hunt out their own work.

It is owing almost entirely to the labors of the Chicago Women's Club that night matrons are in the police stations, giving women-arrests a degree of protection they did not otherwise have. They hold up a handsome yearly scholarship for pupils in the Art Institute, thereby substantially aiding the ambitious but luckless student. They got permission and installed a new officer on the city list—a city forester whose business it is to superintend the growth of trees now planted and to plant more; last year he set out 400,000 seedlings in the parks and private yards of Chicago. They spend \$150,000 annually in local improvements, street cleaning, etc., in quarters not cared for by the regular city government.

They started a school in the jails for young men prisoners, they opened up a public dining-room for women, a physician to segregate contagious diseases and a fumigating plant. They decorated the high schools with moral paintings of great beauty, thus stimulating a taste for art

in the students, and hung paintings and engravings of value in many of the public schools. They established park play houses where women tell the children fairy tales, and relate happenings in history, adventure and achievement—they have a great army of social workers busy in every section, in every interest that may improve living.

Scores of other enterprises, all bent on the uplifting of the ignorant and the downtrodden might be mentioned, as the direct tribute to mankind of the so-called leisured or semi-leisured class of women who have been partially relieved from much of the old-time labors of housekeeping by the consolidation of tedious and physically enervating work. It can scarcely be said that humanity has lost in the change so far. What humanity stands to lose unless women are given freer rein in the matter of citizenship is tersely put by Mr. Hard himself and can be best presented in his own words:

Protective Association

The managers of the Juvenile Protective Association, in going back of the court to study the home lives, the industrial occupations, and the amusements which form the characters, for better or for worse,



Harvest Home Decorations at the Church in Pasquik, Sask.

of the city's children, are approaching the field in which the causes of social corruption will stand much more clearly revealed than at present to our intelligence and conscience. It is fundamental work.

But what of the women who are directing that work? What of the women who are directing the other enterprises I have mentioned? Would they make good citizens? They are militant citizens now, with the rank of noncombatants.

One Woman's Answer

"Women cannot give their leisure to useful activity without verging towards citizenship. That is the rule. There are exceptions caused by individual temperament. But that is the rule. Make one group of the women who use their leisure to good purpose. Make another of the women who use their leisure to no purpose. You'll find a growing desire for citizenship in the former. You'll find little such desire in the latter. The conflict that is going on among women who have any leisure at all is between the spirit which

drives them toward a union with the life of the world and the spirit which drives them toward complete detachment and irresponsibility.

"So let's say no more about the suffrage agitation. It's simply a sequel to women's interest in the world's housekeeping. The broader question is, 'Will that interest grow?'"

"One would think it could hardly help growing. The hosts of women who are earning their living—they are immersed in the world even as men. But the women who are at home with little children about them. They're abstracted from the world, aren't they? Yes, physically, just as much as ever. But mentally they come closer and closer to the world all the time.

"Have you read the *Home Economics* books? The day is coming, you know, when every girl will have the training these books suggest. It will make her a home woman, you say. Yes, it will help to do that. But it will help even more to make her something else too.

"Do you know that the *Home Economics* literature has more in it about civic service than any one other general kind of educational literature you can lay your hands on?"

"Does that seem odd to you? I'll tell you the reason for it.

"Home Economics is the study of right living, the study of importance, the utility, and the possible beauty of the common things of daily existence. Now one cannot study sanitation, fresh air, pure food, adequate housing, the care of children, the protection of the family from disease, the maintenance of proper environment and regimen for health and efficiency, without instantly perceiving the closeness of the relationship between the life of the individual and the life of the community.

"The so-called bread and butter studies, now being inserted into women's education, have the merit, superficially paradoxical, of raising the mind to the duties of citizenship. The simplest mother, im-

mured in her home with her small children, will in the days to come realize, as she does not now at all realize, what the freshness of the milk supply, what the purity of the city water, what the efficiency of the health department, mean to those children. She will know—and when she knows she will care.

"Let me give you one illustration of the extent to which certain teachers of Home Economics recognize the future responsibilities of their pupils.

"In a little town far up in the Northwest there's a famous Home-maker's School. It is far from the social pressure of packed populations. Nevertheless, along with all the housekeeping details which crowd its two-year course, you'll find a series of lectures on 'Home and Social Economics' based on a theory which I'll try to give in almost the very words used by the school itself in its public announcements of policy. It is this:

"The growing wealth of different communities, the application of modern inventions to home industries, the passing of many of the former lines of women's work into the factory have brought to many women leisure time which should be spent in social service. Civic cleanliness, the humane treatment of children, the city-beautiful, education, civic morality, the protection of children from immoral influences, child labor, the organizations to protect neglected children and to reform delinquent children—all are legitimately within the province of motherhood, and the attempt to improve conditions is a part of the duty of the modern woman.

"Is that radical? Surely not. Surely its conservative. There's not a suggestion

in it of any change in woman's interests. There's only an awakening to the fact that her interests are now diffused throughout the community.

"I'm thinking now of the millions of women who, after all their home duties are done, still have some time they could give me for a more livable world life. Will they? I can't say. But I will say this:

"Either their public spirit will grow or their private character will decline. One of the two. Because they carry, along with that leisure of theirs, not only its blessings but also its curse. They must sanctify it or perish by it.

"Leisure! Culture! Emancipation! All nothing unless there is something more. Culture without action is an ingrowing disease which first debilitates and then dissolves the will to live. Emancipation without duty is a mirage of pleasure which raises thirst but never quenches it. The Romans emancipated their women, in the days of their degeneration, but with no result except a complete collapse of family life and of personal virtue.

"But perhaps there will be a new issue of events this time. It looks as if there might be.

"This modern world is turning to optimistic materialism, to the theory that the flesh and the things of the flesh can be made noble, to anti-tuberculous societies and juvenile courts, to the outward workings.

"This world seeks peace in service. It is going to be an era of importance, the utility, and the possible beauty of the common things of daily existence. It is going to be an era of right living.

"Ought not woman to have a particular part in it?"

"I have watched her every hour from the beginning—from the very first beginning of any life that had any warmth of love in it. I have seen her make the hearth the symbol of stability of the individual life. Now, when the duties of the home, the stones of which that hearth was made, are scattered far and wide, shall I not see her reassemble them on a grander scale to make a total of stability for all life whatsoever? Shall I not?"

SLEEP SWEET

Sleep sweet within this quiet room.

O, thou, whose'er thou art,

And let no mournful yesterdays

Disturb thy quiet heart.

Nor let tomorrow scare thy rest

With dreams of coming ill;

Thy Maker is thy changeless friend:

His love surrounds thee still.

Forget thyself, and all the world;

Put out each feverish light;

The stars are watching overhead;

Sleep sweet, good-night! good-night!

—Ellen M. H. Gates, in "Heart Throbs."

NEW YORK'S PROBLEM OF WIFE DESERTION

The deserting husband and father has attained the dignity of a civic problem. He is looming up so large as an item of municipal expense that special laws are being passed to punish his offenses, special officers are being appointed to track him down and special courts are being established to try his case.

In New York City alone an average of forty desertions a day are brought to the attention of the city officials. The number of cases in which the deserted families are cared for by relatives or charitable societies is beyond reckoning. Cincinnati is said to lead western cities in the number of desertions, but Chicago, St. Louis, Philadelphia, Boston, cities large and cities small, cities north and cities south, have finally discovered that the deserted families must have the aid not of church and charity workers but of the law.

Thousands of these deserting men claim that they have been driven to the cowardly step by the high cost of living.

Is this true? Come into court and learn for yourself. New York City deals with this problem in what is known as the domestic relations court.

"Bring 'em together" is the blunt slogan of the domestic relations court, and the number of divorces prevented in the dingy courtroom on the upper east side is known only to the recording angel.

The general euseness of the other man or woman coming between husband and wife—in this order do the causes of desertion run, according to officials of