

BOYS AND GIRLS.

Do the Hard Things.

Other things being equal, it is usually better to do a hard thing than an easy one. There are plenty of tasks waiting for attention every day; few of us are troubled by lack of something to do. But most of us are content to keep busy over the less difficult tasks, persuading ourselves that because we are not idle, we are doing all that can be expected of us. The more difficult duties are pushed aside, and deferred, and day after day opportunities for character-training are lost.

Those who grow stronger and abler in life's race, forging ahead of the rest, are those who are steeling themselves to take the harder task every time there is a choice. That is sound advice, credited to Professor James, of Harvard: "Every day of your life do something that you know you ought to do and that you don't want to do." It is Spartan training, but it makes for character, here and hereafter.

Can the King Do More?

The individual who has learned to be contented in whatever sphere of action his lot may be cast, is not only on the surest road to happiness, but is preparing the way to the advancement that comes from plodding, painstaking labor.

It is related that once upon a time, when King Louis of France was at one of his country palaces, he happened to stroll into the kitchen, where he found a small boy busy at work among the pots and pans and singing as gayly as a lark. The lad had keen, bright eyes and a happy, sunny face. His appearance and manners pleased the king very much.

Laying his hand upon the boy's head, Louis asked him his name. The lad, looking up and seeing a plainly-dressed man, thought that it might be one of the servants or perhaps a groom from the king's stables. He answered very modestly that his name was Simon, that he had come from the town of La Roche, and that his father and mother were both dead.

"And are you content with this kind of work?" the king asked.

Many a boy would have found something in his position in life to grumble at, but not with Simon.

"Why shouldn't I be content?" he asked, with a twinkle in his eye. "I am doing as well as the rest of them. The king himself can do no better."

"Indeed! How do you make that out?"

"Well, sir, the king lives and so do I. He can do no more than live. And then, I am contented. Can the king say as much?"

Louis walked away, his mind full of strange, melancholy thoughts. The next day, much to Simon's surprise, he was called into the presence of the king, and he was still more surprised when he found that his visitor of the day before was Louis himself. The king talked with him for some time, and was even more surprised at his ready wit and good judgment than he had been the previous day.

The end of it all was that Simon was made a page in the king's household. But his career did not stop here. Always content and ready to strive for the best, he rose, step by step, from one post of honor to another, until he became a famous military commander, and was honored by his countrymen as General La Roche, one of the noblest of the many soldier-statesmen of France.

The Misunderstood Girl.

She is to be found everywhere, in all classes of society—and to recognize her is to avoid her. Nothing is more fatal to the peace and happiness of a community or household than to count a "misunderstood

girl" among its members. As a rule they are not misunderstood at all, but, on the contrary, are understood far too well, for they are taken at the valuation of the many, which is more likely to be true than that which is set by the individual herself upon her own character.

A misunderstood girl is often a selfish, always a foolish, girl; for if she is clever she will soon discover the reason why she is not a domestic success.

In some instances we are really misjudged, in the same way as we often misjudge others. But, as a broad rule, the judgment formed by the world—or rather that small portion of it in which we live—is more often the true one.

"Nobody loves me at home; they don't understand me," the "misunderstood" girl will say, with a melancholy smile, and thinks herself well deserving of the pity and sympathy of her friends. But is she?

You are filled, perhaps, with the desire of improving your own mind; you love the study of poetry, art or literature, and you are extremely ruffled when your sister begs you to assist her in retrimming an old dress, or to take the younger children out for a walk. Don't you think you could put down your book with a good grace, help your sister, and at the same time interest and amuse her with an account of your reading?

One day you are keenly interested and excited over an article in a magazine, where your own ideas are brought out in powerful language. You rush down like an avalanche and pour forth a volume of talk upon the head of your favorite brother who has just come home tired from a hard day's work, and then you are angry and hurt that he takes no interest in the subject and wonders what on earth you are so excited about.

The truth is you are not misunderstood—you are incorrigibly selfish.



"The baby in the photo weighs thirty lbs., is ten months old, and is the son of Mr. F. R. Mahoney, proprietor of the Maple Leaf Hotel, Lumsden, Sask. The child stands fearfully erect on his father's hand, and is swung to and fro at the will of the parent. The photo was taken by Wm. M. Togart, at the Lumsden Studio."



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