

The Young Woman and Her Problem.

By Pearl Richmond Hamilton.

Mental House-Cleaning.

This is the month when there is a general cleaning up process. Women are digging out the corners and letting the sunshine in. It is well that we have these times, as it is necessary for the health of the family. There is another kind of cleaning that is likewise essential. We need mental house-cleaning to get the unhealthy thoughts out of the corners of our brains. Just as the housewife lets light into the corners that she may see the dirt and untidy accumulation of things, so we need to open the closets of our minds to intellectual and spiritual light. We can all cultivate the habit of pleasant thoughts. It is not hard to recognize the girl who has this habit. Unpleasant thoughts are unhealthy. The sweet serenity which comes from healthy thoughts shines out of a girl's eyes. In her manner of saying "good morning," her step in the sunny atmosphere which surrounds her, you recognize the result of habitually thinking of what is helpful and uplifting.

Diseased, unsound thoughts create an ugly disposition, and no cosmetic can hide the deformity of a sour temper, no face powder can cover up the wrinkles of a fretful face.

Often I have admired the tasty dress and hat on a girl, but when she turned her face toward me I felt a mental shock. It seemed so old for such girlish attire.

Maxine Elliott says: "People who are at the heart of things keep young. The busy woman is the thinker. The busy woman remembers: the woman with no active work is the sluggard—the sluggard forgets. The busy one has the bright, intelligent, alert expression. The sluggard looks inanimate and stupid. She who has no brains is tiresome. Active brains improve the looks. They have more effect on the appearance than lotions. Regularity is something to be cultivated by those who would keep well and youthful looking. Make your life revolve around someone big, important, necessary thing. The finest gift one can have is that of making people laugh and forget."

There is a little germ that breeds cruel thoughts and selfish hearts among girls—found in the tiny seed "it." In a crowd of school-girls Mary wants to be "it" in every affair. If she be not first in her examination, if the teacher choose another girl to represent her class, if she be not the leader of the class party—in other words, if she be not "it" all the time, she makes life most uncomfortable for all about her. Often other girls give in because they dread the shadow of ill humor that they would be compelled to live in for a week or more. "It" whines, but she does not realize that whining never compels sympathy. I presume the battle for "it" is the most important, and is fought more frequently than any other on the battle ground of school life. Some of the most sweetly patient people in the world are those who have most to endure. Girls who are "it" at school grow up into women "its," and create havoc in their homes and in society.

"It" is responsible for bribes, suicides, murders, and for thousands of broken hearts in social, political and commercial worlds.

There is a lot of downright selfishness back of all desire and determination to be first in everything, and such people are sure to come up against many disappointments in life.

The trouble among many school girls is that they are unreasonably ambitious. A normal ambition is a fine thing. It acts as an incentive and keeps one to her tasks when her energies flag, but distorted, abnormal, dangerous ambition—in other words, the ambition to be "it"—ruins a girl, because she thinks more of getting certain marks than she does of learning something that is of real help.

This aspiration is the cause of the dishonesty which is practiced in schools, and also of much misdirected effort. I like to see girls ambitious—you know I am always preaching it, but I want you to direct your ambition in the right path. I once offered a prize to a class of high school girls. Later I learned that the girl who won the prize for her essay did not write it herself—her older sister at college wrote it. The prize winner had an attack of "it-itis." Do you think the prize aided in developing in her womanly qualities? Your business, my dear school girl is to make as much of the materials you have. Your aim should be not to do better than somebody else, but to do the best you can. Climb, climb, climb up beyond the petty position of "it"—the higher up you get, the harder it will be for others to bother you with diseased desires. There is such a thing as living too high to be touched by the arrows of malice.

A Little Secret.

All normal girls like to be admired, and many wonder why their young men friends drop them and seek other company. One day an engaged young couple sat near me at lunch. The young man, with an unusually kind expression, asked considerably; "Well, dear, how have things been going today?" The girl replied: "Oh, just terrible. I could not find anything I wanted while shopping, and I've had a most wretched time. My sister had a headache and could not come with me, and Kathleen is so selfish that she would not come either. It's horribly sloppy out, and everything has gone wrong." The girl ended with a decided frown. I wish she had noticed the shadow of disappointment that crept over the face of her companion. If you want a man to enjoy your society, be cheerful. Do not fill his ears with all the disagreeable things you can think of or he will soon begin to say to himself: "I've made a mistake, this girl is too fond of the doleful side of life. I'll draw back while there is yet time." We attract hearts by the qualities we display; we retain them by the qualities we possess.

Teachers.

Young women in the teaching profession need to be highly commended for the splendid training they are giving our western boys and girls. I am greatly interested in their work because I was a teacher myself, and yet, how strange! I have not yet written a word to teachers in this department. The boys and girls in Western Canada are fortunate indeed to have the privilege of educational advantages such as are offered today. I have visited school exhibits here where I have been lost in admiration at the display of all that is not only educational but extremely practical. Our schools are educating girls for the home. They see in it a vision of life purposes, and appreciate the grandeur of common things. This education is enlarging the little things of daily living and it glorifies the whole realm of woman's work. It will develop in this country, women fitted for home life, and that is the secret of a prosperous, happy and powerful nation.

I wish the teachers could realize just how much their present training is appreciated by parents. I have often heard a tired mother remark: "Janet is such a help to me, she makes splendid bread and such nice cakes, and it helps me so much, and she learns it all at school." Then mothers appreciate their assistance in mending and sewing more than they can express. Furthermore, in the present system, they really gain more in real text learning than we did when we were children. This extra practical education has done away with that awful system of discipline that we experienced.

The girls are interested, they love their work and do not need the proverbial discipline of former days. This condition has changed the irritated, sour and snappy teacher of the bony, squint-eyed species to the happy, sympathetic and lovely young woman of the ideal kind.

Home work is a life purpose, and it helps the teacher as well as the pupils. Teachers are now the interpreters of life. Someone says real culture comes from association with action, and in this specializing in life's purposes the girl students are developing a culture that reaches the soul. They develop strength that will create beauty in the darkest of surroundings, and when they leave the school and are in homes of their own, this training will create boys and girls that this country will need. I know that teachers have problems—I have experienced them, but I am not going to mention them because these very problems are usually solved into blessings.

A Sermon on the Stage.

"This is a man's world. Man sets the standard for woman. He knows that she is better than he is, and he demands that she be—and if she isn't, she's got to suffer for it." This is the theme of the play, "A Man's World," which was acted at the Walker theatre last month by Mary Mannering, an actress who is an artist in every sense of the word; I saw it, and it was an impressive sermon to me. I wish every young woman among my readers could have seen it. The play was so full of moral lessons that I have been trying to teach to my club of young women that I advised every girl I met that week to go to the play.

Ever since the serpent tempted Eve there has been a double standard for men and women. Really, girls, the majority of men want you to be pure, they demand it, and they are disappointed if they learn you are weak. I wish girls could realize this. My young women are never quite agreed on the double standard question, but they admit that it exists.

Young men of fast tendencies seldom marry girls of their own sort, but demand a wife above suspicion.

Here are some quotations from the play: "Women give too much—they're fooled too much."

"Don't blame nature for ruining the life of a good woman."

"If women decided that men should be equally disgraced for the same sin, they would be."

Is there any reason why young men should not be as virtuous as young women?

If the loss of your society and love be the price they have to pay for immorality they would not pay it.

Pure, sweet girls, kept from the touch of evil through the years of their girlhood, give themselves with their costly dower of womanhood into the keeping of men who have lived in vice and corruption.

There is but one way out of it. Let the young women demand in association and marriage, purity for purity; sobriety for sobriety, and honor for honor.

I believe there are enough thoughtful, earnest girls in our country to work a decided reform in this evil existing condition. Why should the prodigal son be received with open arms and invited to partake of the fatted calf while the prodigal daughter is driven out to starve or die in those cold, friendless dungeons that are filled with other prodigal daughters that have been driven from other parental homes.

The play, "A Man's World," is one of many splendid sermons I have seen acted on the stage of the Walker theatre—a theatre that the public of Winnipeg appreciate. By the way, many do not appreciate the fact that some of the best actors and actresses on the stage today are doing a great deal of sincere reform work. A young actress recently refused to play a part which she considered objectionable because of its immoral teaching, and in defense she said: "I have Maude Adams as an example. She never played a part that her own mother or father would not have wanted to see her play. She is at the head of her profession, and if I ever get there, I am going to get there in the same way."

Miss Rose L. Fritz.

Have you ever stood in the presence of a mind that was entirely concentrated on a piece of work? If you have, did not a feeling of reverential awe thrill every nerve fibre of your body?

I stood in the presence of such a mind this month. Hundreds of stenographers watched her marvellous execution on the Underwood typewriter, and the words, "She is a genius," were whispered through the great crowd that gathered to see the demonstration of the world's champion typist. She—a genius? No. She has mastered the power of concentration; she has developed unusual will power, she has conquered difficulties. There were those who thought it was easy for her. They were mistaken. After the demonstration she told me that she was tired. It had been an evening of strenuous work, honest work, conscientious work, hard work. She remarked: "During the last part of the ten minutes I felt the blood warm up all over—it was a great strain."

Miss Fritz is a young woman with frank, cordial address, pleasing in her manner and remarkably self-contained. Like most people who have won fame in the world of renown, she is kindly, approachable. This young girl of twenty-three had a high ideal, and she trained her power of concentration towards it. I am told that Miss Fritz commands a salary of five thousand dollars a year from her company, and has four months during the year for a vacation. This champion of thirteen world's type-writing contests was heartily cheered by a crowd of stenographers and business men who gathered to see a demonstration, and they were not disappointed. The outstanding feature of her work is accuracy, for an error is rarely found in her work. The large audience burst in applause several times. Miss Fritz's demonstrations included the following: One minute test from ordinary dictation, 131 words; one minute test from dictation, writing blindfolded, result, 129 words; one minute test from copy, during which time Miss Fritz carried on a conversation with a man, result, 152 words; one minute test from new copy, result, 158 words; two minute test from copy, during which she performed a problem in mental arithmetic, result, 299 words; one minute test on memorized sentence, result, 265 words; ten minute copying test, result, 1,500 words, or 150 words per minute. This surpassed her best previous record on this test. During the last test everyone jumped at the explosion of a flashlight picture, but Miss Fritz worked on entirely unconscious of it. She had absolute control of her will.

In personal appearance she is a small clear-eyed girl with blond hair. Her hands are short and plump, and her arms above the wrists show well developed muscular power. At the typewriter the hand reminds one of "flying fairy fingers."

Her toilette is dainty and simple, in excellent taste.

When this little queen of typists felt an ambition to become the world's champion typist she bent every energy in that direction. She practiced concentration until she learned to shut herself off from every disturbing influence. When she is writing she sees and feels only the copy and the keys before her.

Miss Fritz travels constantly for the United Typewriter Company, attending business shows, conventions, visiting commercial colleges on this continent and in Europe. When in England she demonstrated before our king. After watching her demonstration he exclaimed: "It is wonderful!"

It is one thing to wish for something, and quite another to work for it. Rose Fritz wished to become the world's champion typist and she was willing to work for it. I have known her ever since I heard of her a long time in mind concentration, and now, when I have met her, I admire her not only for this very marked accomplishment, but for her sweet, womanly personality. What do you think the man who asked me? "Miss Fritz says she will demonstrate Saturday morning at the office. I can depend on her—will she come?" She will, for she never fails to keep an appointment."