

"Serviteur, Monsieur le Curé."

But Antoine paused, and then retraced his steps.

"Monsieur le Curé," he cried, "a thousand pardons. There is just one question I would ask you if I dared."

Father Bulbius, who had been meditatively contemplating a still far more meditative pig—astray from the right path, like himself—started in anxious expectation. Should he venture—a second time—to refuse? And what would Veronica say, if he came back to her houseless after all?

"Monsieur le Curé," said Antoine, hesitatingly, "a little mass—eh?—just a little one for my—master; it might do much good, perhaps, but it couldn't—eh, do you think so?—do much harm?"

"Certainly not," replied the priest with an approbatory smile. "The idea is an extremely praiseworthy one. But Monsieur le Marquis is not yet deceased. And besides, would he spend money on masses?"

"It isn't possible, I presume," said Antoine, still feeling his way, "to smooth over some of the unpleasantnesses beforehand? Purgatory is a very awful thought, Monsieur le Curé."

"It is indeed," assented the priest, with true solemnity.

"There is a little sum I have set aside," hazarded Antoine. "It is not as large perhaps as might be considered desirable. But the Marquis has not been a good master to me, and I feel justified in leaving it—insufficient. He shall have five per cent. of the sum he refunded last night," reasoned Antoine. "And I hope," he added aloud, "that my action in this matter will be accounted to my credit when my own time comes."

"Our most meritorious acts," said the priest sententiously, "are not those, Monsieur Antoine, which impress us most vividly with the certitude of their meritoriousness."

Loripont winced under the rebuke. "Well, your Reverence," he said, "I am a poor man, but I can't bear the idea of even my master drifting away into—that! If you can do anything later on to make matters more comfortable, I should not wish it to be omitted."

"So be it," replied the Father. "May I ask: have you fixed on any sum?"

"Let us begin with a hundred francs," said Loripont loftily, suddenly rising from his reverential air into one of patronizing importance. "One hundred francs, Monsieur le Curé." And he took his leave and went on his way to the Baron. "Religion is a very expensive item," he muttered to himself, "and supposing—supposing—it were none of it true in the end!"

You who laugh in your souls at reading of this man's thinkings, has the littleness of your life so dried up the tears within you that you have none left to weep over its majesty struck down in the dust? O God, all-loving, all-wise, all-terrible, this then is thy service in the latter-days of thy mercy, and we, thy faithless, self-deceiving children, holding up our rags to shield us from thy radiance, we call upon these, in their filthiness, and hail them as God! From the religions of our inheriting, our imbibing, our creating—from all religions but of Thine implanting—deliver us, O Lord!

[To be Continued]



The Spectator

A fire in an apartment house is very apt to be alarming. The other night the Spectator was sleeping on the fourth floor of a large apartment house, and at two o'clock in the morning he was awakened by a policeman, who told him to get up and dress as there was a fire in the house. "But don't get excited," the policeman added. The Spectator and his friends were soon going down the stairs in a state of more or less undress. From an adjoining apartment to that in which the Spectator was rushed a gentleman, usually very grave of port and staid in manner, wearing striped pajamas and his head covered with a high silk hat. He cut a comical figure, and added just that element of gayety that is needed to stay a panic. The fire did not amount to much, but it surely would have done so had not one

of the tenants been detained at his lodge meeting till something like two o'clock in the morning. There were ladies hurried out of that house that morning who were heard to express the opinion that for a year, at least, that gentleman's wife would not remonstrate with him however late he stayed at his lodge. And speaking of the ladies, the Spectator was impressed anew upon that occasion with the fact that in times of danger they are really stronger than men, and fit for all manner of heroism and self-sacrifice. During the fire, or, rather, the smoke in the flat, the men were flustered and excited, but the women were universally calm and self-possessed. A number of years ago the Spectator was on a Sound steamboat when there was a collision and a fire. The water was filled with wreckage, men and women supported by life-preservers, and a few boats much overcrowded. The boat in which the Spectator was bore down upon a woman who had a life-preserver under her arms and who held aloft a baby. The Spectator and another gentleman got out of the boat so as to make room for the woman and baby. "Get back!" the old woman said to the Spectator, "get back! I am an old body and not worth saving. Save the baby, that's all I ask." She said this as coolly as one would decline to sit down, and meant it, too, for she had to be actually forced into the boat. And the baby was as dry as a chip, though her grandmother had been floating around in the water of Long Island Sound well nigh an hour. Women come out "mighty strong" when there is a need for it, and all who have experienced an apartment-house fire or a shipwreck will agree with the Spectator in this.

An editorial in "Harper's Weekly" recently told how building speculators in New York filled new apartment-houses with "dummy tenants" so as to attract investors to buy these completed houses, which, when in running order and full of good-paying tenants, are very attractive properties because of the large returns on the investments. The investor frequently finds, however, after taking possession, that his tenants not only do not pay promptly, but that they do not pay at all. They have merely been used, with their families, as dummies, as decoys to attract the wary investor. Now, however, they must move to make room for tenants who really pay. A real estate agent, in speaking of this to the Spectator, said that it was entirely true, but that there was another reason for the continual flitting of tenants from these apartment-houses where the flats rented for from \$600 to \$1,200 a year. He said that the desire to live as well and be housed as handsomely as one's neighbors was making life very hard for a man who earned uncertain incomes that ranged from \$1,800 to \$3,000 a year. Many of these in their expenses sailed so close to the wind that there was scant room for a change of course when the conditions of wind and tide were adverse. A little misfortune threw them so far behind that they were never able to catch up. They would get in arrears for rent and have to move. The only remedy was in a reduction of rents. He thought that the speculators would soon bring this about by building more houses than were needed.

In Paris the bicycle riders are having a hard time with the authorities, who have driven them from the Champs Elysées, and have restricted them to the most crowded of the drives in the Bois de Boulogne. This will possibly be followed by a heavy tax on bicycles. All this action has been taken and the further taxation is proposed because reckless and unskillful wheelmen make the roads unsafe. The Spectator has heard that similar action so far as the proposed tax has been suggested in various parts of the United States. And the Spectator is further told that very many wheelmen are greatly in favor of the tax, for they say when wheelmen as such become taxpayers they will have rights that no one can gainsay. The Spectator suggests another plan of taxation which would at once give the wheelmen the rights they seek, and at the same time restrain the reckless and ignorant riders from using the city streets and park roadways. Suppose that the wheelmen be licensed! Each person applying for a license would have to show that he knew how to ride, and to furnish reference as to his character and sobriety. Without knowledge and character no wheelman should be permitted to go abroad.

The Home

The Secret of Influence

Perspective is a law of art, and a law of life. Without it there cannot be an adjustment of the parts; too great prominence of any one part destroys proportion, perspective. Our relation to our family, to the outside world, to our intellectual and physical development, is balanced only as we follow the law of proportion, as we maintain perspective. "To see life steadily and to see it whole" is to keep true perspective, just relations, such as develop a character that is a tower of strength to others.

What is it we admire most in others? Is it not that quality which we term being "self-contained?" How calm and strong that man or woman seems who sees life steadily; who does not turn an incident into an event, an event into an epoch; who never distorts the small affairs that come into the personal or family life into occasions of importance! Such a one sees life as a whole; sees how little that comes into life is important when placed in its true relation. If we would keep a true balance, we must see each person, act, incident, in due proportion to the whole of life. People who see life steadily, who see life as a whole, never grow indifferent. They see that life is cumulative; that to-day is yesterday's future and to-morrow's prophecy. Such people are never blinded by prejudice, by self-interest, by feeling. They are the springs in a desert, the mountains from which we gain a vision of what lies beyond our own narrow valley.



An Occupation for the Growing Girl

By Annie C. Stearns

The average pretty, blooming American girl, all smiles and dimples, is as fair and sweet to look upon as the roses in June; but, to come down to the commonplace, prosaic level of every-day life, can she darn her own stockings, mend her linen, or decently hem a table napkin? The office of keeping in order a young girl's wardrobe is by no means that of a sinecure, the burden generally being borne by the mother, who, in her anxiety for the girl's pleasure, loses sight of the fact that she is falling short of her duty in failing to teach the very things that her mother, in her painstaking, patient way, taught her.

True, as you say, times have changed, and our ideas are modified with them; but, after all, a certain familiarity with the best methods in domestic economy, notably in sewing, is a help all through life, as the "knowing how" is something that the vicissitudes of fortune can never take from her. Many mothers wait until idle habits have taken deep root and become second nature, after which they may expect to reap a harvest of tears; or until, in the multiplicity of school work, there is literally no time for any home instruction after the lessons have been learned, the exercises written, and the recitation committed to memory. The average high-school girl is full of business from the time she leaves the grammar school until, diploma in hand, she is "out of school life into life's school."

To make her independent and self-helpful, begin to teach her while she is yet a little girl in short dresses. At eight she is none too young, as at that age the majority of children are absorbed in dolls and dolls' dresses, and, by adroitly planning a variety of work, she learns to sew while imagining it play. Bring yourself down to the level of a companion, cutting out dresses, skirts, chemises, and drawers. After she has run the seams together in dolly's dress, baste the hem, and show her the rudiments of this variety in sewing. You yourself should encourage her by making the waist, sleeves, and other difficult features of the tiny wardrobe. She will probably take long, uneven

stitches at first that will have to be taken out. I beg of you not to require her to undertake this dispiriting task. When she begins anew they will be a little shorter, but quite as uneven. Persevere, and in time you will be rewarded with encouraging results.

After fairly mastering these details, show her how to fell the little drawers, and with a few hints as to the neatness of having no raw edges in any kind of underwear, she will grow up with the right idea of how a garment should be finished. One of the perplexing difficulties that will arise in teaching "our little girl" how to put a band on a skirt, is the matter of gathering. See that she always uses a double thread, that a sufficiently large seam is taken up, and that the stitches are small and evenly set. After the garment is gathered, show her how to pull the gathers instead of stroking or scratching them. There is quite an art in learning this little detail of needlework, but the gathers can be so beautifully and so quickly laid without the aid of pin or needle—so injurious to fine fabrics—that it pays well to spend hours, if need be, in mastering it. Once learned, it is never forgotten. When she has gathered the garment, draw up the thread as tightly as possible, stick in the needle and wrap the thread around it often enough to prevent it slipping. This done, take the gathers in the left hand between the thumb and forefinger, and with the thumb and forefinger of the *right* hand, pull tightly over the *nail* of the forefinger of the *left* hand. After she has the art down to a fine point, you will feel that your labor has not been in vain. "Rome was not built in a day," neither can this graceful accomplishment be learned at one sitting. Though such an important thing to know, yet there are many good seamstresses who have never learned how to do it.

By the time Miss Dolly's wardrobe is finished, our little maid will have learned many things that will be useful to her as long as she lives. She will, however, need your constant supervision, for if left to her own sweet will her work is liable to be puckered and drawn.

Early in life teach her to mend her own stockings; it will be an investment of time and patience that will bring heavy returns. Select a pair from your darning bag very little worn—large, ugly looking holes are discouraging even to older people. With a long, slender darning-needle, show her how to go back and forth, back and forth, until the hole is neatly covered; then with great precision cross the threads, weaving in and out until the darn is more solid than the original fabric. A few timely hints, and she will soon learn the difference in darning a stocking and darning a torn place in her dress. Baste a piece of the goods under the rent, then with a fine needle and silk the color of the material, let her darn back and forth very closely with the tiniest of stitches, until a smooth surface remains. Dampen a cloth, lay over the darn, and press with a moderately hot flat-iron.

How few there are comparatively who can make a neat, trim-looking buttonhole, and yet what an important item it is in a young girl's wardrobe. One mother tells me she kept an exact account of the number she made in the course of a year for two children, and they footed up to over eight hundred. Show her how to cut them—the first should by all means be made on cotton cloth, and the experiment tried on something not intended for use. After the buttonhole on cotton has been learned, show her how to cut and work them on woolen goods, or broadcloth, with silk twist. An expert sticks in a pin, cuts the buttonhole the required length, then carefully cuts the pin out, which leaves it slightly rounded at one end, which, if done with a sharp pair of scissors, will fit to a nicety the shank of the button.

When children are not over fond of sewing, I have known mothers resort to stratagem in order to have them learn. One mother pays a certain price for every pillow-case her little girl makes by hand, so much a dozen for well-made buttonholes, but upon no account does she pay her to make her own clothes—the pleasure in wearing the garment when finished being considered a sufficient compensation for the time and labor spent.

There was never a truer adage than the old one we