

HOUSEHOLD.

Style—and Style.

(N. E. 'Homestead.')

Perhaps some of you know a girl who is just now feeling rebellious against what she terms Fate, and perhaps the chief cause of this rebellion is the lack of the pretty clothes every girl loves. Perhaps things all went wrong last fall and father seemed unlucky every way. The best horse broke his leg, one of the cows died, a team collided with the new carriage, mother was sick, and so on through the long string of bad luck that made some one say that misfortunes never come singly. Perhaps none of this happened, and yet money is scarce this winter as it is every winter. But this girl never cared quite as much before for new clothes as she cares this winter. She thinks bitterly of Cousin Kitty who is working in the city and gets such lovely things to wear, while there is no way for her but to stay right on the farm and help mother. It is so hard to ask father for anything new when she remembers how much he gives up for his family's sake. Of course she never for a moment thinks of doing anything but what is so plainly her duty—taking the biggest share of the work from mother's tired hands. Still the dissatisfied feeling will come and it magnifies matters, so that sometimes this girl thinks she hates to wear her old clothes anywhere.

If any of you know such a girl, I wish you would tell her what it took one girl years of heartache to discover. She had been preached at just as you have been, that 'handsome is that handsome does,' that no one worthy of regard ever for a moment notices the clothes you are wearing, etc., etc. She knew, as every sensible girl does in her innermost soul, that this was false, and that instead of clothes being a very small factor in one's life, they were truly a very large one. But along with it she learned something else more important—that the expensively dressed girl is not the well dressed girl. When she had put a great many things together she had in her possession a secret that enabled her and her friends to be satisfied and charmed with her appearance in whatever she was attired. She had learned to individualize every article she wore, and in consequence there radiated from her an intangible something oftentimes miscalled style.

She dressed plainly always, except, perhaps, in her own home in the evening. Then she always had a dainty adornment of some kind that was essentially a home dress. 'I want my best at home,' she used to say, and instead of jamming the fluffy, perishable collarette under her cloak, for an entertainment, it was reserved only for the pretty home parlor and those that were so sure to drop in during the evening. On the street, at church, everywhere about her work, her dresses were noticeable for their plain, simple style. She always bought the best material she could afford, and she

learned to make everything she wore a very part of herself.

I have seen so many girls, like the one you know perhaps, who had such mistaken ideas of dress. One of the grievous mistakes made is to spend so much for one dress that requires silk and gimp and lace and all the rest of the pretty expensive trimming that so soon soil and tarnish and leave a shabby 'passe' air to the dress that is fatal to the 'style' so much coveted. To-day is the day of shirt waists, the boon of all dress-weary women. If our country girls would only adopt them more readily what a change we should see. How much wiser is the girl who has two pretty wool waists for her one black skirt than she with the one much trimmed 'best' dress. The beauty of these waists is their simplicity; the effect is a hundred times greater than the bit of lace or soiled ribbon which certainly cheapen the dress.

Choose plain dark colors and brighten them with pretty stocks which can be often renewed. But to the girl who counts every cent, ribbon 'counts up' and soils easily, while in these days of linen collars, the spotless band has a style of its own and can be easily laundered.

Sacrifice everything to neatness. You cannot be well dressed if your skirt sags, the buttons are off your gloves, your handkerchief is soiled. These trifles are of far more value to your toilet than a brand new dress cut in the latest style. I see, daily, girls who are what the world terms at a casual glance stylishly dressed, whose clothes I know are inexpensive. It is more the way they carry themselves and the way every bit of clothing, from shoes to hat, is individualized, than their dress.

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