

women. "The busy idle woman" of the cities is of course a drag on society, as Mrs. Hillis says, but statistics would show that these women are largely from the not highly educated class.

With the smaller necessity for manual labor for women in their homes there is the greater possibility for women to be the intellectual companions of their husbands. This and the "kindergarten for the small child," instead of making the "imperative work of the housekeeper and mother less and less," enable her to make imperative the duty of taking an interest in the topics of the day in which all intelligent men are conversant and all intelligent women should be.

To English women, their country and its politics are a live interest. When the American woman is more like her English sister, she will find the American man not too weary to enter the atmosphere which she can help him create after business hours, and she will get what she wants most—his companionship.

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THE SERVANT QUESTION

The servant question, like the poor, we have always with us. Excellent and far-reaching as are many of the suggestions made in Mrs. Robb's "Our House in Order" in *The Outlook*, there are many housekeepers who do not find the problem solved for them by the system there set forth. Two intelligent, self-respecting women who come by the day, and the laundry work done out of the house, constitute a condition entirely beyond the reach of the ordinary housewife, however much such a plan would please her, and however capable she might be to get on smoothly under such a system.

Three-fourths of the women who are clamoring for better service can barely afford to keep one girl, at the present prices of food and wages; and yet help they must have or break down in health, or break up housekeeping. And so a multitude of women are on the verge of nervous collapse, and a multitude of families are unwillingly crowding second-rate boarding-houses.

Take a family where the income is \$1,500, and where there are three chil-

dren under eight years of age. If the mother is to get any outing with her husband, there must be a maid in the house in the evening. Then, not many women with three little children to care for can regularly prepare breakfast in time for the husband to "make his car." For such families outside help will not do.

I believe it is possible for any really intelligent woman to achieve success with the present system—one maid-of-all-work—despite the prejudice against housework which throws into it, for the most part, only the less capable class of working-girls.

First of all, the housewife should remember that really efficient service is rare, and if she gets it at all it will be the reward of her patient and skillful training; then she will not feel herself imposed upon because she does not find in her maid "all the Christian virtues." She should take care in the selection she makes, seeking above almost all other things willingness to be taught. Usually a good mistress can, by means of her reputation—for mistresses are sized up as well as servants—get a fairly good girl if she takes time. She will show her wisdom by not waiting till the last day of grace before she looks up a helper. A friend of mine—one of those women who have solved the problem—says, "I select my servants with as much care as I do my friends."

Next, there must be systematic care for the girl's comfort. She is a part of the household, and the efficient housewife looks to the comfort of all. The maid should have, to develop her self-respect, a neat and tasteful room. Her work should be watched that she may not be overburdened. The hours are long in domestic service, but with judicious planning there may be, on most days, several hours of leisure. These a wise mistress will encourage a girl, by the use of the sewing-machine and an occasional gift of pretty material, to employ for the improvement of her wardrobe; and, by the offer of interesting books, for the improvement of her mind. That a girl has no such leisure, but is expected as soon as her work is done to take the baby, or do some other task, is mismanagement; and to this is owing in large measure the vexatious habit many girls have of dawdling over their work and never getting through.

It is often remarked that we need trained servants; this is true, but we need trained mistresses much more: mistresses who know how work ought to be done, who are liberal-minded enough to let a competent servant take her own way in unimportant matters, but who know how to direct; who are really and truly the *head* of the house, planning for its smooth running in ordinary affairs, and able to meet and manage those emergencies which are sure to come in the best-regulated families. MARIA L. SANFORD.

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DIVORCE AND THE FAMILY

Mrs. Newell Dwight Hillis, in her excellent paper on "Some Failures of American Women," treats of divorce and of some of its contributory causes, and throws a side-light upon the family which is illuminating.

Legislation may correct a few divorce laws, may regulate somewhat the etiquette of divorce methods, may establish a scale of prices for alimony, "making the punishment fit the crime," as it were, but all that does not affect the matter at all. It leaves the roots of the plant untouched to throw out their poisonous shoots just as vigorously as ever. Divorce is a virulent disease, and, naturally, the home is its first victim. Yet it is in this very spot that the antidote for this poison is to be found, if ever. The stricken home must cure itself. It is a mistake to suppose that the home needs no cultivation, that it can grow of itself. It needs all that the most enlightened, the most exalted humanity can bestow upon it of love and fostering care, and always at the entrance the vigilant guardians who will see to it that no unclean thing enters there. Many people fear that this would mean a reversion to an ancient type of morals and manners, now, in their imagination, worn out and obsolete; but it is not necessary to go back to a puritanical system of home discipline. There is a safe mean between too much restraint and too much license which might be observed to the advantage of both State and individual.

And the conservators of this mean should be the father and mother of the home, for it is in their keeping that the first springs of character, whence flow the

issues of life and death, are placed. But while the father and mother are conjointly the pillars of the home fabric, it is to the mother that we must look for an answer to the question why this institution, on which we pride ourselves so much, should seem to fail us at this critical time. For it cannot be denied that a spirit of anarchy has invaded our most sacred precinct and turned everything topsy-turvy. The children rule; the father and mother are their humble subjects. False ideas of the moral and the unmoral, of duty and responsibility, of the fit and the unfit; have taken the place of the simple formulas the world used to live by, and the result is a *bouleversement*.

In the vast majority of American homes the father has his fixed engagement with fate to leave the house at an early hour, work hard all day, returning at nightfall or a little sooner, according as the mills of his gods cease their grind, and he cannot, therefore, take an equal share in the management of the household. The mother, then, is necessarily the party of the first part in this transaction, and it is upon her that the burden of the proof rests. She is monarch of all she surveys; her kingdom is at her feet. What is the mother's exhibit in regard to her stewardship?

The child's education should begin at birth, but this truism is too old-fashioned to meet with modern approval. To educate is to call forth, to draw out, as the sun, the wind, and the dew help to unfold the flower; but that is too slow a process for this age of steam. We want results to show immediately, and the long years of preparation are ignored. In their stead a veneer of shallow accomplishments is laid on, and the daughter (it is generally she) is sent out into the world ignorant of and careless for the losses and crosses which she must inevitably meet there.

And, as Mrs. Hillis asks, is it any wonder that she fails? Accustomed from infancy to live, move, and have her being at her own sweet will, long before she comes to womanhood she scorns all restraint, flouts the idea of submitting her will to a mere father and mother, and not infrequently emulates Phaeton of old, and risks a world to prove her independence. And the mother aids and abets her, under the delusion that she is giving her a good