

## HOME CIRCLE.

## GIVE THE GIRLS A CHANCE.

"The trouble with me is, Miss Dare," said Helen Brown as the two girls brushed out their braids, "I am not satisfied to be simply a farmer's daughter—I want to be a business woman; I want a business education like a boy."

"With a view of going into business for yourself?" queried the young teacher, turning a laughing glance toward her friend's reflection in the glass.

"No, but with the view of knowing something when I grow up, besides this everlasting round of stewing and baking and pickling. Has Hester Lane two ideas beyond that roomy kitchen of theirs, or any of the girls around us? Why should people make such a distinction between girls and boys? There is John can sit down and talk over business affairs with father intelligently, and he expects it of him. He would as soon think of talking over money matters with Bruno as with me. It makes me vexed."

Miss Dare laughed at the girl's excited air, but asked quietly, "Haven't you as many brains as John?"

"I can beat him playing checkers."

"Yes, and at other things, if you set out. I see no reason why you should not 'know something,' and be able to talk intelligently, even on business matters, if that is your taste, if you will only apply yourself. But wishing never accomplished much,"—and she coolly pinned back a loose braid. There was a sly point in this which Helen saw. She was not so diligent a scholar as she might be, and all that winter Miss Dare, who was boarding at the farmer's, had tried in vain to stimulate her to closer application.

"Some distinguished man, I forget who," went on the young lady, "said: 'Make a boy master of arithmetic, and you have laid the foundation of his success in life.' Now, I should say that two or three other things are important, but certainly this is a foundation stone, and I do not see why it is not every bit as useful for a girl. The discipline of mind, for one thing, is excellent, and then the principles come in play, every day one lives. Now if you had been as ready as John to compute the interest on that note for your father, don't you think he would have had a higher opinion of your business talent?"

"I always did hate interest."

"So you will hate all business details unless you take hold with a will and master the points inch by inch. You have got to take one fort after another, just as a general does when marching into an enemy's country, if you are to be the victor. After you begin to take forts, then comes the enjoyment. I speak from experience."

The tea bell rang and the two girls went down stairs—Helen with a thoughtful face and a very decided mind. She would take one fort that very evening. The tea things were cleared away and the family seated for the evening, when Helen's father remarked:

"I wish John was at home this evening to help me a little with these accounts. My hands are pretty stiff, and I never was much of a hand at figures."

"I wonder if I could help you, father?" asked Helen, with surprising promptness for her.

"Suppose you could?" queried her father, doubtfully.

"I could try; and may be Miss Dare would look over my work afterwards, and make sure I am right."

"Certainly," said that young lady, looking up from her reading. "It will be an excellent practice lesson for you, Helen."

Father and daughter were soon deep in the de-

tails of the business, and with an occasional question to Miss Dare, the work was completed "tip-top," as Helen's father said. to his great delight, as he was fearful he must put it off until next week, when John returned.

"Who would have thought, mother, that our baby had such a head on her?" said Mr. Brown, pinching Helen's solid cheek.

Was not Helen a happy girl? May be it was because she was only still "the baby" to her father, that he had never looked upon her as a reasoning being before.

Now that she had taken one good fortification, she took heart and attacked another. She plodded through a long page of tough "examples," over which she would once have fretted by the hour. If arithmetic would help a girl along in life, she determined to master it page by page. There were a few spots that seemed a little beyond her depth, but she did her best to understand every step she took, and succeeded far beyond the average of school girls. The determination and perseverance that this required, and the mental discipline, were the best results of all, though the practical knowledge was not to be despised.

A gentleman from the city came out one day to buy some stock of Mr. Brown, and accepted his invitation to stay over night.

What surprised Helen was to see the ease with which Miss Dare conversed upon all topics that came up, with this gray-haired man of business, who was in the habit of gathering information of a practical kind in every locality where he happened to be.

"How did you ever learn so much, Mabel?" asked Helen, in the privacy of their own room. "I never suspected you of being a business woman."

"Oh, a reputation of knowledge is very cheaply acquired sometimes. I always make a point of learning something wherever I go, and then you know I read a semi-weekly regularly. The fact is, Helen, I don't 'skip the dull parts' in a paper." Helen laughed as she saw the application. She always did skip the dull parts from regular system.

"You never will acquire much general information until you get over that habit," went on Mabel Dare. "Reading simply for amusement may do for a recreation, but all play quickly spoils the working powers of body or mind. The two great points with you, Helen, should be in these years to increase your mental powers, and add to your stores of knowledge. I would write these two points on a card, and study over the subject some minutes every day. I would ask myself every day if I had gained anything on either count."

There were several good papers in the house every week, but Helen had always been in the habit of skimming them over on the hunt for a story, and as soon as it was devoured the paper was thrown aside. She tried Mabel Dare's plans of reading for information, and was surprised to find that so much could be learned from a single number. She was a sensible girl, and did not proceed to air her knowledge just for the sake of showing it off, but bided her time, and found it was easy and pleasant to join in conversation on other subjects besides cooking and sewing.

When spring work came on, she entered into the bustle with more zest than she ever had before.

"I wish I had something of my own on the farm, Mabel," she said one day, rather fretfully. "Something I could raise money from, and increase by diligence. I know father is a better provider than most men about here, but I should love to handle money that was my very own; to spend money without asking for it first."

"There are a great many possibilities on a farm," said Miss Dare, "and I am sure your father would be willing to help you if he knew your ambition."

"The two girls discussed various ways and means before they went to sleep, and Helen's mind was made up to "try something."

It is said that Providence helps those who help themselves. That very week a swarm of bees flew over the wheat fields and alighted on an apple tree bough. The united talent of the family conspired to "hive them" in a bushel basket, and from thence they were transferred as soon as possible into a patent hive. It was Helen's discovery, and Helen's swarm. She felt that she was fairly started in a new industry of which she had not even thought.

"It seems a little like keeping strayed cattle, father," said Helen.

"It would be rather hard to prove property," answered Mr. Brown.

"Any way, I mean to ask Mr. Anderson about them," she said; "he is the only person very near who keeps bees."

She did ask him the very first time she met him if she had any of his bees prisoners in her hive.

He laughed, and said he thought likely, but that he should not go to law about it. He always had the luck to lose a swarm or two, but he did not know what to do with all he did have.

So Helen's conscience was at peace, and she went to work with the greatest diligence to qualify herself for a bee farmer. She studied the subject in books, looked over the bee department in files of old papers up garret, and best of all, she made frequent visits to Mr. Anderson's, and found out all he knew about the culture from a practical point of view.

It was a good thing to begin small in this, as in most new enterprises. Those who start out with a dozen colonies are apt to find them much diminished before they are increased. Helen had her ups and downs, as all have, but she did make good money out of the business, and found it a source of great interest besides. Her mind was wide-awake on the subject of earning something "on her own hook," and her father wisely gave her all the facilities she desired. A pet cow, which had been her "little bossy calf" in the childhood days, not so far away, was now her young cow, and after deducting a merely nominal sum for its board, she had all she could make from it. She fed this cow and milked her, and churned the butter herself, and many a pretty article she added to her wardrobe and her room furnishing, by means of the money she earned from this.

If all parents were as wise, there would be a better crop of children raised on our farms. Instead of hoarding up money to be cut up among the children after you are dead, and they have drudged on in poverty until middle life, give them a reasonable sum as they go along—not enough to make them lazy and worthless, but enough to really help them, as money would have helped you in your younger years. Nothing more endears a parent to the hearts of his children than a wise liberality. Nothing makes him more careful in their eyes than a close-fisted stinginess. It is not pleasant to feel that they are looking forward longingly to the day when the estate can be divided up. J. E. McC.

## AN ENGLISH FARMER'S WIFE.

"We's up at four o'clock, for yer must be up betimes; the young poultry are soft and can't bide long whiles without food. At quarter to four I steps out of my bed just sharp like and sings out to the girls, and they slips forth from bed as quick as ever they may, and we jumps on