

you know,' she argued, 'that the expenses of the concert do not amount to so very much. The actual cost of each seat would not amount to over fifty cents, for the singers give their services. Suppose you turn in just that—the actual cost, and you see there will be no loss.'

'But there are ten persons going to that concert, and they paid full price for the tickets, expecting the money to go to the Home. I am responsible, because they gave it to me. I have thought it all out, you see, Mrs. Armitage. It's just simple honesty.'

'My dear,' said Mrs. Armitage, genuinely worried, 'it will take all the pleasure out of my concert if I feel that you, who were so kindly willing to help me, have lost fifteen dollars by your kindness. Will you not,—she hesitated a little, 'will you not, as a favor, allow me to assume the thing, and attend to it myself? I really cannot let you'—

'I really cannot let you, either, Mrs. Armitage,' broke in Theodora. The sensitive nerve of her independence had been touched, and Mrs. Armitage realized that her offer was a mistake. 'I must insist on paying fully for the tickets; and I would not have mentioned the matter to you at all if I had been able to pay at once.'

'And she went off,' confided Mrs. Armitage to her husband afterwards, 'like a princess, with head in the air, while I felt very small indeed. It's most uncomfortable, Fred; she will go without shoes and gloves and car fare, to make it up; I know she will. And I would not have had to deny myself anything whatever in order to pay for the tickets. Why can't people be reasonable.'

'Some people are honest first, and reasonable afterwards,' said Mr. Armitage; 'and I like them the better for it, myself.'

'But other girls have lost tickets or ticket money before, in my experience, and not insisted on making it up when they were told they needn't,' objected his wife. 'Most young people are as careless as they can be about tickets.'

'All the better for this girl, then,' returned Mr. Armitage, stoutly. 'You know I don't approve of this ticket-selling business for charities, anyway, Fanny. If people only gave outright, as they ought, such uncomfortable things as this couldn't happen. It's hard on the girl, and it isn't her fault; but it shows what first-rate principles she has, and how bravely she lives up to them. I'd like to have seen her turn on you—for you deserved it, my dear!' and Mr. Armitage laughed. 'Where does she sit in church?'

Theodora did not know why the next Sunday Mr. Armitage looked at her so keenly, while his wife stopped after church to shake hands with her. But it pleased her thoroughly to feel how Mrs. Armitage, with all her style and fashion, met her simply as an equal and a friend in that greeting.

'She understood,' thought Theodora; 'she knew I didn't mean to be rude, but I just had to refuse. I guess I can give fifteen dollars cheerfully, though I didn't mean to give it at all,' and she forgot her worn shoes and her thin jacket, and felt a glow at her heart that helped her to be brave.

Nevertheless, it was hard that winter. Shoes will not last beyond a certain point, and the jacket question had been a vital one even the year before. Then, to add to the burden, Mr. Gray fell sick, and for a fortnight was unable to go to his work. Medicines and doctors are costly, and Theodora was not able, all winter long, to overtake those fifteen dollars once paid out. She

went to church, but she hurried out so that her shabby appearance might not be noticed. Yet, in spite of it all, she felt a queer exultation in the cause of these things. 'It isn't like suffering for doing wrong,' she said to herself; 'it's for doing right. Honesty is better than new shoes, any day, and I ought to be glad of the test of whether I'm really honest or just pretending to be.'

It was a test that was more real and fruitful than Theodora knew. She was a good deal astonished when, in the spring, she received a letter asking her to call the next day at Mr. Armitage's office. It was only a short distance from her employer's, so she hurried round, wondering. The chief clerk ushered her at once into the private office of the firm, where Mr. Armitage was sitting before a desk crowded with papers.

'Miss Gray,' he began, without preface, 'I want a successor to my private secretary, who is going to be married. She has given me six months' notice, and she is willing to train her successor during that time. I have been making inquiries about you, and I understand you are an excellent typewriter and stenographer. So far, so good; but, you understand, on your side, that other things are necessary for a private secretary—system, discretion, memory, and so on. Whether you have these or not I do not know. It will take a month or two to find out. Are you willing to come into the office on condition that, if you should not take the secretaryship, a position quite equal to the one you leave shall be guaranteed to you?'

Theodora was stunned. All she could say was, 'I am quite willing, Mr. Armitage,' but her flushed check and sparkling eyes showed how much she appreciated the surprising offer.

'Very well, Miss Gray,' said Mr. Armitage. 'How soon can you report for work? The first of next month? Very well. We will consider the matter concluded, then.' He touched the bell, and the dignified clerk conducted Theodora out again, dazed but happy in her new prospects.

'I can do it! I will do it!' she said to herself, as she walked along as if on air. 'I know I'm systematic, I hope I'm discreet, and I always had a good memory. If hard work will do it, I'll be as good a secretary as he can find.' Mr. Armitage, at his desk, nodded his head in approving retrospect, and reflected: 'She'll do. Good face, plenty of will, plenty of sense, reliable to the core and that's the great thing. I'm glad I thought of it. Well, she'll not lose by those ten tickets in the end!'

Which was quite true, as the private secretary can testify to-day. 'Those blessed ten tickets! they were a very dark cloud, but what a silver lining they turned out to have in the end!' she says to herself, as she remembers them—which she does often, for memory, as will be recollected, was one of her qualifications for her new occupation.

### Expiring Subscriptions.

Would each subscriber kindly look at the address tag on this paper? If the date thereon is May, 1902, it is time that the renewals were sent in so as to avoid losing a single copy. As renewals always date from the expiry of the old subscriptions, subscribers lose nothing by remitting a little in advance.

Business men of New York city, who employ twenty thousand boys, have determined to give the preference to boys who do not smoke cigarettes.

### A Girl's Influence.

(By Mrs. Clement Farley, in 'Ledger Monthly.'

It would astonish noisy, vain girls, conspicuous in the street and attracting disrespectful notice wherever they go, to suddenly realize that years hence they should have been among the causes which made it possible, for generations to come, to read that the young girls of our time lacked refinement in manners and dress and were not modest in public places.

It would seem of little moment to any one but themselves and their parents, how Jennie and Bessie looked and walked as they went briskly to their desks in some office; yet their ladylike hats, their suitable and refined working dresses, their intelligent faces, their gentle yet business-like manner, have distinct bearing on the estimate made of our country by observant travellers to-day and shall be an element of importance when our record is written for those who are to follow us hereafter. Each of our lives has a bearing on the story of advancement in the mighty new century into which we have just entered.

It may seem nothing, but, dear girls, it is a great gift which is put into our hands, this power of influence; and the poor girl who is struggling hard to make an honorable living and her rich neighbor, whose material endowments are so great, have almost equal power to do good. The character of the women of our country, and therefore the character of the homes of our country, lies as much in the power of the one as the other. Perhaps the greater opportunity to do good lies with the poorer girl, for the exceptions are the rich; the majority of the inhabitants of every land are the workers.

And it is all so simple, because the effort lies in our own control since we must begin with ourselves; preaching what we do not practice is a waste of words and time.

A sweet, dainty, refined girl needs to say little as she stands among her fellows. A careless, untidy, vulgar neighbor immediately begins to change her hair-pins and tries to gather up her straggling locks; she straightens her collar and tightens her belt, and feels her disorder in every fibre of her neglected self.

There is an actual envy which arises when the dweller in a shabby, disorderly home is confronted with the charm and comfort of a room made lovely by care and cleanliness. The same furniture, the same space, the same expenditure may have produced these unequal results, and the sunshine through clean pane and snowy curtain may woo the aroused observer quickly to emulate her neighbor.

To try to brighten your own life and with steadfast endeavor keep yourself on the upward path, is to inspire like endeavors in others. To strive to increase the good order of beauty and comfort of your own home, is to set your neighbor to work with paint pot and brushes, and sends him forth to tidy up the refuse the winds have carried to his door. And when you really take to heart that your example and record have their share in your country's welfare and affect her history, it does seem worth living up to your ideal even if you do it with a great effort.

### FORMING ONE'S OWN CONCLUSIONS.

Try to think out what you would like to see improved in your own little circle. Do not wait for some society to be formed, or a town meeting to be held, but form your own judgments as to what would be a gain