

The Home

The Cumulative Result

Thoughtlessness and selfishness are the causes of much public discomfort. For years the big hat in the theater has been condemned; of course it is as great an annoyance in the concert or lecture room. Can anything be more annoying than to have a view of the platform or stage entirely shut from sight by a hat? Even when the hat is beautiful there is no compensation, but when, as frequently happens, it is not the creation of art, and has no relation to nature except as a caricature, it becomes a barrier which few people bear with equanimity. The present little silk band and bow worn as a bonnet make really the first suitable theater or evening bonnet that we have had in use. These allow a pretty arrangement of the hair, and are, when artistically made, a decoration, and all that ever should be worn on the head in theater, concert, and, at times, even the lecture-room. They hardly suggest lectures on the sciences, but certainly are appropriate for lectures on art and literature. Next to the wearing of the big hat, which is a combination of thoughtlessness and selfishness, the habit of entering a hall or theater late is a special annoyance. It is unpardonable to disturb an audience by arriving late, entering hurriedly and usually noisily; and those who do this are usually the people who leave before the entertainment is over. Another bad habit is that of arranging wraps and overcoats during the last number of the programme, or the closing lines of a play, or the last paragraph of a lecturer. Often the rustle of these movements will destroy a period of eloquence or the climax of a musical idea. One sympathizes with the man who said that he thought that just before the doxology and benediction in church the minister ought to say, "We will now stop to put on our overcoats."

There has been a marked improvement in the manners of American audiences in late years. Now one really can attend a season of concerts and at the close of the season will have to admit that a disturbance caused by whispering was the unusual and not the usual experience. If each person would only realize that the little pet habit which he has cherished, of late arriving, of early departure, or preparations for departure before the proper time, is duplicated by very many people in the same audience, the value of overcoming this habit would be apparent. It is not the entrance of one person, or the departure of one person, or the whispering of one person in an audience, that is so annoying, but it is the percentage of the audience who permit themselves to indulge in these bad habits—if one may not call them bad manners. If one must leave before the expiration of the time which it is reasonable to suppose is necessary for the completion of a programme, no matter what that programme is, the least he can do is to choose to occupy a seat as near the door as possible. By this means much discomfort will be saved.

The Letter and the Man

By Lyman Abbott

A boy lies in the hospital on the Potomac; and letters come from home, and he is glad to get them. They are sacred, and he treasures them, and puts them beneath his pillow, and reads and re-reads them. By and by some nurse appears at his side and says, "I have come here from your native village, and your mother asked me to come and inquire for you and find out about you." And she is

more to him than any other nurse, because she has come from his native village, and from his father's home and his mother's home. But one morning he wakes up from his troubled and fevered sleep and feels a hand upon his brow and sees some one stooping over him, and looks up; and it is his mother herself who is looking down into his face. More sacred than the letter, more sacred than the messenger, is this mother herself who has come to him. The Bible brings us some word of God, and the prophets and apostles of all times bring us some word of God, but the glory of the Christian religion is this: that the Father-God and the Mother-God come to our fever-stricken couch, and stand by our side, and look down into our face, and listen to our words, and nurse, and medicate, and bring us back to life and love again.

"No man cometh to the Father but by Christ." By Christ every man may come to the Father. And if there be any one to whom God is an unknown God and a far-away God, and he knows not how to approach him or pray to him, think of the Christ that walked by the shore of Galilee, think of the Christ that put his hand upon the fevered brow of the leper, think of the Christ that wept at the grave of Lazarus, think of the Christ that bade the repentant sinner go and sin no more, see in him the image of the Father, believe that what he was in that one short period of three brief years the Eternal Father is eternally; turn your thoughts to that Christ, think of him as sitting at your side, speak your wants to him, tell your needs to him, open your heart's adoration and love to him: for "he that honoreth the Son honoreth the Father, and he that loveth the Son loveth the Father, and he that cometh to the Son cometh to the Father." The Father is no longer a great way off, but walks in our midst, lives our life, sits by our side, enters into our heart-experiences.

An Unsettled Question

The domestic servant question is one that taxes the intelligence of American housekeepers, and no one offers a solution. The rapid growth in apartment-houses with restaurants, family hotels, and the like, shows how many homes are destroyed because servants cannot be secured who can meet the demands of homes that must be maintained on limited incomes. Statistics show that in 1870 there were 1,836,288 women engaged in paid occupations in the United States. One-half of these were employed in domestic service. In 1880 the number of workingwomen in the United States had increased to 2,647,157, and only one-third of these were in domestic service. The reason why self-supporting women refuse to enter families is one which must be found by the mistresses, and without doubt it is that class of mistresses who employ but one servant or two who must solve the problem. Certainly the remuneration for servants is higher than that paid to the girl who works in the factories, showing clearly that money—that is, the increase of wages—will not solve the problem. The home life of hundreds of families in this country is destroyed because workingwomen, willing and skillful, cannot be found to enter domestic service. On the other hand, every large city is struggling with the question of the unemployed, and those living right in the midst of this class cannot secure skilled service.

In a measure, families of the middle class are beginning slowly to solve this question. Cooking-schools have become fashionable. Not to know how to cook will, before long, be considered on a par with that lack of intellectual training which limits one to the use of one language. Untrained mistresses have doubtless been responsible to a great degree for the untrained servants. When the mistress knows the real difficulty of domestic work, the possibility of accidents, the time required, she will be more reasonable in her demands, less censorious and more sympathetic. The relation of mistress and maid must be more socialistic, especially in small households. There is a mutual dependence which, when fully recognized, reduces the servant-girl problem in that particular home. No ser-

vant will render devoted service where her relations are merely commercial. She must be considered as a social being, and her social life provided for; she must be considered as a physical being, and her comfort and health be of enough importance for the mistress to demand space, light, and air for her from landlords; she must be made to feel that her relation to the family, so long as she fulfills the requirements of her position, is one of personal interest, and all in the family must recognize that discourtesy and bad manners are as obnoxious to the maid as to the family. The commercial relation must be commercial in the true sense; there must be a fair equivalent of service rendered for the wages paid. It is absolutely dishonest for a mistress to pay more wages to a servant than she is worth. It is far better that all the family should suffer for a little while than that the home should be controlled by the autocrat who does not govern herself. The whole problem of domestic service is a complicated one, and, while the principle of fair wages for service bears alike in every household, there are certain families where concessions must be made in the privileges given if servants are to be retained.

The domestic service question is the most important problem that women have to solve. It is the one that is most complex and the one that is determined by character independent of wages. The recognition of character as a factor in the problem will raise the grade of intelligence of the women who enter this field.

The wages paid must be a recognition of ability. A woman who meets the demands of a refined home where but one servant is employed should receive the highest wages; this is the only guide she has of recognition of her ability. Liberty must be given her. She cannot, she should not, be held to the lines of limitation that are necessary to protect ignorance from itself. No woman of ability in her chosen field of labor will submit to the treatment, the oversight, the direction, that ignorance demands. On the other hand, the mistress who pays the wages demanded for skilled labor to unskilled labor, and misplaces it in its relation to the economic world, commits a grievous error—one that imposes an unjust burden on the housekeepers of her class.



The Club for American Girls Studying in Paris

By Caro Lloyd

One frequently passes in the Latin Quarter of Paris girls who reveal by their sailor hats and the delicate beauty beneath the brims that they are Americans. They usually carry canvases, and walk with a purpose. French people, seeing them, whisper, "Anglaises." They often turn into the narrow Rue de Chevreuse. Here, at No. 4, any American girl student has only to ring and the great door opens hospitably. Entering, she sees a cheerful yellow house surrounding a court. She will discover on the first floor a well-equipped reading-room with a library of six hundred volumes, where there is a cheerful fire, and beside it that American luxury, a rocking-chair, with flowers on the mantel, and, sitting quietly reading while the clock cozily ticks, American girls, potential friends. Here she will feel at once an atmosphere of home. She may wander into the "tea-room" adjoining, where there is a piano and where students gather daily for a social chat over five o'clock tea. There is also the "blue room," where she may receive her friends, and in another she may get excellent meals at prices below those of any restaurant. When told that all she need do to become a member of this club is to come and enjoy these comforts, she will be ready to exclaim, with one homesick girl, "This is a little heaven on earth. I have sat in the public restaurant alone with the tears rolling down my cheeks into my soup." And she will wonder how this beautiful reality grew.

This Club for American Girls Studying in Paris had, like most worthy achievements, a small beginning. Eight years ago Mrs. William Newell, the wife of a well-known Ameri-

can clergyman (lately deceased), noticed at her reception a lonely girl, and, calling upon her soon after, found her in a tiny bare room. "Don't loosen your cloak," the girl said. "I took a room without a chimney, lest I should be tempted to have a fire." She was an art student making a brave struggle to stay in Paris, and her heroism was that year rewarded by her picture being accepted at the Salon. Mrs. Newell, who had herself been homesick in Paris, has ever since been holding in her heart and brain the hope of brightening the loneliness that often comes to American girls transplanted to this foreign life.

She and her husband began by inviting the students to their home Sunday evenings, and many came. If there were not chairs enough, they sat on the floor. Mr. Newell gave a talk, and then there were singing, refreshments, and a sociable time afterward. Those social Sunday evenings of which the Club is an outgrowth now form a main interest of club life. After this many ladies in the American colony became interested, so that an apartment was taken three years ago, and the Club formed; but nothing like the present spacious quarters was dreamed of. Mrs. Whitelaw Reid then very generously offered to meet the running expenses. So it is now a permanent institution.

The restaurant is Mrs. Newell's long-cherished plan. Many students who live in studios cook their breakfasts hastily on alcohol lamps, dine at restaurants where they are subject to unpleasant experiences, and at the end of a long day's work cook their own suppers; others live in expensive boarding-houses. Many are teachers who have earned the money to come, and they find everything dear in Paris except bread and gloves. The problem is to stay as long as possible, so every franc is regarded in its capacity to keep one in Paris. There are, besides, temptations tugging at their purses—operas, classic plays, studio properties to buy in fascinating junk-shops, books bound to order to suit one's caprice, for a mere song, and, above all, summer excursions into Holland and England. Accordingly, the restaurant has been enthusiastically received. It is fitted with dainty china, silver, and linen given by the American ladies. The Parisian breakfast of coffee and a roll is five cents, or chocolate and roll six; oatmeal with milk is six cents. A luncheon of meat, a vegetable, and dessert costs from fifteen to twenty cents. Here is the menu of a recent dinner: Soupe aux haricots, 4 cents; gigot de mouton garni de riz, 10 cents; bœuf roti purée, 9 cents; riz créole, 4 cents; carottes béchamel, 4 cents; purée de pommes, 4 cents; salade chicorée, 4 cents; petite suisse, 3 cents; fromage camembert, 3 cents; gâteau à la crème, 4 cents; poire et raisins, 5 cents; café noir, 3 cents.

The house, full of rambling passages like one in a story, has rooms for any forty members who wish to live there. It was Professor Keller's Protestant School, and here many an American boy was educated. Perhaps its old walls, as they prick their ears again at the sound of English, will some day hear the voices of those boys' daughters. It was filled at once, and the only pity is that there is not another like it. The rooms range in price from fifteen to sixty cents a day, including service. Those studying French may take board at a table where no English is spoken. This costs seven dollars a week, room included. There is also a French class for all members.

The community has a charming variety—New York Art League girls, college girls, a pupil of Guilmant the organist, an enthusiastic decorator who returns from the Bon Marché with exquisite and expensive draperies which she has to sell to the other girls to repair the fatal damage to her allowance. One of the quietest is a passionate explorer, the only woman who has penetrated the lower Mackenzie. Her room is adorned with presents from the Eskimo, and a wonderful Norway fish-net. The graduates of Vassar, Wellesley, and Michigan there say that the life reminds them of their college days.

A typical room is that of two Vassar girls who, through much traveling, have learned to quickly make homelike quarters: the beds disguised as divans, the washstand screened, the writing-table where the long home letters are written, and everywhere curios gathered in their wanderings—peasant hats, Syrian scarfs, Dutch mugs. One