

divine womanhood is this—the assumption that vice cannot live in its presence, but is transformed to virtue.”

In our homes which is stronger—vice or virtue? In my life which is stronger—vice or virtue? What a helpful influence these reproductions must be in the molding of girlhood character. Yet the Wellspring mentions other pictures of ideals of womanhood that are better—such as the Madonnas and the saints. The writer of the article makes special mention of Saint Barbara as being one of the most beautiful faces of womanhood in art. She is the patron saint of Christian learning. She is dressed modestly and seems to be about to step into a life of freedom. It is a noble representation of the ideal woman.

I sometimes think that girls are not careful enough in the selection of pictures for their rooms. Pictures inspire or poison the mind according to their subject. At any rate, take down the Gibson type and put in its place a study that inspires and strengthens character.

SUMMER READING

For months I have looked forward to my summer reading when I might enjoy the luxury of leisure. Piled high on my table were magazines of many descriptions and a few light stories. I sat down one afternoon last week for the treat. After reading an hour or two I glanced over towards my library where Ruskin in fourteen clean volumes lured me most invitingly—and I responded. Why should one not have as wholesome literary food in summer as in winter? My “summer reading” has been carefully packed away in the basement and Ruskin has taken its place. I find that my club of girls enjoy the lessons from great writers more than any other studies, and this is a most encouraging feature of the work with



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busy wage-earning girls. They want good food for the mind and soul. This summer we have had a course of lectures by women, each one of whom is at the head of her special line of work, and every speaker has expressed her surprise at the intense interest the girls show. They ask me if the girls care for deep thoughts, and I always answer: “Give them the best you have.” One speaker’s subject was “Lessons from Tolstoi;” another, “Thoughts are Things;” another, “The Lady and the Law;” and another on “Lessons from Canadian Women.” The girls were deeply interested in every subject. Since we have studied in our club for the past six years—Shakespeare, spending three months on each play—the girls crave a good class of literature. Educated people often misjudge the wage-earning girl’s intellectual power, and give her light stuff when she craves genuine literary food. And so we look on great books and splendid men and women as life teachers, meanwhile recognizing the Bible as the greatest Book and Christ as the greatest Teacher. While on this subject, I want to mention a little volume by Newell-Dwight Hillis entitled “Great Books as Life Teachers.” He reviews several books in this manner: John Ruskin’s “Seven Lamps of Architecture” as Interpreters of the Seven Laws of Life—a Study of the Principles of Character Building; George Eliot’s Lito, in “Romola”—a Study of the Peril of Tampering with Conscience and the Gradual Deterioration of Character; Hawthorne’s “Scarlet Letter”—the Retributive Workings of Conscience; Victor Hugo’s “Les Miserables”—How Jean Valjean was Recovered from Passion and Sin to Christian Service and Self-Sacrifice; Tennyson’s “Idylls of the King”—an Outlook upon the Soul’s Epochs and Teachers; a study of Browning’s “Saul”—the Tragedy of the Ten Talent Men and

Their Recovery; the Life of Lord Shaftesbury—the Opportunities of Leisure and Wealth; the Biography of Frances Willard—a Study of the New Chivalry.

This I give our readers for a summer’s course in reading, assuring every girl who follows this course a training that will mean an increase in happiness, strength of character, and womanly power.

THE LUCKY GIRL

This month a girl who had done her work so thoroughly in domestic service was promised a place in an office. The head of the family had noticed her capability and offered her the promotion. Another girl exclaimed: “She is the lucky girl! I never have any luck.” The first girl made her own luck. She did her work well. I have watched both girls for nearly a year expecting to help the second girl into a position more to her liking, but she did her work so carelessly and had such regular attacks of laziness that I felt she could not do well in another position. I believe if a girl does her work well it will be recognized. It may not be the kind of work she likes, but it is often necessary to renounce the luxury of personal preference—and the successful woman is the one who has learned to do common tasks uncommonly well. The mastering of difficulties creates personality—and personality creates that which unsuccessful girls determine “good luck.” The girl who is determined to win will look upon every experience as an educator. She is the girl who will realize her ideals. Successful young women have the marvellous power of retaining and utilizing past experiences.

THE OLD PROBLEM

This past month I believe I have had more experiences with the domestic girl than during any previous month. It has been the first time for several years that there were more girls than positions. A few remarks for both mistress and maid might not be out of place. Few women ask to pay less than a maid is worth, but many say: “I want a capable girl; I am willing to pay the price if the girl is capable.” This is the continual demand, so I asked myself: “What does capable mean? Is it a demand that a girl cannot meet?” I learn that it is just what every girl should and can be—namely, to do the work neatly and carefully. One girl objected to wear a cap and apron, and refused to accept a good position because of this requirement. The trained nurse wears a cap and apron; the clerk wears her black costume; and I sometimes think it would be well if the office girl were required to wear a certain kind of plain dress. It certainly would do away with much extravagant dress that many girls cannot afford. And so I cannot understand why a girl in domestic service should object to uniform.

Lack of attention and carelessness are both faults that can be corrected, and these are most common. Many lose their positions for these reasons. I really believe that as soon as the average girl becomes capable the standard of domestic service will be raised. The dignity of service lies largely with the girl herself. The continual complaint from women that their girls did not do their work carefully prompted me to test some for proof, and it is an actual fact that among several girls who washed the dishes in my kitchen I found only one who left them clean and free from particles of food. Now, no one has more sympathy for the wage-earning girl than I have, but I cannot understand why so many are careless. One woman explained to me that she handled her domestic help in a business way. She helps them the first few days, showing them the way she wants her work done. Then she expects the girl to do the work as explained. If the girl fails she dismisses her. When I mentioned this some girls thought it was hard. But is this not just what is expected of the business girl and of the clerk? Why should not the same requirement be demanded of the girl in domestic service? I realize that it is not easy to work for a woman, yet girls would be given more consideration if they tried to do their work thoroughly.

JACK CANUCK says—
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