

what we are incapable of achieving. If we follow its dictates, we challenge no blame. But we are under just condemnation for leaving undone anything which we acknowledge that it is our bounden duty to do. Hence the woman who would conserve her husband's influence through her own "blameless life," should guard well against challenging criticism, by assuming the responsibilities which are laid upon her the moment she acknowledges "duties peculiar to a minister's wife."

Let us take for practical illustration the matter of making acquaintances, calling and visiting. On other ladies socially prominent, society makes its respectful call, and then humbly waits a return, which, when made, is gratefully received. Upon the minister's wife society descends with a rush, open-armed, and expects her to be "so glad." She must not make formal calls in return. Oh no! She must "run in." She is to be the exemplar of sociability everywhere. Her list of acquaintances may number twenty-five or five hundred, it makes no difference. Somehow she must manage to "run in" at every house once a fortnight, or be met when she does call with suspicious glances, and "You're quite a stranger! We thought you would not stand on ceremony!"

This, too, from ladies who are known to make a business of a "yearly round of calls," and who feel that they do well if they clear their scores every twelve months. Now I claim that the minister's wife should be guided in her social relations by precisely the same principles that guide any other true lady. "But people want to know their pastor well socially, and they cannot if his wife is not friendly." True Christian friendliness may be exhibited without promiscuous hand-and-glove intimacy. The one grand, beautiful point in the life of a minister and his wife is, that they can be so closely associated in every detail of work—that he can draw such unfailing inspiration from her sympathy and cooperation. But the beauty is all gone when outsiders are allowed to dictate how and where and when this happy wife is to sympathize and cooperate. In this matter of a people desiring to know their pastor socially, her course of action is very simple.

No one sees more clearly than the wife how greatly his influence for good will be increased by personal encounter with all his charge. She opens her house at intervals to her husband's friends; with the gracious courtesies of hospitalities and Christian sympathy, she adds a new element to the atmosphere of good influences with which he strives to surround them, but she must be left a free agent.

In closing, I would say that while I acknowledge no "duties peculiar to a minister's wife," no duties of "commission," (if I may use the term,) there are one or two duties of "omission" which, while binding on all Christian women, seem specially so upon her. This, let me quickly add, not because she is a minister's wife, but because she is a *wife*. Just as it would be unbecoming in the wife of a Prime Minister of State who is rigidly striving to enforce economy in our national finances, to set an example of marked extravagance, or in a doctor's wife to exhibit utter disregard for the laws of health, so it is unbecoming in a minister's wife to do things directly contrary to the spirit of her husband's teachings.

I would enumerate, among those duties of "omission," extravagance of dress, indulgence in utterly worldly amusements, excessive pleasure-seeking, and drawing individual social distinctions between rich and poor. And even here I throw in the warning, let her decide for herself, and not according to congregational dictates, where lie the lines between temperance and excess, the worldly and the unworldly, the expedient and the inexpedient.

Let ministers' wives develop side by side with a new spirit of consecration as Christians, a new spirit of independence as members of society, and they will soon convince the popular mind of its illogical and inconsistent theories concerning their position, and prove that no other offers more of honor or happiness to the "Coming Woman."