

# The Girl and Her Religion eBook

## The Girl and Her Religion

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## PART I

*The Girl*

### I

#### THE RIGHTS OF A GIRL

She has certain inalienable rights, regardless of race, color or social state. When it has thought about her at all, society in general has supposed, until recently, that in a free country, a glorious land of opportunity, the girl has her rights—the right to work, the right to play, the right to secure an education and to enter the professions, the right to marry or to refuse, the right in short to do as she shall choose. And in a sense and to the casual observer this is true. Our country gives to her some rights which she can enjoy nowhere else in the world. But as one learns to know her, little by little the stupendous fact is impressed upon him that girlhood has been and is being denied *its rights*.

*It is the right of every girl* to be born into a community where the sanitary conditions are such that she has at least a fair chance to enter upon life without being physically handicapped at the start. But hundreds of girls every year open their baby eyes in dark inner rooms where the dim gas light steals what oxygen there may chance to be in the heavy air, take their first steps in foul alleys, find their first toys in garbage cans and



gutters. They have been denied their rights at the start. In a Christian land, they grow weak, anemic, yield to the white specter and in a few years pass out of the unfair world to which they came, or remain to fight out a miserable existence against terrific odds. They make up an army of girls who have been denied their rights. And her religion? What is it that religion may offer to her in compensation for that which she has been denied?

*It is the right of every girl* to be born under conditions which will make possible sufficient food and clothing for her natural growth and development. But scores of little girls go shivering to school every morning after a breakfast of bread and tea, they return numb with cold after a dinner of more bread and tea and they go home to a supper of the same with a piece of stale cake or a cookie to help out. Nature calls aloud for nourishment and there is no answer. The girl enters her teens, finds a "job," goes to work, hungry the long year through, fighting to win out over the cold in winter, and to endure the scorching days of summer. And her religion? What is it that religion may offer to her in compensation for what she has been denied?



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*It is the right of every girl* to receive, through the educational work of the community, training which shall fit her for clean, honest and efficient living. Yet every year sees hundreds of girls turned out into the world wholly unequipped for life, their special talents undiscovered, their energies undirected, their purposes unformed, their ambitions unawakened.

*It is the right of every girl* to be shielded from the moral danger and physical strain of labor for her daily bread, at least until she shall reach the age of sixteen. Yet every year sees a long procession of girls from eight to sixteen entering into the economic struggle who cannot claim their rights.

*It is the right of every girl* to have a good time, to play under conditions that are morally safe, and to enjoy amusements that leave no stain. Hundreds of girls live in communities where this is absolutely impossible. What has religion to offer to a girl denied an education which will fit her for the life she must live, compelled to enter into a fierce struggle for daily bread while still a child, surrounded by every sort of cheap, exotic amusement behind which temptation lurks? Has it anything to offer in compensation, if it permits conditions to go on unchanged?

*It is the right of every girl* to enjoy companionship and friends. Thousands of girls toil through the day in shops, factories, offices and kitchens and at night sit friendless and alone until the loneliness becomes unendurable and they seek companionship of the unfit and the refuge of the street. Has religion anything to do with lonely girlhood?

*It is the right of every girl* to receive such instruction regarding her own physical life and development as shall serve to protect her from the pitfalls laid for the thoughtless and ignorant, and shall fit her to understand, and when the time comes accept the privileges and responsibilities of motherhood. Every year sees thousands of girls enter the teens whose only knowledge of self and motherhood is gained through the half truths revealed by companions, the suggestions of patent medicine and kindred advertisements, or the falsehoods of those who seek to corrupt. What has a girl's religion to do with these simple undeniable facts?

*It is the right of every girl* to receive the protection of wise parental authority. The guidance of parents who earnestly, wisely and with the highest motives require obedience from those too young to choose for themselves is the right of every girl. Yet thousands of girls every year are left to decide life's most important questions, while parents, weak, indifferent or careless sleep until it is too late. Has religion anything to offer to girls whose parents have laid down their task and neglected their duty?

*It is the right of every girl* to receive such moral and religious instruction as shall develop and strengthen her higher nature, fortify her against temptation and lead her in the spirit of the Author of the Golden Rule into service for her fellows. Yet thousands of girls are without definite moral and religious instruction and unconscious of the fact that it is their

right, and thousands more receive moral and religious training in haphazard fashion and from sources inadequate to the task.



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When the community awakens to the necessity for sanitary conditions in the environment of every girl and honestly seeks the solution of the problems of economic injustice; when the educational system seeks to prepare its girls for the life they must live; when laws for the regulation of labor for girls are made in the interest of the girl herself; when the community makes it possible for its girls to play in safety and makes provision for friendless and lonely girlhood; when mothers instruct their daughters in the most important facts of life, parents exercise protective authority and the church provides adequate assistance in the task of moral and religious instruction, then, and not till then, will the girl receive her rights.

And the girl's religion? The girl is naturally religious. Without religion no girl comes into her own. Whenever and wherever religion concerns itself with the rights of a girl it becomes a girl's religion to which she can pledge body, mind and soul. For the coming of that religion the world of girlhood eagerly waits.

## II

### THE HANDICAPPED GIRL

They were both handicapped, as a careful observer could tell at a glance. One stood behind the counter, the other in front of it examining the toys she was about to purchase for a Christmas box for some young cousins in the country. She had not been able to find just what she wanted and was impatient in voice and manner as she explained to the girl on the other side of the counter what she had hoped to find. She was extravagantly gowned in a fashion not at all in good taste for morning shopping, but she was pretty and her fair complexion, her shining hair, soft and well cared for, the beautiful fur thrown back over her shoulders fascinated the other girl and filled her heart with envy. She was pale and anemic, her hair was dark and there was barely enough of it to "do up" even when helped out by the puffs she had bought from the counter on the opposite side. The weather had been bitterly cold and she was suffering from sore throat and headache. She had turned up the collar of her thin coat but it had failed to protect her and she was thinking of that as she looked at the fur. She was worn out by the strain of the Christmas season, had slept late, and then rushed to the store with only a cup of coffee to help her do the work of the morning. She did not care much whether the girl before her found the toys she wanted or not. Toys seemed such a small part of life and Christmas aroused in her all sorts of conflicting emotions. It was winter and life looked very hard, as it can look to a girl of fourteen upon whom poverty had laid a heavy hand and whose life has been robbed by the sins and misfortunes of others, who has been handicapped from the beginning.



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The girl before the counter finally decided upon the toys, ordered them sent to her home and looking scornfully at the cheap jewelry and tawdry ornaments passed out of the store. She was thinking what a nuisance cousins were, how ridiculous it was in her father to insist each year upon her remembering his poor relations at Christmas, just when she needed all her allowance for herself, and planning to tell him that next year she did not intend to do it. She was in a most unhappy mood because she had been denied permission to attend a house-party and she could not bear to be denied anything. She was handicapped by the heavy hand of money, newly acquired by her father and by the atmosphere of pride, vanity and social ambition which surrounded her.

All day through the busy streets of the shopping district they passed—the city's handicapped girls. Some were held back from the best that life can give by poverty, which like a great yawning chasm lies between the girl and all her natural desires and ambitions, some held back from the joy of simple, natural living by the forced, artificial social system of which they are a part, some pitiful specimens of physical and mental handicap and some who showed the strain of the handicap of sin, mingled in that Christmas crowd.

Through the open door of great sea-port cities there have poured during the years past steady streams of handicapped girls. They are poor, they are plunged into a life whose manners and customs they cannot grasp, they are handicapped by a language they do not understand and by great expectations seldom destined to be fulfilled.

According to our government statistics during nineteen hundred twelve, ninety three thousand, two hundred sixty-one (93,261) girls from fifteen to twenty-one years of age came to us from across the sea and in three years an army of two hundred forty-six thousand, five hundred fifty-four (246,554) became a part of the girl problem our country must meet. It is hard to picture in concrete fashion how great this host of girlhood is. Sometimes when one looks into the faces of a thousand college girls at Wellesley, Vassar, or Smith and realizes that in a single year more than ninety three times as many girls from fifteen to twenty-one came to test the opportunities of a new land, the significance of the figure becomes a little more clear to him. When he realizes that in three years enough young girls land in this country to found a city the size of Rochester or St. Paul, when he tries to imagine this army of girls marching six abreast through city streets for hours and hours until the thousands upon thousands, representing scores of tongues and nations, have passed, some conception of the great task facing any organization attempting to direct that army of unprepared, unequipped and largely unprotected girlhood comes to him.

[Illustration: *Unconscious of her handicaps she anticipates keenly life in the new world*]



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Where will they be in another year—those ninety-three thousand and more who came to us in nineteen hundred twelve? What an array of factories and kitchens, what rows of dingy tenements, the moving picture film could reveal to us if it followed these handicapped girls! It does not follow them—they come in over the blue waters of the bay, look with shining eyes at Liberty with her promise of fulfilment of all the heart's desires, they sit in the long rows of benches at Ellis Island, pass through the gate and are gone, the majority to be lost in the mass that struggles for a mere livelihood—just the chance to keep on living.

What if some summer morning, or in the dim twilight of a bitter winter day, a miracle should be wrought and the handicapped should be lifted so that girlhood might be free to work out the realization of its dreams! Many have prayed for such a miracle, some have hoped for it—but it will not come. There will be no miracle suddenly wrought for men to gaze upon in wonder and after a time forget. The release of the handicapped can come only through man's God-inspired effort on behalf of his brother man. In removing his brother's handicap he will remove his own and both shall be free to live. But it cannot be done in a moment. Effort is slow. It cannot be done by any organization, or church, or creed or individual. It must be done by the public conscience. Educating the public conscience is a long process and America is in the midst of that process now. There are two qualifications without which the educator of the public conscience cannot succeed—one is patience, the other persistence. All educators of the public sense of right, like Jane Addams, have had these two characteristics in marked degree, and all churches, creeds and organizations which have had local success in removing local handicaps have shown the ability to wait and the power to persevere despite every opposition.

How the public conscience will act in directing the work of removing the conditions which so sadly handicap girlhood today we cannot say. It may be that vocational schools built and maintained by the State, not by charity, will be one strong hand laid upon the inefficiency and ignorance that handicap. It may be that the Welfare teacher whose salary and rank shall equal that of the teacher of Greek, Ancient History or arithmetic will be another hand laid upon the shoulder of the girl limited by the lack of friendship and protection. It may be that houses maintained as a business proposition and paying honest returns, built in such a way that girls obliged to work away from home may be decently housed and have a fair chance for health, will be another strong hand reached out to release her from the things that handicap. It may be that a minimum wage, safety devices, laws wiping out sweat-shop methods, will reduce the number of handicapped girls.

Wise cities may establish special schools for the immigrant girl where she shall learn something of the language while being taught the making of beds, simple cooking and the common kitchen tasks, then to be recommended with some equipment to the homes greatly in need of her. Even if she should choose later to go into shop or store, the State will have gone a long way toward removing the great handicap by having

taught her to understand the language of the new land, to care for a room, cook simple food and keep clean.



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It may be that some thoughtful States will require school attendance until a girl is sixteen, the age under which no girl should enter the business world as a wage earner.

It may be that the natural good sense of the true American woman will finally triumph over the extravagant and unnatural living of the present day and that the handicap of false standards, superficiality, display idleness, and wild pursuit of exotic pleasures shall be lifted from the girls now held prisoners by the tyranny of money and complex social life.

It may be that in all these ways and scores of others, the public conscience, working out along lines in which it finds itself best fitted and most interested to work, will solve the problem of the handicapped girl.

Before one can possibly help another in a permanent way he must know what is the trouble with him, and then *what* has *caused* the trouble. The greatest encouragement in our girl problem today lies in the fact that *politics* is looking at her and asking questions it scarcely dares to answer; the corporation is looking at her, compelled to do so often against its will; City Government, School Board, Board of Health are all looking at her; women's clubs, whose individual members have never given her a thought, are reaching out a hand to her; the Church, whose part we shall study definitely later on, is looking more practically and sensibly and with deeper interest than ever before; the Young Women's Christian Associations are looking wisely and intelligently, getting facts which speak with tremendous power and showing them to the world. More than all this the handicapped girl is looking at herself.

It has become in these days the passionate desire of those who see the problem with both heart and mind, and are interested not in abstract girlhood but in the individual, living, real girl, that the public conscience be more deeply touched and stirred until it shall feel that by whatever means the thing is to be accomplished, the bounden duty of Church and State to give themselves to the task of solving the problem is clear.

For in the midst of every problem—political, social, economic, religious, there stands *The Handicapped Girl*. God help her—and us—for until we have gained the wisdom to remove her handicap the whole problem will remain unsolved. We are learning—every year shows a gain and in this fact lies our hope.

### III

#### THE PRIVILEGED GIRL

One finds her in all sorts of unexpected places. Last summer I saw her in a home of wealth and luxury. She was fifteen, the eldest of a family of four children. Behind her was a long line of ancestry of which anyone might rightfully be proud. Her face was

pure and sweet and her eyes revealed the frankness and honest purpose of past generations. After breakfast she played for the hymns at prayers and in a clear,



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true, soprano led the singing. A twelve-year-old brother had selected the part of the Bible to be read and the eight-year-old sister had chosen the hymns. The father's prayer was simple and sincere and some of its sentences were remembered for many a day. After prayers the girl attended to the flowers. This was her work for the summer. I saw her gather from their lovely garden dainty blossoms and sprays of green, making them with unusual skill into bouquets for the Flower Mission in the city. Then three small baskets were filled with pansies. These went to three old ladies in the factory section of the village. She told me they were "the sweetest old ladies" and "dear friends" of hers. She seemed to take real delight in making the baskets beautiful. I saw her later in the day galloping off through the woods on her horse, her face glowing with health and happiness. In the afternoon she spent an hour on German which she said was her "hopeless study," but I found her reading German folk lore with ease. She was familiar with the best things in literature, was intensely interested in art and revealed unusual knowledge without any evidence of precociousness. She was just a normal, healthy, natural girl, well-born, well-bred, a girl with every advantage. When I said good-night to her in her lovely room and thought of her protected, sheltered life, I wondered how she might be helped to know into what pleasant places her lot had fallen and how she might come to understand and do in later years her full duty toward the other fifteen-year-old girl who that day made paper boxes, feathers, flowers or shirtwaists, toiled in the laundries or the cotton factory, or walked with heavy heart from place to place searching for work. They are dependent upon one another, these two. They do not know it now, but if each is to be her best, they must know.

How to lead her daughter to value and help this *other girl*, that sweet mother told me as we talked in the library that night she felt was her great problem. "We women are responsible for so much," she said, "and our daughters will be responsible for still more. We must help them estimate things at their right value." With that thought and spirit in her mother's heart the girl I had watched all day with such pleasure seemed doubly privileged.

Last September I saw another privileged girl. She showed me her trunk packed for college. Every member of the family was interested in it, perhaps most of all her father who had put into the bank that first dollar on the day that she was born with the faith that what should be added to it might one day mean college. Behind her was a long line of honest ancestry, simple people who had worked hard and managed to "get along." She was the first on either side of the family to "go to college." No one in the family, even the most distant relative, failed to feel the importance of the event. "Tom's Dorothy goes to college this week—think of it," a great aunt, in a little unpainted, low-roofed farmhouse far away in the hills, told all her friends at church.



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Great ambition, hopes and dreams were packed into that trunk and the day when she should graduate and come back to teach in the high school seemed near. Jack and Bessie and Newton were in her plans for using the money she should earn when those four short years were over.

[Illustration: SHE WAS FULL OF AMBITION AND WILLING TO WORK]

Looking at her sweet, fresh face so full of happiness one knew her to be a privileged girl. All through high school she had had her purpose clear, her studies were a pleasure, her simple good times were enjoyed to the full and life, every moment of it, was worth the living. When I saw her lock the trunk and excitedly instruct the expressman as to just how it must be carried, I had a sudden vision of the thousands of girls, with happy faces filled with anticipation of all that is wrapped up in that one word, *college*. A great army of privileged girls, they are. One cannot help wishing that he might feel sure that when they leave those college halls it might be with a deep appreciation and real sympathetic understanding of the other girls who have turned their eyes with longing toward four years more of study and fun, but whose feet were obliged to walk in other pathways. They are so dependent upon one another, these girls who can go to college and the other girls who cannot go. They do not know it now but neither girl can ever come to her best until the privileged girl sees and understands.

One of the most interesting of the privileged girls I met one morning going to work. It was her third month in the office. "One of the finest in the city. There's a chance to work up, and me for the top," she told me, her face beaming. Her father had come across the sea from Sweden when a boy. Long generations of honest folk were behind him and he made good in the new land. He saved a good share of the wages he made in the bicycle shop, studied with a correspondence school and assumed more and more responsible positions with higher wages. At last he was able to build a house for his young family, at the end of the car line where the children had room to play and the cow and chickens kept the boys busy and taught them to work. Olga was the eldest and it was a proud night for the family when she graduated from grammar school. Going home on the trolley her father determined that she should have the desire of her heart and go for two years to business college. There was great rejoicing on the part of the family when he made his decision known and Olga hardly slept that night. When the two years were over the principal of the school had said such fine things of her work that Olga had blushed to hear them. More than that, he offered her the best position open to his students. He was a little astonished the next morning when Olga's father came down to ask in his careful English regarding the character of the men in the office where his daughter was to work. To Olga's great joy he was able to satisfy the father to whom the matter was of enough importance to make him put on his best clothes and take half a day off, in order to make sure that all was right.



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It was a great day when Olga came home with her yellow envelope and laid the money on the table. Not a cent would her father take. "No, Olga," he said, "the money is yours. You shall keep the account of it and show it to your father. You shall buy the new bed for your room and the chairs. Your mother wants the house made pretty. Perhaps you will help. That will be very good. But the money is yours." No one seeing the girl's face as she related her father's words could doubt the appreciation in her heart. Her girl friends had "paid their board" and she had expected to do the same. That night she refurnished the house in her dreams and the memory of that dream room of her mother's, with paper on the wall and rugs on the floor, helped her save her money until the dream came true.

Olga is indeed a privileged girl. She has parents wise enough to have given her the best equipment possible for the work she wanted to do. She has her own money and may dress as well as any girl in the office. She has an object for saving what she can and knows the joy of helping to make home beautiful. The suburban church is the center of many of her pleasures, for it is alive and the young people in it know how to enjoy themselves. She is loved and sheltered in a real home. She can live a normal, useful, happy life with opportunity for promotion in her work and an object for her ambition. She has health, sane pleasures and good friends. Any such girl is indeed *privileged*.

When one sees her going happily to work he is forced to think of the other girl, her homeless boarding place, chance friends, pitiful economies and few pleasures; the girl who has forgotten what it means to be sheltered and protected, if she ever knew, to whom love is a myth or a dream.

Perhaps one of the happiest of the privileged girls was the one who took me to her room on a beautiful June day to show me her cedar chest, her gowns and the gifts already beginning to come. *The day was near.* The young man whom she was to marry was honest and fine, in business with his father and hoping to make the firm a greater success than ever, as the years should pass. The girl was just twenty-one. After high school, a mother who was not strong needed her help and she had made that home a center of enjoyment for three years. Surrounded by the loving appreciation of parents and brothers, her life was filled with happiness. Now in a few days she would go across the street to the house built for her and furnished simply and well, with the articles which he and she had chosen on the long shopping tours during the months past. She was in every sense a privileged girl.



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The *other girl* saw her married. She was looking forward to her own wedding day but it seemed farther away than ever. She had no hope for a house built for her, but she knew where there was a flat for rental which she had mentally furnished many times that month. But they could not afford it. They had added and subtracted and gone over the figures again and again but it was of no use. He was manly and fine, he had hope and ambition, but the clerkship was only fifteen dollars a week and he had tried in vain for another position. Fifteen dollars a week would not do in their city. Butter, eggs, coal, ice, milk and meat stood in the way. So they were waiting and there were tears in her eyes at the wedding of the privileged girl.

That day was a hard one for another girl. She read of the wedding—the decorations, the gifts, the congratulations of friends—then putting down the paper forced back the tears and went out to finish the shirt waist she was making, for it must be ready to wear to the office in the morning. That evening he would come, she knew, to tell her again that it was not fair, that her family would get along some way and that he had been patient for a long time. She knew that he must continue to wait, for her mother was doing her utmost, Wilbur could earn only a little and the other two children were too young to leave school. It was three years since her father's death. The young man had said then that he could wait *ten* years. She had begged him to take his release but he refused. Of late he had been very insistent. She knew she must stand by her mother and help her through. If he could not see it that way there was but one thing to do. She found it hard even to think the words that she must say and she thought of the privileged girl with longing in her soul. But the privileged girl did not know. If she had, her sympathy and understanding would have helped.

One rejoices as he remembers the thousands of pure, sweet, wholesome girls who have been privileged to enjoy the results of a long ancestry unstained by weakness and sin, the results of training, guidance and protection, the opportunity for healthful, normal living, for pleasures and the satisfaction of human friendship and love. Our country looks today with increasing hopefulness to these privileged girls for the solution of many of the problems of the other girl. Our country looks to them for another generation of privileged girls even stronger and wiser than they.

One of the greatest of the problems with which our country is concerned today, the solution of which involves every phase of social, religious and economic life, is the providing of ways and means by which the unprivileged girl may, in large numbers, be promoted into the privileged class.

## IV

### THE GIRL WHO IS EASILY LED



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She is a chameleon sort of girl but she is not rare. So often she is sweet and lovable. Almost without exception she is obliging, a jolly companion, fearless and frank. One often finds her a girl of talent and natural ability. She is the very opposite of the indifferent girl for she responds to everything. The girl she will finally become depends upon the companions whose lead she follows. Her safety lies in the establishment of the habit of going in the right way. She is the girl who most needs care and guardianship. So much depends upon her choice of friends that parents and teachers must be wise for her.

A little ten-year-old, in whom all her teachers were interested because of her versatility and quick response to every interest, moved into a new neighborhood. Some weeks later because of her ability to learn rapidly she was put into a higher grade. Her new home and new classmates in a short time entirely changed the character of her environment. Before long the girl herself began to show the result of the change. She had always been too much interested in her studies to waste time or disobey the school rules. Following the leadership of some of the newly made friends she entered into all the little conspiracies of a group of girls and boys who made things hard for the teacher, a rather weak disciplinarian. One day, the girl hitherto perfectly honest, told a lie to get out of the trouble into which the following of the new leaders had brought her. It troubled her conscience and she cried on the way home from school, but her companions laughed at her, told her she was "all right," and had stood by them splendidly. They made her feel heroic and she dried her eyes and stifled her desire to tell her mother. Before the year was over the child had entirely changed. Her studies suffered, she seemed to lose her ambition, her naturalness and spontaneity vanished. Her mother began to discover increasing untruthfulness. One day, toward the close of the school year, the child asked to wear her best dress to school, saying there was to be an entertainment. There was no entertainment. Instead there was a party at the home of one of the girls of whom her mother disapproved. The party began later than they had planned and it was nearly six before the child reached home. She found her mother greatly troubled and said quite glibly that she had stayed after school to help the teacher. Next day the mother called at the school to remonstrate with the teacher for keeping the child so often and so late to "help" her. Then the whole truth came out and the mother was dismayed. She felt that the matter was so serious that she must remove her daughter at once from her companions and before school opened in the fall the family had moved back to their former neighborhood and the parents were permitted to send the little girl to another school where new associates were carefully chosen. Before she left that grammar school she had recovered her frank, sweet spirit, her interest in her studies returned, and surrounded by a group of fine boys and girls she went through the high school with the love and respect of teachers and companions.



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This child is the type of many, who as early as ten years and younger, are so easily led that their natural tendencies toward good are wholly transformed by association with evil companions whose strong personality and power of leadership can so easily turn the weak wills into the wrong pathway.

Parents and teachers cannot be too careful of the companions of a girl of vacillating, easy-going, versatile temperament, for they may ruin or make her.

When Leonora moved from the great manufacturing city, which had been her home for fourteen years, to the home of her aunt, in a quiet suburb, where the children attending the high school were from homes of real culture and refinement, she was disconsolate. Voices, language, games, manner of recitation, behavior on the school grounds and street, perplexed her. She seemed lost in her new environment. She had never been a leader but had followed with all her heart. Her playground had been the street. She had enjoyed boisterous good times, had patronized moving pictures of every sort, had entered into the mischief of "the crowd" always close to the leader. In a pathetic letter to one of her chums she said that at the very first opportunity she should run away and be with them all again. She characterized the beautiful suburb with its neatly kept lawns and pretty homes as "a dead old hole" from which she could not wait to escape. Still, her aunt's home, the new wardrobe containing the lovely dresses, becoming hats and coats, for which she had always longed, tempted her to remain. One day, early in October, her classmates made the discovery that she could sing. She had quite a remarkable voice for a girl of her age. The teacher of music became her interested friend and found she could play unusually well, though mostly "by ear." The leader among the girls who "adored" any one who could sing adopted Leonora as her special friend. The new wardrobe added greatly to her attractiveness, and her aunt's social position opened many doors for her. Her new friend's mother was pleased with her daughter's choice of a companion despite the lack of good breeding and lapses in English.

Leonora became the obedient and devoted follower of the new girl friend and the influence of the music teacher was indeed remarkable. Almost as by magic Leonora dropped the coarse slang, loud talking and shouting of her companions, who in the city had been termed "wild" and adopted the ways of the new leader. At the end of two years it would have been quite impossible to recognize in the pretty, interesting, well-mannered girl of sixteen, who sang so sweetly, the uncultured, ill-mannered, slangy girl of fourteen.

Leonora was so easily led that it was not a difficult task or a great accomplishment to have so transformed her. If she remains until she is eighteen or twenty in her present environment, the chances are that the good friend, *Habit*, will have determined the way that she shall go. If she should now drop back into the old street, the old companionship, the place which until her father's death he had tried with her help to

make a home, the chances are the old voice and manner, the old slang and old interests would return.

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For a girl of Leonora's type the impress of the right environment, the guidance of the right hand, means everything. To discover such girls, to open the way for the working of new friendships, which shall furnish new leadership for them, is a fine task and a great pleasure for the lovers of girlhood.

But so impossible is the task of attempting, through the individual, to touch the great mass of girls who are easily led, that one can work effectually only through the individual effort plus the *law*. It must be made "to go hard" with those who, for selfish ends and financial profit, plan to take advantage of the weak will and trusting, unsuspecting mind of the girl who is easily led.

Most of the girls in their teens, who are walking in evil ways, are there because they have followed friends and companions. There are girls who have blazed the way to paths of evil for themselves, but they are comparatively few. Any court, or school for delinquent girls, which contains a sympathetic man or woman to whom the whole truth may be poured out, will testify that *somebody* led the way. When allowance is made for the tendency to lay the blame upon other shoulders, the facts bear out the testimony that there has been a *leader*. The girls who by nature are weak of will, and have had no training which could tend to strengthen or develop that will, must be protected, and that protection must be furnished by the community. It may be furnished by putting the welfare teacher into the school; by making the street on which so many girls find companionship as safe as possible; by driving professional leaders of the unsuspecting and easily led from all places of recreation and amusement; by helping parents, especially those parents, who, themselves born across the sea are attempting to bring up daughters in the new land, to see and understand the dangers; and by making it a real crime to lead the easily led astray.

But this is not enough. Perhaps the greatest steps toward the safe-guarding of the easily led were taken when the carefully supervised public playground and the school gardens were started and the women police were sent out into the streets of cities.

A strong, wise, sane woman who is neither a prude nor a crank can do more toward preventing the first steps into forbidden ways than those interested in great city problems have yet dreamed. The day will come when these women will make the arm of the law an efficient friend of the weak and unprotected girl and give all the positive, helpful agencies an opportunity to strengthen her against temptation.



## Page 14

I shall never forget my visit that Sunday afternoon to a detention school for delinquent girls. Over in the corner of the room where the afternoon service was to be held was the piano, the orchestra, made up of members of the school, was gathering. There was a cornetist, two or three violins followed, then a banjo and guitar. The service that day was to be a great event, for the wonderful woman in charge of that school who had done away with the cells, taken down the great spiked iron fence and planted flowers in its stead had persuaded board, committee and municipality to permit her to follow out the one great desire of her heart. The girls were to wear on Sundays and other dress occasions white Peter Thompson suits, big bows of ribbon in their hair and shining, well-fitted shoes.

Soon *she* entered the room. One could hardly take her eyes from that sweet, sympathetic, calm, face. A glance told one she might trust her with her soul's secrets without fear and might tell her *anything* and she would understand. After her came the girls and quietly, with an attractive self-consciousness because of their new glory raiment, they took their seats. Who could fail to forgive them if they fingered lovingly the great soft silk Peter Thompson ties and patted the bows on their hair. Some of them seemed scarcely more than children though some were in their later teens. No one of the group present that afternoon will ever forget how they sang, nor how they listened with eager responsive faces. No one can tell what new hopes and ambitions were born as they sat in their new finery, some of them for the first time in their lives becomingly dressed.

After the service they filed out, put on their long checked aprons and got supper. We saw the beds in the wards where all the new comers must sleep, then the smaller rooms with six and four beds, the still smaller with two and the honor rooms which a girl might occupy alone and might arrange as she chose. There were flowers in all the single rooms and pictures on the walls.

It almost seemed as we walked along the edge of the drive over the walk the girls had laid, that we were leaving a boarding school where girls were being taught household economics and the arts and crafts.

The woman who had wrought the miracle which had been wrought in that school stood at the end of the drive as we left and in response to the exclamation, "It seems impossible that these girls could ever have been guilty of the deeds the records show!" she answered, "These girls are not vicious. It is after all a question of leadership and they followed the wrong leaders." She paused a moment, looked back at the buildings, and then said softly, "God pity the girl who is easily led." And in our hearts we echoed her prayer.

**V****THE GIRL WHO IS MISUNDERSTOOD**



## Page 15

Every girl in the world I suppose has sometime in her life felt that she was misunderstood, that every one looked at her through the wrong glasses, that no one saw her good qualities or appreciated her abilities and that all with whom she had to do interpreted her at her worst. The cry of a girl's heart for someone who understands is the cry of humanity. No one can perfectly understand another, therefore only God can be just. And so in a sense all girls are misunderstood. But there are special types of girls who suffer more from being misunderstood by their families, neighbors, friends, and by strangers than do others.

There is the self-conscious girl. Shy and made awkward by her shyness, unable to forget that she has hands and feet, painfully aware that she must walk while others watch her, that she is expected to say something and those who listen will criticize, she suffers intensely. The great onrush of self overwhelms her, she stammers, blushes, fingers and eyes help to reveal her suffering and as soon as possible she beats a retreat. How intense her sufferings are only those who know by experience can say. The shy and self-conscious girl will always be misunderstood. People may be very sorry for her but they do not understand her. She needs a friend who has passed through the self-conscious stage to sympathize with and help her, or some girl quick to see her good qualities who can show confidence in her and smooth over the awkward places for her, until she becomes convinced that she is like other girls and that she can do as they do.

I shall never forget the change which her first year in college made in a girl friend of mine. In the high school she was exceedingly shy. Her recitations were accompanied by so much suffering that they were painful to witness. Her written tests revealed an unusual mind, keen and active. She won the prize for the best essay in a county contest. She was asked to read it to the school and though she begged to be excused, her teacher insisted. She slept little and ate little during the days before it must be read and on the morning when the school assembled to hear it looked pale and wan. It was with very evident effort that she walked to the front of the platform. Her lips opened but no voice came. Her sister thought she was going to faint but she pulled herself together and was able to read in a thin scared voice which could not be heard three seats away. But those who heard and those who read marveled at the thoughts which the girl had written in a clear and original fashion. Still when she left for college she was a misunderstood and unappreciated girl in her own home and among her neighbors.

It seemed as if she could not endure the thought of a roommate but necessity offered no alternative. She reached the room first and arranged all her belongings in her accustomed careful and orderly way. She sat by the window lonely and miserable, trying to read, when the roommate came. She was a rosy-cheeked, laughing, vivacious girl who greeted her as if she had always known her and did not seem to notice that she received monosyllabic replies. Before an hour had passed the shy, self-conscious girl was down on her knees helping her new friend unpack her trunk and talking to her more naturally than she had ever talked with anyone before.



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The new roommate was a very wise girl, a little older than most girls entering college. She knew that the girl with whom she must live was shy the moment she caught sight of her and felt the dread with which she had waited her coming. From the time she was fourteen until she left for college she had helped her father make strangers in his church and congregation feel “at home.” She knew just how.

During the first trying days every one greeted the shy girl cordially and then gave their attention to the wide-awake, interesting roommate. But the roommate always included her. “How was it, Clara? I don’t just remember what was said,” she would say, suddenly turning to the girl who blushed but answered and found she could, to her great surprise. Under the warmth of her roommate’s confidence in her and pride in her scholarship and the ease with which she conquered the most difficult subjects she learned to forget herself. A great longing to help the girls who found things hard came to her and they gladly accepted her help and loved her for her sympathy. The months wrought a marvelous change and though she found it difficult in the presence of the critical family to talk naturally at first, still the things she had to tell proved so interesting that they forgot to criticize and she forgot herself while they listened. At the High School Seniors’ banquet she spoke for her college and her brother declared it the best speech made.

She is a graduate now and all traces of the old awkwardness have left her. She is reserved but easy, simple and gracious in meeting those whom her work calls her to meet and her eye and her heart alike are open for the self-conscious girl wherever she meets her. If she were to try all her life, she tells me, she could never express her gratitude for what that roommate did for her.

What was it that happened to her? She forgot herself. People had told her to do that before but she couldn’t, for she felt that they were watching to see her make the attempt. They called attention to her shyness, her roommate ignored it. They bade her take part in conversation and join with others in what they were doing; her roommate gave her a part in the conversation and made a place for her in all that they were doing. Her family and school friends said by their manner and sometimes in words, “The poor girl is so shy, what a pity it is.” The roommate expressed calm confidence in her and in manner and words said, “You have no idea how fine she is and how well worth knowing.”

If a girl chances to read this page who is herself popular and who finds it easy to meet people and join naturally in whatever her neighbors may be doing, has in her circle of friends a shy, awkward, self-conscious girl, may she see her opportunity and realize her mission. The pure kindness of heart and the thoughtfulness which prompts a happy girl, free from the pain of self-consciousness, and always at ease with her friends, to shelter, stand by and call out the best in a shy girl suffering from awkwardness deserve a rich reward.



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The very opposite of the girl who is misunderstood and undervalued because of her shyness, is the girl who, because of her boldness and independence, her carelessness of speech, hilarity and adventuresomeness is misunderstood.

“She doesn’t mean anything by it,” said one girl of another whom she was trying to defend in the presence of a critic, “she is good hearted, generous and just fine, but she has been brought up in a large family where they have noisy times together.” The critic accepted the explanation but strangers, new people whom she met, men and women upon the street, constantly misunderstood the girl whose unfortunate manners would lead one to believe she was a most undesirable friend. The girl was conscious that she was misjudged and misunderstood and was growing hard and beginning not to care when an older woman who loved her showed her with real tact where the trouble lay. No one could help admiring that girl as she struggled to overcome the things which had been the cause of all the misunderstandings.

I met awhile ago, a girl whom her companions described as *wooden*. I knew that she wanted to talk with me, that she was interested in the people whom the group were discussing. She seemed like a bright girl and I felt sure that she had thoughts of her own worth hearing if she would only express them. That was her trouble. She couldn’t find words so she said “yes,” and “no” with effort when a remark was addressed directly to her, otherwise she was silent. Later in the day a girl friend who really appreciated her told me how very interesting she was when one knew her well enough to dispel the awful fear that she should say the wrong thing. She read the very best things and was conversant with the history of important events all over the world. “She is a regular encyclopedia,” said her ardent defender.

This wooden girl is misunderstood simply because she has not learned to express the thoughts she has. She is unhappy, and feels that people do not like her, and do not enjoy her company. In her heart she blames *them*. But one cannot expect everyone to penetrate the exterior and see and appreciate real worth. Most people take us for what we seem to be and if we appear cold, uninteresting and ill at ease, they seek pleasanter companions. The wooden girl *can* overcome her stiffness and learn to let people see that she thinks. She can cultivate a very rare art—the art of listening with appreciation. There are very few listeners in any group of people and often not one in a group of women. It is a great thing to be able to listen with that attention and interest which draws out the very best in the one who is talking.



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More than that the girl who is termed wooden can learn to express herself in words. She may never become a great talker but she need not regret that. She can take part in conversation and can make it easy for people to talk with her. I know a girl who plans before spending a social evening with friends what she will talk about. Following the advice of her mother who has suffered much through inability to talk, she holds imaginary conversations which often become real when she meets people later. She makes a special effort to remember the names of those whom she meets and some of the things in which they are especially interested. She is learning to remember the names of books and their authors and publishers, she takes special pains to remember worth while magazine articles and last spring people appealed to her again and again for information regarding the Balkan situation. She is making herself an interesting companion and in a few years I believe all traces of the awkward wooden silence will disappear.

In the long line of misunderstood girls, are many whose interests and enthusiasms are altogether outside their immediate environment. There are girls at college and sometimes at boarding-school who have seen a larger world and have come to love the real things of life. They find it very hard to waste the days in superficialities. They long to have life mean more than a round of social events, and the family and friends misunderstand. Some girls of this sort have solved the problem by gaining consent to plan their own days. Some have never been able to gain that consent and have gone on for years in unhappiness. Others have learned to inject into the seemingly superficial some real things and have found an outlet for the best that is in them through work for those in need. One must feel real sympathy for the girl who, striving to be her best, to live above the round of pettiness and selfish pleasure, is met with disapproval and misunderstanding.

Many a girl is misunderstood by the one person in the world who ought to understand her best—her mother. Perhaps more bitter tears are shed by girls because their mothers do not understand than for any other reason. The misunderstanding oftentimes is the result of temperament. It is exceedingly hard for two people of diametrically opposite temperaments to live in close association without clashes. One of the most pitiful things in home life today is seen where mother and daughter have opposite interests and sympathies and lack self-control. The constant criticism and judging of one another, the quick-tempered commands and demands on the part of one and the sullen yielding on the part of the other make one heart-sick.



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I am reading over a letter from a girl who says, "I honestly love my mother. I am proud of the things she can do and I admire her beauty.... I am twenty-two years old, very ordinary looking and not a social success. I am a constant disappointment to mother. Our opinions about everything differ. We cannot agree upon the most trivial things. When father was living he laughed at us and his genial spirit made things easier but the last two years have been dreadful. What can we do? Mother does not need me. When I am away on a visit everything goes smoothly at home and her letters to me are affectionate. I love them and have kept them to read when it does not seem as if she *could* care for me. My uncle has asked me to come to their home in D—— to be a companion for his seventeen-year-old daughter who is lame. I love her and we get on well together. Ought I leave my mother and go? She says I may do just as I wish and does not seem to mind the thought of my going...."

Here is a clear case of clash of temperaments. Both are to blame, each is misunderstood. In this particular case it seems wise that the daughter should, for a time at least, accept her uncle's offer. She may learn from a distance to understand her mother better and her mother may more fully appreciate her daughter. Often it is far better that two people who constantly clash should learn apart to respect and honor one another than to live in a quarrelsome, fretful atmosphere which is bound to banish deep affection and respect as well. Some daughters cannot be their best at home and some mothers can never reveal their best selves in their daughters' presence. That such can be the case is most unfortunate and wrong. Away back in the daughter's childhood someone was careless, in early girlhood a thin partition was raised which shut out mutual love and trust. It might then have been destroyed, but was left until it became a barrier almost impossible to break down.

But there are some girls who are misunderstood by their mothers, and who because of circumstances must accept it and learn, despite misunderstanding, to let love triumph. There is much that every girl owes to her mother even though it be true that she is unfair and unjust.

One of the sweetest home makers I have ever known, in whose family it seems to me no cross or critical word is ever spoken, whose boys and girls trust her absolutely and love her devotedly, learned her patience and forbearance, acquired her fine courtesy and graciousness in the years when she was a misunderstood girl and had to live in an atmosphere of petulance, ill-temper and selfishness.

The misunderstood girl whatever may be the reason for the misunderstanding must cultivate frankness. She must learn to be generous, she must help people to understand her. She must believe that being misunderstood should deepen her sympathy and increase her tact. One of the most marvelous teachers in our country today, who succeeds in awakening dull hearts and minds, in controlling wayward and wilful childhood, when asked to explain her power said simply, "I was a misunderstood

child. How I suffered! My mission is to relieve the suffering of the misunderstood, whatever the cause.”

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There is a very brief prayer which every misunderstood girl might well pray daily, "Help us to understand as we long to be understood."

### VI

#### THE INDIFFERENT GIRL

Until she has entered upon her teens the attitude of the "don't-care" is rare with the average girl. She either heartily approves or frankly disapproves of those things that cross her path or claim her attention. But with the coming of the teens those closely associated with the girl often become conscious of the loss of that spontaneous response which has made her such a delight. The teacher is puzzled by this change, wonders if she has offended the girl, redoubles her efforts to make the lesson interesting and seeks to win the girl's confidence. Sometimes her efforts are rewarded by renewed interest but often the attitude of indifference persists. The girl's mother feels keenly the change in her once expressive, often demonstrative child, eager to talk and anxious to join in everything, and says in a tone of condemnation that she cannot understand her daughter.

The presence, in a class of ten or twelve girls, of even one indifferent girl, or the presence in the schoolroom of three or four such girls, chills the enthusiasm of the teacher and the class. Such a girl is a "wet blanket," she is a cloud steal-in across the sun on a glorious morning. Her indifference is contagious. She changes the atmosphere. If the class is planning an entertainment she "does not care" what they have, she does not care whether she has any part in it or not, she has no choice as to the way the class funds are spent, she does not want to look up any assigned topics, do any special work, or take part in any debate or discussion.

She is a very real problem to teacher, parents and friends. To be able to diagnose her trouble correctly and find a remedy for it is well worth every effort of those who have her present and future in charge. Before one can hope to help her he must discover the cause of her trouble. Reprimanding her is of little avail, and discussing her indifference with her is useless.

Some years ago a young teacher in the eighth grade in a public school consulted me regarding a girl of fourteen whose indifference was a great source of trial. The girl came to school with fair regularity. At ten and eleven she had been considered a very bright pupil but was now below the average in all her work. She often expressed the wish that she need not go to school but when allowed to remain at home was restless and unhappy.



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Observation of the girl in class showed all that the young teacher had said to be true. The girl took no voluntary part in the recitation and when called upon her usual answer was "I don't know." I talked with her and she said she liked the teacher, she liked the school and her classmates. She did not care about them especially. She did not know whether she would go to high school or not; she "didn't care either way." She did not know what she wanted to do when she grew older. Her excuse for falling so far behind her record of other years and her unwillingness to recite was that she did not feel like studying and that she could not seem to remember what she read. She said she felt well but she was growing very rapidly and did not seem strong.

I called upon her mother and learned that she was greatly concerned because of the changes in her daughter. I was surprised to find, however, that she stated quite calmly that the girl's appetite was not good and that she complained of being unable to sleep and of having "dreadful dreams." The mother had not consulted a physician. She scolded the girl for being lazy and indifferent; at school the teacher reprimanded her constantly. I urged the mother by all the arguments I knew to see a physician at once. She said her husband seriously objected to one's "running to the doctor all the time," and that he thought the girl would come out all right. If she did not "brace up pretty soon," she added, they might "take her out of school and put her to work." During the winter the girl contracted a heavy cold and her indifference and apparent laziness increased. The mother was finally enough impressed by our concern for the girl to take her to a good physician. He found her to be in a very run-down state, in bad condition nervously, and really ill.

A year out of school, spent in a country town with her aunt, where she had the best of food, fresh air and exercise, cured this indifferent girl entirely.

Continual headache is often the cause of indifference, and eye strain or improper food the cause of the headache. The first duty of those in charge of the indifferent girl, before passing judgment upon her, is to make sure that the physical condition is not at the bottom of the trouble. Many a case of indifference and loss of spontaneous interest, which cannot be cured by punishment, by persuasion, by prayers or exhortation, *can* be cured by a wise physician.

Sometimes a girl becomes indifferent from lack of a sympathetic environment. She feels that others do not care about her and that what she does makes no real difference to any one. She may be surrounded by poverty, where the struggle to exist is so keen that there is no time to think of the girl and her needs, or she may have every luxury yet be denied the companionship of one who understands.



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I am thinking now of a girl of fifteen, who does not seem in any way to belong in the family where she was born. Her sisters are at work in the factory and content. They are sweet, attractive and good. But she does not want to work in the factory. She would "give the world to have a room alone, that could be all fixed up," as she would like it. The family cannot understand her. She can have none of the things for which she longs, she is not able to be with the sort of people she loves and admires. She wants good books, she enjoys music and longs to be permitted to finish her high school course. She is willing to work out of school hours, to do anything if only she may continue to study. Because the family consider all her notions ridiculous, and all she longs for seems impossible, the don't-care, reckless spirit and the indifferent "what's the use anyway" are gradually enveloping her whole life.

Surrounded by much that money can buy, a most interesting girl whom I met recently is surrendering all her interests to the "don't-care" spirit because the one great desire of her heart is not to be gratified. She has been urged to enter upon the duties of the social world but says she has tried it and "despises society." She does not care about travel, she wants to be trained as a nurse, enter a school of philanthropy and then become a district worker among the poor. Her father will not listen to the plan, her aunt opposes it, her brother laughs at it.

She says that now since all her most earnest desires can never be fulfilled she doesn't care about anything. It was a long time before the teacher of the Bible class of which she was a member could believe that this indifferent girl whose silence had annoyed her each Sunday was longing to serve her fellowmen and had lost heart because the way was blocked. It was only when she had made a special and earnest attempt to really know the girl that she learned the truth.

No one can act wisely in the dark, and before passing judgment upon the indifferent girl who may try one's soul, he should know whether in the thwarting of all her desires, the denial of the right to follow her natural inclination for work and service, lies the explanation of her indifference.

Many times the girl who *seems* indifferent, is so only on the outside. She has developed more as a boy develops and does not wish to reveal her best self, nor even in the least degree her deeper feelings. She hides. When things are very serious or pathetic she sometimes laughs half nervously. She looks out of the window, at the ceiling, whispers to her neighbor or assumes the most disinterested, superior air possible if she is at all impressed. When one sees her alone, it is a great surprise to discover a new girl who is by no means indifferent, who has thoughts and can express them when other girls are not there to listen. Her indifference is not a serious matter, is usually of short duration and is explained by the attitude of self-sufficiency which manifests itself in the teens.

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The girl really indifferent to *everything*, unless she be ill, does not exist. There is a point of contact, a line of interest. The girl indifferent to religion, to the work of the church, to her studies, may be keenly alive to the call of other things—her friends, plans for her future, all lines of social life. Last summer I met a girl of seventeen, indifferent to all interests save nature study. She had failed in the languages, was defeated by mathematics, but could sit hours in the woods waiting for a tiny bird, or a squirrel to pose for her. She had made some remarkable photographs and tinted them beautifully.

The usual social interests of the girls of her age bored her. Her mother stated to sympathetic friends that the girl was hopeless, indifferent to every plan for her future. The girl in turn said half defiantly, that she did not care, and it made no difference to her what people thought of her. It would have been so easy had the right guidance been given, to help the girl see the great need a real naturalist would one day feel for the languages, to show her that she had some social duties and to let them be as few as possible, giving her every opportunity to develop her special talents and interests. But the wise guiding hand was not present and so the girl grew hard, indifferent, and created an atmosphere of constant friction.

Into a night court in one of the cities there was brought an exceedingly pretty girl just out of her teens. She seemed wholly indifferent to any moral appeal and conscience was evidently dead. She would make no promises for future good-behavior, she showed no evidence of shame. She was unmoved by the matron's words of appeal. When she found that she was to be detained through the day she begged the woman probation officer to go with her to her home saying that her mother was ill and she feared the result if she did not return as usual. With a great desire to befriend the girl the officer went. She found a sweet pale-faced woman suffering from incurable heart trouble, a bright beautiful girl of sixteen who was taking the business course in the high school and a ten-year-old boy. The flat was airy, neatly furnished and seemed a very happy home. The girl told her mother that she had had breakfast and must be away that day on business but would return for supper. The love of that mother for the daughter who bade her good-by so tenderly, the evident affection of the younger sister and the admiration of the boy greatly impressed the officer.

The girl walked in silence back to the station, then she broke down.



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“Now, you see why I chose the street to make a living,” she said. “We used father’s life insurance and mother had to have things. She will not live a month now, the doctor says. My sister can soon earn her own living and I can help Fred until he is old enough to help himself, by working in my old position. But for a while I *must* have money! I hate myself, you understand, but I had to have the money. Oh, mother, mother, it is the last thing you would have me do, but I did it for you and the children,” she sobbed. This was the hard, indifferent girl who didn’t care for anything. The matron and officer looking at the sobbing girl recorded one more tragedy upon the annals of their experience and set about helping one more girl back into the straight way.

In how many types we find her, the indifferent girl and the girl who does not care, and for what varied reasons indifference and the don’t care spirit have fallen upon her. Whatever the cause of her indifference she is a problem. One of the High School girls in a group discussing another girl put it quite forcefully when she said, “Yes, I’d like to help Alice, but she doesn’t want to be helped. She just doesn’t care about anything. If you don’t invite her she doesn’t seem to mind, if you do she doesn’t care whether she goes or not. I’d rather die than not care about *anything*.” “Such people are so uncomfortable to have around, I’d rather have a girl who gets mad,” was the opinion of another in the group. Young people feel naturally that there is something vitally wrong about the girl who has no enthusiasm, whom all the interesting life of every day fails to arouse. And there *is* something wrong. The problem facing those who have to do with the indifferent, don’t care girl is to find *what is wrong*. Indifference is merely a symptom—there is always a cause. One may discover if he will the things to which the girl is *not* indifferent, her real interests. Knowing these, he sees the door through which he must go to awaken other interests. Sympathy and friendship are the foes of indifference. If one “feels with” the girl who does not care, he may help to awaken her interests. Friendship can discover causes which nothing else can find.

But there is one word which must be stricken from the vocabulary of parents, teachers and friends, who hope to awaken the indifferent girl. It is the word *hopelessly*. *Hopelessly* dull, *hopelessly* bad, *hopelessly indifferent*! Experience teaches that these must go. No teacher has a hopeless pupil, no mother has a hopeless daughter. One may regard the indifferent girl as a difficult problem but never a hopeless one. Behind the indifference and the don’t-care is the *real girl* and one must with patience and sympathy find *her*.

## VII

### THE GIRL WHO WORSHIPS THE TWIN IDOLS



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The twin idols that accept with all the complacency of an ancient Buddha the devotion of more worshipers than any church or creed can claim are Fashion and Pleasure. Not sane fashion which helps make men and women attractive and clothes them with neatness and care, protects them by courtesies, and shields them by conventionalities, but *mad* fashion. Not real pleasure that fills eye with delight and days with happiness that will be remembered even when one is old and days are dark and hard but *mad* pleasure, the thief and robber.

What costly sacrifices are offered every hour of the day and night to the twin idols. When men and women away back in the dim past laid their children in the hands of Baal they made their weird music, sang their wild songs and shouted aloud that they might drown the appeal of the sacrifice. The dark ages have passed. It is the enlightened age—and yet with music and shoutings, weird dancings and songs men and women today drown the appeal of the costly sacrifice laid on the altar before Fashion and Pleasure.

[Illustration: SHE WORSHIPS PLEASURE AND FASHION]

There in her room sits Ellen Gregg, that is she used to be Ellen, she is now deeply offended if friends forget to call her Eleanor. She is an ardent worshiper of the Idols. When she was twelve and fourteen she was a frank, contented, happy girl, simple in her tastes and able to have a good time in most inexpensive ways. A trolley ride to a park and supper under the trees she looked forward to for days and enjoyed in retrospect, until a trip to the lake, a concert, a visit to the picture galleries, or a shopping tour down town where she spent the twenty-five cents she had earned and saved, gave her another happy day to remember. Eleanor is now eighteen and she has been at work for two years. She needs plain becoming dresses, plenty of shirt waists, sensible, pretty shoes, rubbers, a rain-coat, a suit, two becoming hats, for it is the beginning of winter. But she has none of these things. She has just been kneeling before the altar and has laid her costly sacrifice of common sense and comfort, perhaps of health, there in the presence of Fashion and Pleasure. Her face is troubled as she sits there in her room for the memory of her mother's reproof and her brother's disapproval stings a little. But in a moment she looks toward the bed. Lying upon it, smoothed out carefully, is the result of the sacrifice—a thin silk gown of palest blue draped with a fragile chiffon, trimmed and caught up with crystal drops and tiny rosebuds. It is a pretty thing. Besides it is a spotless white outing coat, rough, and to quote the words of the clerk who helped her select it, "exceedingly modish." There are pale blue stockings and pumps. She did hesitate about the pumps but they were there. The hat was there too. She hoped to go perhaps to two dances, she knew she should go to the theater, for she already had an invitation and there might be another.



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Besides that she intended to go herself and invite one of the girls if she were able to get all the things paid for before the theater season was over. Last year everything got shabby so quickly and “looked like a rag,” before the season was over but she hoped for better luck this time. She rose and put her new possessions away very carefully in the little closet and boxes and turned to the mirror. The hair dresser had shown her a new way to dress her hair and she tried it now herself. After a long time she met with fair success. She did not call the family to see the result, for there might be more words of disapproval and though they would not influence her in the least still it was a bore to listen to them. The new arrangement was very uncomfortable and it did seem strange to be apparently without ears but she was an earnest devotee and what it pleased the idol to dictate, that she did. Next she tried the new concoctions for cheeks and eyebrows. The result pleased her. She called to her mother to ask the time and exclaiming at the lateness of the hour called back that she was dead tired and would go to bed. When she hung up her skirt she was dismayed to see how worn it was. She had paid for the style in it, not for the material. She did not go to sleep directly though she had a right to be tired, for she had to get up very early each morning and she was obliged to stand all day at her work. But she was troubled. Even the pleasure of possessing the clothes so carefully protected in the closet could not take away the anxiety produced by the conscious need of rubbers and a winter suit. But at last the poor little devotee, the ardent worshiper of the twin idols, worn out by thinking of it all fell asleep.

Over on Blank Street, in another part of town that day, another worshiper and her devoted mother had been talking over plans for the future. Both were “climbers,” at least they thought it was climbing. They had social ambitions and it was whispered by their enemies that they intended, at whatever cost to enter the inner circle of those who worshiped the idols. Last year the young girl who wanted to go to college had “come out.” It had been a wonderful season but it had left her with a pale face and dark circles under her lovely eyes. The rest cure had done much for her but her physician had said another season in town would undo all that had been done. Her mother was loath to believe it. She had always been able to dismiss her husband’s arguments and had done so successfully the night before when he plead for a year of roughing it in the west, society forgotten and the things of nature for amusement and fun. “If we drop out now,” she told her daughter, “all is lost.” And so they made their plans. The daughter was not an adept in learning the rapid succession of combination dances wherein orientalism, the harem, the submerged tenth, and the various beasts of the field and fowls of the barnyard figured, so the first step was to secure a teacher who would correct her errors and give her skill in the performances which had robbed so many of her friends of all reserve and had taught them the abandonment of motion.



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She had tried to take a nap that afternoon but sleep would not come though she obeyed all the rules for capturing it. Her father's blood was in her veins and even her training had failed to obliterate all of the hard sense which had helped him pass his neighbors in the race for money which should win the coveted title "A Success."

She did not like the dances, she knew she was not equal to the round of varied functions that lay before her. But she was a worshiper—she blindly followed Fashion—she bowed in the presence of Pleasure—and at last sighing wearily, murmured softly, "Well, there is no way out. Mother has set her heart on it and one might as well die as to be out of everything"—she laid her sacrifice upon the altar, took up a book and stopped thinking.

It is easy to think that she is but one, and perhaps the great exception, that because she is not physically strong she shrinks from the long gay season. But she is only one of many, some very young and strong, and some in the twenties who have hearts and find them unsatisfied, who long to be free but held in the grip of the twin idols at last bow down and worship.

In the home of a shoemaker where food was coarse but plentiful and where the loose casements and cracks in walls and doors defied all efforts to keep out the air, grew up a little rosy-cheeked, black-haired girl. When she was fourteen she was tall for her age, her black hair was abundant and beautiful, her large, dark eyes snapped and sparkled in laughter or in anger. She went to work. As yet she had thought little about the twin idols. Before the year had passed, she knelt before them. At the end of the second year she had offered in their name, truth and honesty in exchange for furs, a silver purse and a beautiful necklace. Her parents unable to speak English, ready to believe that anything was possible in the new land suspected nothing. Before the close of the third year, when she was but seventeen, in mad devotion to Fashion and Pleasure, she had laid herself, a living sacrifice upon the altar.

In the same city where she had followed so madly in pursuit of pleasure and dress, in a comfortable home upon one of the new avenues where young shade trees, modern houses, neatly trimmed lawns, all spoke of the young people just starting out for themselves, there lived a family trying in vain to find happiness. Both were young, she only twenty, he twenty-two. She worshiped the idols. He worshiped her. She had social ambitions. She needed money to carry them out. He got it as fast as he could and he was doing pretty well. But it was not enough. That night they had said bitter words to each other, then had repented and he had begged her to be careful, to try for a while to do without unnecessary things for his sake and said that she was more beautiful than any of the more richly dressed women he knew and that she ought to be content. She promised to try. But it was of no use.

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She heard the call of the idols. She could not resist and bowed down and worshiped them. Before the year had passed she had plunged into hopeless debt and in her mad devotion sacrificed her husband with all his hopes and honest ambitions upon the altar. The music, the lights, the dresses, the compliments, the promise of opening doors into the society in which she wanted to shine, for a time drowned the sight of his suffering and pain. Then suddenly he yielded to temptation, was discovered taking money that was not his and the gods of fashion and pleasure forgot them both; the doors of society closed and she was left with nothing but her bitter thoughts. It was a costly sacrifice but a common one which the Idols accept again and again.

Hardly two blocks below was another home with its lawn, its flowers, its neat window boxes and its young trees. There in his nursery was a little two-year-old. He stretched out his hand to his mother and cried when she passed through the hall and down stairs. He had not been well for some days and missed his old nurse who had been dismissed for a slight offense the week before. He did not like the new nurse. His mother did not know much about her. She seemed kind and she was very courteous in her manner. The mother was going in her friend's machine, out to the club-house for bridge. She was a little late and could not stop though the child had looked very pitiful and rather pale. He still cried despite the nurse's warnings, coaxings and threats. At last she grew impatient, seized him and shook him until there was no breath left to scream, laid him on his little bed and left the room. After a while soft, heart-broken baby sobs came from the tired child and he lay still as she had bidden him.

At the club women dressed in all the extremes of fashion, laughed and chatted or grew tense and strained as they exchanged their cards. Over in one corner some of the younger women blew curls of smoke into the air. The baby's mother sat there.

It seemed very lonely to the little boy lying in his nursery. The sobs ceased, the baby grew interested in life once more, climbed over the side of the bed, slipped to the floor, softly opened the door into the hall. His eyes were swollen and he was weak from the shaking and the strain of the day and when he reached the shining staircase, his foot slipped.

The nurse's face grew pale when she picked up the unconscious child. The doctor said he would live but the spine seemed to be injured and the full result of the fall he could not predict.

While they were bending anxiously over him, he opened his eyes and said "Muvver." Just then she entered the hall and they could hear the congratulatory words of her friend. She had won. Then she started up the stairs. Let us draw the curtain, for on the altar of Fashion and Pleasure *a mother* has offered as a sacrifice, *her child*.



You who have read this chapter have been looking with me upon a series of rapidly moving pictures. Perhaps they have seemed too dramatic as they have passed. But they are not fiction—they picture facts. They are not in the past. The same scenes are being repeated now all over our country and across the sea. No one can number the worshipers of the Twin Idols and no one can estimate the awful cost of the devotion of their followers.



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It is right that a girl should enjoy pretty clothes and desire them. It is right that she should spend a fair part of her income on the necessary gowns for parties and pleasures. It is right that girls should seek pleasure and enjoy life to the full. It is right that young mothers keep their youth and enjoy the society of their friends. But when girlhood erects an altar and in the presence of Fashion and Pleasure sacrifices time and strength, money, honesty, thrift and virtue, then it is *sin* and the individual and society must suffer. At this present moment in our country, as in the ages past in nations and with peoples that are now being forgotten, girlhood is worshipping the Twin Idols and one is compelled to ask himself if the final result will be the same.

It is not alone the rich girl who bows the knee in the presence of Fashion and offers her best to Pleasure, the poor girl also worships. In the multitude that bow are all sorts and conditions of girls.

We wait for a prophet. A prophet that shall awaken womanhood and girlhood and show them that to be well dressed means to be appropriately dressed, that extravagant overdressing is clear evidence of the lack of good breeding and good taste; that those who indulge in clothes which they cannot afford and those who make of themselves living models for the exhibition of the latest extravagances, both proclaim the unworthy station in life where they *truly* belong.

We need a prophet who shall awaken womanhood and girlhood to see that the wild rush for sensational and unhealthful pleasures has always meant one thing—final inability to enjoy, the day when all pleasures pall.

Would that the prophet might come, and speedily, that our girls might stand up on their feet free, no more slaves to Fashion or servants of Pleasure. Free—their faces clear, tinted and rosy with the keen joy of living. Free—their eyes bright with health and energy. Free from the lines of worry that stamp the faces of all those who yield to the demands of the Twin Idols.

It will be a great day when the leaders and worshipers of Fashion and the devotees of Pleasure blow the trumpets and cry aloud, “Bow down,” and the mass of girlhood and womanhood, beautiful, strong, healthful, loving life, answer and say, “We will not bow down, nor worship.” When that day comes—and it will come—the reign of the Twin Idols shall cease.

## VIII

### THE GIRL WHO DRIFTS

More than two years have passed since I met one of the girls returning from a girls' conference where the depths of her nature, unstirred before had been touched and



quickened into life. A passion to serve had been awakened in her and as she told me of her new visions and desires I confess that I feared for her. Here she was, the embodiment of all the charm and power of youth with a soul on fire to accomplish great things, and the temperament which



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does *not* accomplish great things. When the train stopped she was met by her father, a keen, common sense, average business man who often expressed the wish that his daughter would “get busy and do something.” She went home to a mother large hearted and self-sacrificing, proud of her attractive daughter and doing so much for her that little remained for her to do for herself. On Sunday she went to a formal, dignified, self-satisfied church; she attended a Sunday-school where the teacher made the lesson interesting without requiring much from the girls; she spent the afternoon with a book, the piano, and the relatives and friends who came to call. Church, home, friends, seemed content with her just as she was. She meant to do so much and to some of her friends she told with great enthusiasm her plans for future work. But the days passed as other days had passed. What became of her passion to serve, to share in the work of making life easier and happier? What became of the cry in her heart for something to do to express the new life which had fired her soul? They died. Slowly the fire was quenched by inaction, the embers grew cold, the longings were quieted, life went on as before—so easy it is to *drift*.

She has the sympathy of every one of us, the girl who “*means to*,” for we also intend to do, and fail. Perhaps she learns from our vocabularies the words and phrases which so often appear in her own. “Tomorrow,” she says, and “I am going to,” “I intend” and “I mean some day to.” She enjoys the present but all that she hopes to *do* she puts into the future. She does not realize at first that the future always has a day of reckoning and that suddenly when one least expects it, the future meets her in the present and says, “How about this and this and this which you were going to do? The time is past. What now?” Sometimes with bitter tears, often with deep regret, always in half guilty fashion the girl answers, “Well, I really meant to do it, only—”

If the drifting girl who “meant to” is to be strengthened in character she must be helped to substitute “I have done it” for “I really meant to do it.”

The girl who continually “means to” and seldom “does,” is usually emotional, responsive, lovable and irresponsible. I remember a most interesting teacher in the last year of the grammar school who had just such a girl in her room. The girl admired her teacher greatly, and whenever she expressed the desire to read a new book, to have the class see a fine picture, to use certain material for the lesson in drawing or painting, the girl promised that the book should be brought, the picture would gladly be loaned by her father, the poppies or tulips she would get from her garden. Almost never was the promise fulfilled, still she continued to promise. One afternoon her teacher talked with her after school and showed her a list of twenty-one things she had promised to do and had not done. “I know



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you do not mean to be untruthful, but you are," the teacher told her. "Whenever you promise now to do a thing, the other girls smile. You wanted to be chairman of the luncheon committee the other day and did not receive a single vote, not because the girls dislike you, but because they cannot depend upon you. You always intend to do things but they are not done. You—" The girl interrupted:

"Twenty-one promises to you, broken!" she exclaimed. "Twenty-one! I shall keep every one of them. Let me see them." Then she burst into tears and the old excuse fell almost unconsciously from her lips, "I meant to, I really meant to."

Sympathetically, but without being spared, the girl was shown that the promises could not be kept now; the time had passed and the things had been done by others. The inconvenience and unhappiness caused by many of these unkept promises were explained to her and the teacher asked that for one week she should make her no promises and that she should not volunteer to do anything for her.

"Oh, but I want to do things for you. I must!" she cried with all the passion of her emotional nature.

"What I want most," the teacher responded, "is that you *do* things, but say nothing."

The girl tried faithfully. Her love and admiration for the teacher furnished a strong motive, and the week showed a real gain. One day her mother called at the school. She said that her daughter had made a strange request of her. "She asked me," said the mother, "to compel her to do everything she promised to do, or said she was going to do and to punish her if she failed. I asked her to explain her strange request and learned of the struggle she has been making. It seems to me she is too young to assume responsibility to the extent of actually doing everything she just casually says she is willing to do or intends to do. We all fail to carry out our intentions."

The teacher helped that mother to see that a girl of fourteen is old enough to begin the struggle to establish the habit of *doing* what one *means* to do, and she realized her mistake. Together they decided to encourage the girl to refrain for the time being from making promises. Meanwhile they made requests for such services as seemed perfectly possible for her to render, being careful that but little time need elapse between the request and its required fulfilment, in order that action might follow rapidly the resolution to act. In the months that followed, the girl's effort to do what she said she would do, furnished many a scene of both tragedy and comedy, but slowly she gained and in two years the result was marvelous. A girl who because of her dependableness will be of great value in home, school and community is being made by the sane, wise sympathy of mother and teacher.

The girl who drifts because she “means to” and fails, is easy to love and easy to pardon for things left undone. But those interested in her welfare will spare neither time nor thought in the effort to help her gain the power to make connection between the intention to do and the actual doing.

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When one observes carefully any large cosmopolitan group of young women, she sees some with hard faces, some marked by suffering, many marked by selfishness and fretfulness and many more showing dissatisfaction and unhappiness, and her mind goes back involuntarily to the fairy story with the mirror which showed “the girl you meant to be.” The contrast between what many a girl meant to be and what she is, reveals a real tragedy.

Many a girl drifts through life always meaning to do—to be, yet missing the joy of accomplishment because she does not summon her will to her aid, and often because friends are too lenient and parents too thoughtless to make her see to what failure and unhappiness, meaning to do and never doing will invariably lead one. If a girl who some day “means to” should read this chapter let her seize at once the only life line which can ever save her. It is made up of three short words which are relentless, but if she obeys they will prove her salvation. *Do it now*, they read and for the girl who “intends to,” there is no other way of escape.

There is another type of girl who drifts. She is explained by the phrase, “aimlessly drifting about.” She is the girl who does not know where she is going. She has no objective. Often parents, teachers and friends have neglected to help her centralize her thought upon one thing which she desires to do and she has not seen for herself that while trying to do everything one accomplishes nothing. Many times she is a girl of varied talents and puts all her effort first upon this thing then upon that but never works long enough to complete anything or learn to do it well. In school she changes her courses just as often as it is permitted, in business she changes her position never remaining long enough in any one place to qualify for a better. If at home she drifts from settlement work to domestic science, from domestic science to a dancing club and the golf links. She gives herself to the current and the wind and *drifts*. She needs an anchor. She needs the strong will of another to steady her while she is developing her own. She needs a great ideal to guide her and hold her with the magnetic power of some North Star. She needs to have her ambition aroused and to be made to believe that she, as truly as any one in the world has a “call to serve.” She needs to have great things expected and demanded of her.

The power which rescues the drifting girl is a power outside herself. It may be a call from the bank of the stream which causes her to pick up her oars and leave the current, at the call of danger, in answer to a cry for help; in times of sorrow and illness, many a drifting girl has come ashore and rendered noble service. Those who thought they knew her looked on with unconcealed surprise and said to one another, “I didn’t think she had it in her.” Yes, it was in her. There, undreamed of by those who saw her drifting. The drifting girl has within her all the possibilities. That is the pity of it. As she drifts she may lose oars, chart and compass and in the stress of the storm that is bound to come be carried out into the sea of darkness, or be wrecked upon the shoals or sandbars that line the stream of life.



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A wise teacher, awakened parents, a good friend, a live church, a great book, these have the opportunity of pulling the girl out of the current, and steadying her until she fastens her life to the Ideal which can hold her.

I can see now the plain, dreamy face and great black eyes of the girl of whom parents and relatives said as they looked at her, "What will she ever amount to?" Their faces betrayed their own conviction that she would amount to nothing. She tried piano but concluded that the training necessary to make her a teacher would take too long and took up stenography. After a few weeks she decided that she was unfitted for the work and would rather be a nurse. Some weeks were spent at home just thinking about it, then she began her training. At the end of the period of probation she left—she knew she could never be a nurse. She spent the days reading, sewing a little, taking pictures in the woods and along the shore near her home and tinting them. She drifted through the months, through a year. One day she posed a group of children, watched her chance and caught them all unconscious and natural, interested in their pails and shovels and the tunnel she had helped to dig. The mothers of the children saw the picture. Beautifully tinted it seemed alive and they were enthusiastic. The next week she chanced to see a nine year old fishing with a child's faith. The perfect stillness of the usually active little body, the expectant look on the small face charmed her and in a moment, her camera had them. Every one who saw the picture exclaimed at its naturalness and life and a friend who believed she saw a future for the girl took it to the best photographer in the city. That night the photographer's call anchored the drifting girl. He made her feel that he had discovered an artist for which the city and many outside of it had been waiting. He fired her imagination and awakened her ambition. She felt that she had a real mission in reproducing all the sweet simplicity and naturalness of the child. She worked hard, the artistic temperament became trained and both fame and money came to the girl who would probably still have been drifting had not some one helped her find her work.

To criticize the drifting girl, even though she sorely tempts one to criticism of her, is not enough. To preach to her on the evil of drifting along without aim or purpose, just letting the days slip past, is not enough. The friends of the drifting girl must help her find her work and her mission and inspire her with the belief that she has both.

And there are the girls who drift because strong, capable, efficient mothers cannot conceive of them as anything but "little girls," cannot realize that they have grown up and continue to plan for them, to make all their decisions and choices as they did when their daughters, now twenty, were children of ten. This sort of girl needs sympathy and help, for in the years when her own powers should



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be developing they sleep. Her mother, though with the best motives and intentions in the world, is compelling her to drift through the years that should be filled with experience and effort and when the time comes that she must be left to herself and depend upon her own resources, her state is pitiful. The girl in the later teens and early twenties needs direction, advice and counsel but if she is to be saved from drifting she must learn to think for herself.

There is another girl who drifts, not aimlessly about, but downstream. She has lost her ideals. She has ignored the still small voice that tried to save her, until now it seldom speaks. One and another of her friends have been with her in the current but have left her and made their way to safety. Only those from whom at first she shrank are with her now. She has reached the place where the current is strong and rapid and escape is doubtful. Her mother still believes her good, her father still trusts her, but before long they will have to know. She began by saying not "I meant to," but "I didn't mean to, I didn't think it was wrong," not "I will do it tomorrow," but "I will never do it again." But she did it again and yet again. She let go of the help that the church offered and gave and went to the pleasure parks on Sunday. She let go of a good friend who held her to the truth, and made a companion of the girl who helped her invent the things she told her mother when she came home very late. She let go of the good books little by little and read the foolish stories that were exciting and absolutely impossible. She let go of the little courtesies and one by one of the laws that good society demands that its girls shall obey. She let go of modesty and in dress and speech allowed herself to drift into the current where it is swift and black.

If only parents had watched more closely, if girl friends had been stronger, and older friends wiser, it would have been so easy when the current just touched her and she was still near to all that is pure and good. But she is drifting—drifting more and more rapidly farther and farther downstream. Now and then she looks back, remembers all the ideals she once dreamed to reach and makes a feeble struggle to resist but the current bears her on. Only some mighty Power can save her.

To the girl who "means to," and "intends," to the girl who dreams and waits and dreams again, to the girl who has let go and is in the current this chapter throws out the challenge—*Act now*. You can! There is help. Take it.

## IX

### THE GIRL WITH HIGH IDEALS

Ideals make men and women and the process of ideal making begins in childhood. A great deal has been written and said about the value of the early ideals born in the



home, but too much cannot be said, and the value of the influence of good homes and parents whose ideals are high cannot be overestimated. The girl whose home life during the first seven years has not brought to her the high ideal must struggle all her later life to build up and intrench in her mind what might have been hers without conscious effort. Very early in her life the little girl reveals in her play, in her conversation, in her countless imitative acts, the ideals which are being formed.



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One day a little four year old told a lie in my presence. Her mother looking the child straight in the eyes, said, "Did Esther tell true?" For a moment the child wavered then nodded her head and said, "Yes, Esther tell true." The mother simply said, "Very well" in the coldest of tones. After a moment the little girl turned to her dolls. She took them to a party, brought them safely back and carefully tucked them into bed. Then she sat quietly looking at them. Finally she took one from the group, placed it in the little chair, very straight and said "Look at me! Did 'oo tell true? 'Oo *didn't* tell true. Naughty girl." A sigh followed. Then slowly Esther came over to her mother, ignoring my presence. Her lips quivered and smoothing her mother's hand she said sadly, "Esther didn't tell true. Naughty, naughty girl." The little girl at four years of age had her ideal of a good girl and she acted according to its dictation. She must "tell true." At fourteen she is a remarkably truthful girl and very accurate in her statements. Through fear, that mother as a child had become untruthful and in later years had a bitter struggle with the temptation to sacrifice the truth to save herself any annoyance. She determined to give to her own little daughter an ideal of the beauty of truth which should save her, and she succeeded.

Many a little ten-year-old girl has fine ideals of truth, unselfishness and honor and they steady her through the teen years when temptations press hard.

The twelve-year-old girl on the edge of the African jungle arranges her hair in "mop" fashion because that headdress represents her ideal of beauty. Rings in the nose, wonderful decorations of ankles and toes, represent ideals of fashion and beauty. The girl in Japan, China or the Philippines thinks she has made herself beautiful when she has arrayed herself in accordance with her ideals. We often term her "awful" and "ridiculous," shrinking even from her picture and she makes sarcastic remarks, laughs heartily and never fails to express her curiosity regarding us and our strange fancies and fashions.

It is our *ideals* which act as a great commander-in-chief and we follow in obedience to their commands. Our country needs today more than ever before, the girl with high ideals, for it is when ideals are lowered that character is weakened and sin and evil have their opportunity.

There are many things in the life and surroundings of the girls of today that tend to lower and dim their ideals which did not enter at all into the lives of the girls in our grandmother's and great grandmother's time, and the girls of today must be stronger if they are able to resist them. Our great-grandmothers lived in the home and did not enter into business life. It is hard for the wide awake business girl of today to imagine how that girl of long ago managed to enjoy life. But monotonous as her life often was, she was spared many things. She never rode



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alone in trains and trolleys nor learned to jostle and push through crowds. She was not compelled to return home late at night without proper escort as countless girls are today. She never spent the evening on the streets, nor was she obliged to join the great army of girls who today live alone in boarding houses in great cities, suffering from discomforts and desperate loneliness. Her parents were more careful than the majority of parents today and she knew what *protection* meant.

It is because these things are so that one feels like giving added praise to the girls who today *are* girls of high ideals, who refuse to let the carelessness of the times in which they live gain entrance to their hearts to tarnish those ideals.

A short distance up the shore as I write I can hear the roar of the tide as it rushes into the very center of a great rock of granite. The geologist can find in that mass of rock the tiny crevice where the water first gained entrance. It has split it asunder because it was able to gain entrance through a little crack and each day sent in its drops of water where now with that roar rushes the tide. Farther along the shore is a solid block of granite. Its face is polished smooth by the dashing waves. There is not a crack in it, not a tiny crevice. It presents its splendid, shining surface to the great sea but offers it no opportunity for entrance.

One cannot help wishing with all his soul that we may have more and more girls who are like that bit of solid granite, strongly resisting those things that seek a tiny crevice by which to enter. For we have so many who through some weak spot have let the tide of evil in and slowly it has done its work until now the once strong and fine ideals lie broken and beaten by the waves.

The strong girls of high ideals are with us and it is a comfort and a joy to look into their young faces so full of promise and of courage. We find them among the very rich and among the very poor as well as among the girls who live in comfort with neither riches nor poverty to make things exceedingly hard.

Irene is one of the girls who amidst poverty and sin has been able to keep her ideals high. Her home is poor because her father, a mechanic, who *can* earn good wages is a hard drinker. Her mother, an honest, clean, hard working woman, is nervous and fretful, worn out by the hard things she has had to meet. It is a quarrelsome household and when the father comes home intoxicated the law is obliged often to interfere. One of the boys was expelled from school because his language is so dreadful. Amid this environment the girl lives. She studies her lessons in school and at the library. Her mother constantly urges her to give up school and go to work but an uncle who furnishes her meager supply of dresses, shoes, coats and hats, says it would only make her father feel that he could give still less to the family's support and so she continues to



attend. Every evening she helps her mother and on Saturday works hard for a neighbor with only a pittance for pay.



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The school and the Sunday-school have furnished all her ideals and she is holding on to them while her father taunts her with being a "saint," and the girls of the neighborhood tempt her to join with them in the things she knows are wrong. The hour on Sunday is a great help and on Monday she loses herself in her lessons and enjoys her school friends. She is only sixteen and she cannot help hoping that things will be better soon. But Wednesday there is another dreadful quarrel, bitter words and her father's drunken threats. When late at night all is quiet and she creeps into bed beside her little sister, her ideals seem far, far away, out of her reach, but she says, "I *must* reach them, I *must*, I *will*." And so day after day she presents to all the waves of discouragement and evil the strong, granite-like determination that will not let the tide come in.

Strong as she is she does not excel another girl surrounded by extravagant wealth, praised, flattered and pampered, trained to think of one thing supremely, and that *herself*. But she is a girl of high ideals. When a little child her old nurse told her the stories and taught her the prayers that she never forgets and helped her feel a deep sympathy for all who suffer and have need. A fine young uncle who has used his wealth to comfort the old and save the sick, told her many a tale that stirred her soul, and her admiration for the young man of millions who worked as hard every day as any man in his office but never for himself, helped in forming her own ideals. And so she reads and studies, dreams and plans the good she will do some day, meanwhile helping in every way open to her and standing firmly for the things she knows are right, resisting with granite-like determination the onslaught of the waves of self-indulgence and the tides of wild extravagance and display.

The girl of high ideals is everywhere. Every school can claim her. Despite teasing, sneers and laughter, she remains true to her ideals. She is not a book-worm but she studies, she is not prudish but she is high minded and pure, she has fun but it is wholesome and clean and kind.

She is found in every shop, every department store is aware of her presence. Honest, attentive, true, interested in her work, following amidst many insidious temptations her own high ideals.

Every college knows her. She resists the petty sins of college life. She banishes jealousy and self-assertion. Snobbishness she will not tolerate. She seeks no honors save those fairly won. Keen, alert, pure and true, capable of sacrifice and hard tasks, sympathetic with all need, a lover of true sport and real fun she represents the college girl of high ideals.

Every factory has her among its operatives. A good worker doing honest work, refusing to allow the stain of coarse jests to touch her, or the temptations which come with low wages and great fatigue to enter her life. Again and again she has revealed her ideals in moments of disaster and death. It is hard to find words to express one's admiration for the factory girl as she holds to her high ideals.



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Many a kitchen knows her. Neat, clean, honest, capable, happy in her work, resisting all the temptations that come through loneliness and deadly routine, she clings to her ideals with courage.

Every set in society knows her; turning her back upon temptations to excess, vanity, pride, scorning all forms of gossip, neither listening to, nor repeating the words that “they” say, she keeps her mind and heart fixed upon the undimmed ideals she has set for herself.

Many a schoolroom and office know her, the girl who does her best work though no one sees and none commend, refusing to lower her ideals in obedience to subtle suggestions or definite temptations; a girl who does what is expected of her and more, who puts her heart into her work and glorifies it.

The girl, whatever her station in life, whatever her occupation, who has kept her ideals high has the right to be happy. She can afford to be light-hearted, to enjoy fun and frolic and to get the most out of everything, for she need not spend days in regret, nor wet her pillow with tears of remorse. Nothing in the world can make up for the loss of a pure and high ideal. If girls could see the sad faces and know the suffering hearts of the women who in girlhood forsook their ideals, they would understand.

If a girl of high ideals is thinking about them now and knows that she has of late been tempted to lower them a little, let me ask her to look at them very earnestly before she consents to tarnish them *even a little*. Perhaps it is only to wear upon the street the sort of dress which attracts attention and causes remarks to fall from the lips of loafers as she passes, perhaps to accept invitations from those who do not measure up to the standard, perhaps to engage in a dance in which the ideal could not join, to repeat gossip which is interesting but may not be true or to be mean and unkind. Let me beg of every girl to cling with all her might to the highest ideal of her mind and heart. Never let it go. Pay the cost of keeping it whatever that cost may be.

## X

### THE AVERAGE GIRL

The average girl does not want to be average. She wants to stand for something, to *excel*, to be beautiful, to do great good in the world, to sing, to play, to be a social leader, to dress well, to be very popular, to be *something*, so that people will single her out and say, “That is Charlotte Gray; she is the prettiest girl in town,” or “That is Charlotte Gray; she has a most wonderful voice,” or “She is the most popular girl in the office,” or “She is the finest girl athlete in the city.” In her day dreams she pictures herself the center, but in real life she does not find herself there—she is just plain Charlotte Gray.

The average girl has all the elemental powers of the race; there are always undeveloped resources in her, always the possibility that she may bless the world by new ministries, enrich it by the discovery of the art of living nobly amid the commonplace, that she may be the mother of the great.



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The average girl has some handicaps and some privileges, in some things she is easily led, she is often misunderstood, she has periods of being indifferent, she spends too much time following the dictates of fashion and too much strength endeavoring to have a good time, she means to do things that never get done, she has times of drifting, she has some high ideals to which she clings with more or less tenacity—she is a combination girl.

The average girl is in many ways the most important member of society, for what the average girl is, that society is. Society cannot be more generous-hearted, pure, altruistic, content and happy than its average girl.

I am thinking of two towns whose inhabitants number between three and four thousand. In one, the girls are careless in dress, vulgar in speech, spend their evenings in the two dance halls and the cheap picture shows. While still young girls they marry men who drink and gamble, start homes with practically no money, are poor cooks and housekeepers and know nothing about the care and training of their children when they come.

There are beautiful homes in that town and sweet, fine girls with the highest ideals. There are wretched hovels in that town with wicked and criminal inmates. But neither the girl with the highest ideals, nor the girl with the lowest, can stamp that town; neither the sweet, refined, cultured girl, nor the immoral and vicious one can stamp that town. The *average* girl determines the character of it.

In the other town the girls impress every stranger with their cleanliness in dress and in speech; the streets are clean, the homes are simple and neat. The girls spend the evenings in their own homes, in "The Center," a house dedicated by one of the churches to the young people of the town for their enjoyment, in the one excellent moving picture establishment. They have a debating society, a dramatic club, and do fine work in the gymnasium. They marry young men of simple tastes like themselves, start their homes with at least the necessities, they know how to keep house and they make good mothers.

There are some girls of culture, some of wealth and fashion in the town, but they do not stamp it. There are some immoral and degenerate girls in that town but they do not stamp it. It is the average girl who leaves her imprint upon it. Neither of these towns can get away from the impress of the *average girl*.

The first town has the licensed saloon and the factory owners have not the breadth of mental vision to see what good houses, fair wages and common sense treatment can do to build the character of the average girl. The second town has never had a saloon, the owners of its factories and business houses live in the town and they have the keen vision which sees the value of good houses in which to live, fair pay, and opportunity for

real recreation. They have been able to raise the standard of the average girl, therefore the enviable record and character of the town.



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It is the average girl in college who determines the character and reputation of that college. It is not the brilliant girl, it is not the girl whose earnest plodding barely carries her through, it is not the failure, it is the average girl. If the average girl should leave her college a good athlete, interested in everything athletic, that fact would determine the general character of the college. If the average girl leaves her college with broadened sympathies, good scholarship, intense interest in the affairs of the day, real joy in living and helping; these things determine the reputation and character of the college. If the average girl leaves her college with social ambitions and plunges into the social whirl, giving her time and strength to the race for social prominence and notoriety, these things determine the character and decide the reputation of that college.

The usefulness and character of every church is determined not by the few people who do all that a church member should do, nor by the few who utterly fail to fulfil the mission of the church, but by the attitude, work and conduct of the average member of it.

The average girl in any occupation determines its standing and character. The average girl in the employ of any concern determines not only its value as a public servant but its success.

The average girl holds the key to all situations touching the life of girls. As the average girl becomes more efficient, finer in character, broader in thought, more sound in body, mind and spirit, she raises society with her; as she loses in efficiency, in power of thought and in character, grows weaker in body, mind and spirit, she drags society down with her.

What should she be like, this all-important average girl? What is she in the ideal? I have asked scores of girls the question and the following paragraph is their answer as well as my own.

The *ideal average* girl is strong in body, is intelligent, believes in God and strives to obey His laws. She is not afraid to work and she has courage to meet hardships and loneliness if they come. She is interested in pretty clothes, she wants them for herself, she has what she can honestly afford and she spends time and takes pains to get the very best she can for the money she has. She refuses to be extreme in style or to make herself ridiculous or conspicuous. She likes fun, she enjoys amusements and good times. She will not indulge in things of which her parents heartily disapprove or which unfit her for work or study, and which her own conscience tells her are doubtful. She loves friends and companions and has as many as she can. She chooses carefully her friends among the boys and men and lets neither word nor act lower in the least degree their respect for her. She looks forward to the day when she shall have a home of her own and fits herself to care for it with intelligence and skill. She is honest, and faithful to the present tasks. She is kindly, generous, helpful, cheerful, *just the sort of girl one would like to live with every day.*



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It is a high average, yes, it is *ideal*. But the fact that so many girls are seeking that ideal, that so many against fearful odds are pressing toward it, and that so many little by little are achieving it fills one with hope. The fact that so many men and women who but a few years ago were not concerned with either the needs or rights of a girl are bending every energy to the task of setting her free from the things that burden her, hold her back and make her suffer, fills one with anticipation, for the things which touch the average girl are the things which concern all who have great hopes and dreams for the future of our land.

This chapter and all the chapters preceding are an appeal to the average girl and those who love her to summon all their strength and raise the standard of the average.

Let the average girl be the highest possible average, realizing the important place she holds in the working out of all problems of right, justice and public welfare and knowing that God must have had great faith in the power and possibility of the average girl else He would not have trusted so much to her keeping.

The world is grateful for the brilliant girl, for the gifted, the talented, the beautiful; but without the average girl it could not live. God bless her and give us more and better.

## PART II

*Her Religion*

## XI

### THE GIRL AND THE UNIVERSE

When Wonder suggests its first questions to her they are large questions. They have to do with the Universe. They are eternal and unanswerable questions. They fall from baby lips but they baffle sages. It may be on some bright summer morning that she stands amidst the daisies scarcely taller than they, listening intently to the words of wisdom which tell her that God made the daisies every one, and all the flowers and the butterflies and the cows in the meadows. After a time of silence she puts her question, her clear eyes searching the face of her would-be teacher. "Who made God?" she asks, and while the teacher wavers she repeats her question until some sort of answer comes. That night when she is tucked into bed her mind returns by way of her evening prayer, to the subject of the morning. She hurls another question, "Where is God?" Since she cannot be evaded she is so often told that God is everywhere and accepting it with all the faith of the literalist she begins her search for Him. She strives to solve the mysterious fact that He can be everywhere and yet in all the places where one searches He is not to be found.



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Then her grandmother who sat in the sunny room upstairs as long as the little girl can remember is taken sick. Some days pass and her mother with tears streaming down her face tells her little daughter that grandmother has gone to heaven. The mystery bearing down upon the little soul deepens. "What is Heaven?" and "where is Heaven?" she asks. They tell her of its beauties, its peace, happiness and joy. They say that grandmother wanted to go and then they cry again. The little girl cannot understand it all, but she tries. If grandmother is happy and really wanted to go, why does mother look so sad, why the closed blinds, why is everything so quiet? She asks the question in the presence of her practical unimaginative aunt, who bids her be quiet and adds in her even, impressive voice, "Your grandmother is dead." The word has an awful sound and she raises her eyes to the severe face above her and asks, "What *is* dead?" But the aunt does not answer, and the little girl goes to the window to think it all over. She knows that *dead* is dreadful—grandmother has gone, the house is quiet, father will not play with her and mother cries. She is only a very little girl but she has met the unanswerable questions, "Who made God? Where did I come from? Where is Heaven? What is it like? What is Death?"

As the years pass her instructors in religion attempt to teach her. In varied words, according to varied creeds they answer or postpone the answer to her questions. She learns that God is good and God is great; that He takes care of people, at night especially; that one may ask Him for whatever she wants and if it is best she will get it; that if one would please God she must be very good and there are many things she must not do; that those who please Him shall be rewarded and those who fail shall be punished.

Her instructors do not mean always that this shall be the sum total of their teachings but stripped of all the songs, the pictures and cards, the birthday greetings, the flowers and stories, these things in the majority of cases sum up the little girl's conclusions. There enters into her religion in many cases that name which seems so often to sound sweeter when murmured by baby lips than at any other time. The little girl has learned to love the Baby asleep in the hay, the Child before whom the Magi knelt, the obedient and lovable boy who played in Nazareth. Then the new outlook comes and the little girl sees Jesus the Redeemer and God the Father. She listens with eager fascinated interest to the stories of what He did and said, tries to obey the commands He gave, suffers for her sins of commission, prays and hopes to be forgiven. The One who searches the hearts of men must find as honest, devoted faith among these little girls as anywhere in His army of believing followers.

Then the spirit of altruism begins to awaken. She is no longer a *little* girl. She begins to understand the meaning of *sacrifice*, she is stirred with the desire to serve. Christ the Messiah, the Savior and Master, claims her interest and her heart is filled with desire to serve and to prove her love to Him. She pledges herself to His service, strives to be faithful, suffers agonies of remorse over her failures. Among all the hosts who follow Him there are none more loyal and loving than this girl in her teens.

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The years pass and in the later teens and early twenties another world forces itself upon the girl. It is the world of sin and evil, of selfishness, greed and hypocrisy. She shrinks from it but it is bound to be revealed. She catches a glimpse of a world of suffering and pain that makes her heart ache. And while these worlds are pressing hard she is plunging into the secrets of things. The revelation of biology, astronomy, chemistry, the history of peoples, languages and books, the science of economics, and the mysteries of psychology are demanding consideration. Something happens to the bright, sweet unquestioned faith. Questions persist, doubts suggest themselves and demand answer. Nature asks "What do you think about me?" The problems of sin and sickness, accident and injustice ask "How do you explain us?" and darkness settles over the girl's spirit. Sometimes she refuses to think things out and accepts the new explanations of things whatever they happen to be, turning in cynicism from the old. But more often she does think—asking the old questions she faced as a little girl all over again out of a larger world and a trained mind. "Who made God?—what was the very beginning of beginnings?" she asks. "Is it some *one* or some *thing*?" "What is Death and what is after that? How am I to *know*?" Soul, mind and spirit cry out for concrete proof of that which can never be concretely proven.

The thing she needs just here, is the very thing she is most often denied. She needs some one who can show to her the larger God and the greater Christ for her larger world and greater thought. She is losing or has lost her smaller conceptions in the maze of wonders which have been revealed to mind and heart. She needs to know that she has not lost her God, rather is she just beginning to discover Him; that she has not lost her Christ, instead the Christ is just beginning to be revealed to her in all His greatness. She needs some one to make clear to her the meaning of the promise, "Seek and ye shall find. Knock and it shall be opened unto you." From a new viewpoint with a larger horizon she may be helped to begin her trustful search for God knowing that truth can never lead away from God. She is just a girl but the Universe is hers in which to seek Him. Its laws, as fast as she can discover them, are her servants to lead her to Him and its broadening horizons but bring her nearer.

When she can face all the new knowledge, feel the shaking of the old foundations, in this spirit of trustful *discovery*, her doubts will pass away. The world is saved through Christ, not through dogma and if she can have the wise instructor or friend who can show her these things she is safe.



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Whenever one thinks of the little girl among the daisies there comes to him in woful contrast the little girl in the crowded cities' wretched streets. She is denied the daisy field. Stars do not tempt her to wonder. The narrow streets filled with material things, pressing close, crowd out sun and moon. The name of God is familiar to her ears but she does not ask questions about Him. She associates the name with loud voices, angry faces and often with blows. Death awakens wonder but there is little time for answers to puzzled questionings. The few days of relief from noise, the expressions of sympathy and friendship, the unusual words of tenderness all make a deep impression—then life goes on as before only harder because of the added expense. As the years pass she accepts the teachings of her church, she can recite them more or less glibly but they have nothing special to do with her life. Philosophy and science do not trouble her. She says her prayers thinking about other things and when she grows older stops saying them, save at church.

Oftentimes as a little girl she receives no religious instruction, never enters a church and the name of God drops in curses from her own lips. Only now and then fear of the future takes possession of her for a moment. Only in great stress of unusual suffering or pain, or in the presence of awful sorrow is her soul stirred to ask the little girl's question, "What is Heaven like?"

Sometimes the bitterness of her lot causes her to treat the idea of God with scorn. "Look at me," she said one day in my presence. "What have I done that God should punish me with the troubles I've got. There ain't no God, that's what I say, anyways."

Poor girl! The church must give to her the God whom she can trust and love, but it will have to give Him in widespread, simple justice. First she must see Him in *deeds* and then in words.

The girl amidst the squalor of wretched conditions in heartless cities, needs a God who is her defender and champion as well as her Savior. When some wise instructor or inspired friend can give to her this view of the Lord God of Hosts, the Father of all, who seeks through His children to save His children her salvation has begun.

Oftentimes one meets the gentle, trustful, lovable little girl who asks her question and receiving the answer accepts it, never to doubt it through all the years, never to ask the great universal questions again. Sometimes it is because the answers were so wisely given, sometimes because the depths of the girl's mental and spiritual life are never touched. She has a comfortable faith, earnest, true, honest and sincere. It does not embrace the world, nor is it deeply concerned with the great problems with which the world wrestles. It is not necessary perhaps that it should be. The girl is naturally religious, trustful and believing. Her sweet, untroubled faith blesses the life of every day.

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Those who are interested in the religion of girlhood and young womanhood are filled with hope today as they listen to the answers which are being given by wise mothers and teachers, to the great questions of the universe. The answers leave room for a *growing* religion which grows as the girl grows.

A while ago my friend walked through the country fields with a little six year old. My friend says she has left behind an "outgrown religion." Her complacency and cynicism received a shock that afternoon. A lamb which was the baby of the flock had been made a special pet by the children and came immediately when the six year old called. The days were getting cold and the lamb's woolly coat was thick. My friend, intending to instruct the child said, "Put your hand on the lambie's thick wool. Cold days are coming and Nature makes the lamb's wool nice and warm."

"Yes," answered the child, her eyes shining, "the Heavenly Father makes its coat warm. He didn't give them a papa like mine to get their clothes. He gives them to them himself."

My friend was surprised by the words and before she could think of a suitable reply, the child continued—

"He tells the birdies to go down where it's warm and there are flowers all the time. Just a few stay here when it's cold and they have warm feathers. The bear and the foxes and the horsie and kitty,—the Heavenly Father makes all their coats warm. He is very, very busy," she added impressively.

For weeks during the preparations which nature makes for the coming winter, my friend, hitherto satisfied with abstract law found her mind going back to the Heavenly Father "very, very busy" in the great world He had made. She was so impressed that she went with the child to her kindergarten class in school and in Sunday-school and in both she heard of the love and care of the Heavenly Father.

As she listened to the simple teachings, the children's answers and comments, she realized that in the circle there was a very real personality called the Heavenly Father whom these children knew and loved. "I wish such had been my training," she said regretfully. "Perhaps I should have been saved the darkness and perplexity in which I have lived for years."

Months after in a large class of earnest, eager and attentive girls I listened to a wonderful teacher. I loved with a deeper love, after that lesson, the Christ whose presence seemed to fill that room as the teacher showed her girls the Master at His task of saving the world by showing it God, the Father.

One day I stood in a silent home with a brilliant, cultured girl, who had traveled much and enjoyed every privilege. She had that afternoon left her mother beside her father



out on the sloping hillside in the great silent city. We raised the curtains the maid had drawn, the girl laid aside her coat and hat and said sadly, "Now life must begin again, without all that is dearest to me." I tried to find words to strengthen her but she turned her calm face toward me and said, "How do people live through it and go on, who haven't God? The Father of the World has them both in His keeping. I can wait till I find them again."



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This girl had never doubted. She had wondered and thought, questioned and *believed*. Wise parents had given to her the God of the Universe—the Father, and His Son the revelation of Himself to men that it might be saved, in such simple terms, so free from petty dogma that as she had grown in mind and spirit He grew in wonder and majesty and power, commanding her love and worship.

If a girl, troubled and perplexed by the things the mind cannot grasp or heart understand, chances to read this chapter let her know that the trouble lies not with the God of whom she has been taught but with those who, trying to do their best, have been weak in their teaching.

If we can banish from our faith all its man made littleness, all its chaos of bickerings, all the fret of the conflicting opinions of those who, after all, are themselves but children searching after truth, and give to the growing girl, a growing religion, the God of the Universe will become her God and she will worship him in sincerity and truth all the days of her life.

“Dear Lord and Father of mankind,  
Forgive our feverish ways;  
Reclothe us in our rightful mind,  
In purer lives thy service find,  
In deeper reverence, praise.”

## XII

### IN THE HANDS OF A TRIAD

Despite all the words that have been written and spoken in the past it is still true that many of those engaged in the religious training of a girl, or responsible for the form of religion which is presented to her, do not realize, or else they ignore the fact that she is in the hands of a triad—body, mind and spirit. As a triad she develops if she be a normal girl, as a triad she acts. Her character is made by these three agencies working together. It is a fact, the significance of which none of us fully realize, as yet, that a clean mind and a clean heart in an unclean body is very rare. A quick, alert balanced mind and a pure, heroic spirit in a starved and diseased body is also rare. A well-nourished, well-cared-for body with all its functions doing their work and a mental weakling is a rare combination.

Once we did not know that adenoids made children mentally deficient, nor did we dream that teeth properly attended to, and a pair of glasses could transform a girl from a sullen, morose disobedient child into an interesting, happy and obedient one; but some of us have seen that transformation and marveled at it. Once we believed that inherent moral degeneracy sent a twelve-year-old girl to the courts. Now we are beginning to



see the relationship between a room with no windows and no running water, a dirty alley or a wretched street and the moral degeneracy. Once we shook our heads and said, "Well, they say there's one black sheep in every family." Now we are beginning to see that the black sheep may be made by the gratification of every physical desire and every mental whim and the neglect of the spirit.



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Churches, schools and individuals are beginning at last to *seriously* consider the teaching of morals and religion and as they give themselves to the task of laying down practical workable plans, suddenly as if it were a new revelation comes the *fact* that the individual is a triad and she must be taught as such.

If homes were ideal it would be an easy task. If it were possible for the majority of homes to approach the ideal it would seem an easier task. But with poverty, ignorance, inefficiency and indifference clutching at the very center of dynamic power, the task is one of the greatest which men have as yet been asked to meet. If homes were ideal, from the moment the little girl comes into the world, and even before her coming, sensible, rational care would be taken of her body, not only to make it beautiful but that it might do its work for her in healthful, normal fashion and be a good servant throughout her life. Her mind would be awakened and trained to think, her will to act and to control and all her sense of reverence, wonder and worship developed while her love for the good and the beautiful, the heroic and self-sacrificing was stimulated.

But homes are not ideal and the majority have neither accepted nor considered deeply the task of preparing the *whole* girl for life. Some prepare her physically and let the rest of the triad develop as it will. Some prepare her mentally and morally while both body and spirit suffer. Some seek to prepare her spiritually by fitting on as a sort of garment what they believe to be religion while body and mind receive little attention and some let all three develop as convenience and chance may dictate.

When men's consciences have been awakened and they find the home incapable or inert, they have turned the responsibility over to the public school and the church. Of late civic forces have given their aid. Those directly interested in the religious training of the girl are coming to agree that these three agencies are needed and that they must work *together* if the whole girl is to be helped.

*Some one* must teach a girl the things about herself that she ought to know. That some one is her mother. No one else can do it with the same power. Neither church nor school can perform well the delicate task of revealing life's secrets, and blundering is deadly. But church and school and civic forces together can help the mother, can give her a proper conception of her duty, give her the words to say, perhaps. The school can teach morals and keep its own moral standards high; the church can awaken the spiritual life of a girl and nurture it, that knowledge and high ideals may work together to fortify and strengthen her. The civic forces can see to it that the girl has the opportunity for pure physical enjoyment, for mental stimulation and moral uplift.

What civic forces have been able to do through tuberculosis exhibitions and child welfare exhibits, by showing parents the truth regarding the importance of the physical care of their girls, furnishes encouragement to go further. Good newspapers may speak to parents untouched by the school and out of touch with the church and have done so. The majority of parents when they see and believe will act.



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There was a time, and not long since, when those engaged in teaching religion were not concerned with the number of hours the girl worked, the age at which she began, the sort of room in which she slept, the amount of real food she had. And because they were not concerned they lost her. Today a teacher cannot teach religion if she does not care about life. She attempts it but she fails. Jesus astonished the Scribes, Pharisees, Doctors of the Law and Priests of the Temple by His intense interest in the physical needs of men. He took into account the *whole* man and set body, mind and spirit free.

When one considers how little mental stimulus and training comes to the average girl after leaving school and is aware of the vast majority who leave school at any early age, she is not surprised at the lack of power to think on the part of so many, and at the very limited knowledge she finds when attempting to teach. The girls of today need to be informed on matters of public welfare and political and economic affairs as never before. Where shall they go for that information and how shall they be led to desire it? Girls need to know the meaning of religion and in simple fashion the history of creeds and denominations. They need instruction from the Bible which cannot be given in a half hour a week of more or less regular study.

Once those who were teachers of religion were not deeply concerned with what the girl read and the things about which she thought. Now one cannot teach religion truly unless she *knows* what a girl reads, about what she talks and thinks, whether she is in touch in any way with that which can broaden her mind and give her food for thought.

No girl is safe, no girl can be her best or get the most out of life who is weak on the third side of the triad. Unless she has the help of a well developed spiritual nature how the littlenesses, the routine, the difficulties, the jealousies and envyings, the gossiping and petty dishonesties of life dwarf her.

Long ago, when I first began to print pictures, I tried to print a picture of a beautiful rail-boat against long lines of sand dunes, on a postal card. I couldn't. They explained to me that I must have sensitized cards, then the imprint could be made. The girls of today need to be developed and sensitized spiritually that the imprint of purity and righteousness may be made upon the whole life. The spiritual life, as well as the mental and physical, is as we shall see in a later chapter, a matter of cultivation.

If the girl herself reads this chapter she will stop a moment to examine the triad which makes up her own life. Perhaps the physical side is weak. She may strengthen it if she will. Now is the time, while she is young and it will obey her. When habit has written its words in iron on muscle, heart and nerves it will be harder for her to control it. Perhaps she has been careless about fresh air, perhaps has been tempted to let pie and cake



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and coffee make a lunch, perhaps to neglect rubbers, to get only half the sleep she needs or to dress foolishly on cold winter days. If the physical side of the triad is weak a girl must suffer. The body is a despotic master and it is a splendid servant. Even if others have failed to help her and circumstances have been against her, a girl can if she will, improve her physical condition and every little improvement is worth the cost. It may not seem to her at first a part of her religion to keep her body well and to strengthen it by every means in her power, but it is.

It may be that the mental side is weak; that it is lazy and does not want to think; that the only food it craves is the sensational, and light, *very light* reading and not much of that. But the girl who is in earnest can refuse to gossip and learn to talk and think about the great needs and problems of our day. She can turn quickly the pages where crime and accidents are recorded and read carefully those that tell of the progress in science and the happenings among the nations of the world. She can read a great book once a month or once in three months according to the time she has and she can think and talk about what she reads. She can find some hobby in which to be interested. The effort she makes to compel her mind to work will bring a very real reward.

It is a pitiful thing to see a woman at thirty or forty who has nothing to think about but herself and the affairs of her neighbors, and who never reads. If the mental side of the triad has grown weak through laziness and neglect, the girl may strengthen it. The effort to make it strong may not seem a part of religion but it is.

And if she knows now as she thinks honestly about it, that the spiritual side of the triad that governs her life is weak, she may strengthen it. She can read the Book that through all the ages has strengthened men's spirits and made them conquerors over temptation and sin. She can think about the words that have helped women to keep sweet and strong amidst trial, and danger, sorrow and disappointment. And she can pray. She does not need long prayers. She needs just a word with God, her Father and her Helper every day to keep her strong, and another at night to give her courage to go on trying when she has weakly yielded to temptation and failed. If she has neglected it she may begin now to strengthen the weak place that she may be saved from spiritual sickness which is the worst of all.

One covets for every girl the opportunity to live in the hands of the healthful, trained, awakened triad. Life is a blessed experience to the girl who is well physically, alert mentally and strong spiritually. If that experience is to come to the majority of girls, then those interested in her religion must more and more understand that true religion touches all of life—the triad—body, mind and spirit.



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One summer night when the thunder was roaring over the sea and vivid flashes of lightning blinded for the moment one daring enough to face the storm, the little village church bell rang the dread alarm of fire. The apparatus for firefighting was of the type most city people have forgotten. Men rushed to the fire company's quarters and dragged the engine forth. From one of the highest hilltops flames lighted the sky. The men seizing the rope dragged the apparatus up the steep slope. Just before reaching the top it stuck. Suddenly a sharp appealing voice rang out into the darkness. It did more than request, it commanded and demanded. "Everybody take hold" it shouted, and under the power of it people sprang to obey and the engine reached the hilltop.

Those who look with sympathy and love at girlhood today, cannot help wishing that some Voice of power would ring out through every place where girls are found saying—"Everybody take hold!" If everybody would respond to the task as that night in the fire and the storm, the girl, in body, mind and spirit might easily be saved. Everybody may not respond now—but how about *you*, the girl herself?

### XIII

#### THOU SHALT NOT

In our effort to get away from the harsh negative teaching of the past which made young people feel that life meant "don't," we have made the mistake of failing to teach with power the fact that there are things to which God's law and man's law say *thou shalt not*. "I did not know it would do any harm," is oftentimes a truthful statement and the girl has the right to be carefully, wisely and sanely taught the things to which she must say no. A girl's religion must have not only the *constraining* power which sends her out to do the kindly deed, say the word of comfort and cheer, give of her time and her talent to help make life easier for those who find it hard, but it must have the restraining power which shall keep her from self-indulgence and sin.

Whenever the *thou shalt not* side of religion is mentioned the girls themselves and those responsible for their training immediately think of the question of amusements, which is after all only a part of the greater question of how much leisure a girl should have and what she should do with it. Preachers, teachers and Christians generally, differ so widely on the matter of disputed amusement questions that *thou shalt not* loses its force. It is the parents' right to decide the girl's amusements and determine her social life and when one sees the length to which parents permit and even encourage their daughters to go, he knows that the *thou shalt not* might well be said to *them*. When parents do not care what their girls do, or are too careless and ignorant to realize danger, when the girls are without friends and unprotected, then the teacher of religion must without hesitation, forcefully and with the arguments of *fact*, teach them to say "no" to the things which she believes can bring only harm, which weaken the power to resist other evils and which are unhealthy for the growing girl. One may teach with feeling

and power the “*thou shalt not*” in which she believes without uttering bitter words of condemnation of those who differ with her.



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Religion and the law together have the right to say to the unprotected girl, lacking wisdom, without discretion, eager for fun and adventure, ignorant of danger, *thou shalt not*. The words should be written over every unchaperoned or inadequately chaperoned high school dance, over the public dance hall, over the cabaret, over the vaudeville where the vulgar hides behind a mask, over every place which by its very nature opens doors of temptation and lowers powers of resistance. The teachers of religion, and all agencies for moral training and uplift, *because* of the comparative helplessness of girlhood, have the right to teach by every means at their command *thou shalt not*.

Some one must teach the growing girl that extravagance is sin; some one must say *thou shalt not* to her common faults of promising without thought of the cost of keeping the promise, of exaggeration and untruthfulness. Some one must help her see the utter folly of snobbishness and false pride. In some way she must be taught the cruelty and meanness of gossip, the results of a sharp tongue and a critical spirit. She must be shown the sin of ingratitude and the curse of jealousy and envy. In fact the old ten commandments are needed by the girlhood of today as truly as they were needed by that great army of people in the days of the youth of a race, when their great law giver and leader strove to save them from the results of their own ignorance and newly acquired liberty.

Who teaches *thou shalt not* to the girl of today? Indirectly, a great many people. Directly, clearly, definitely so that she understands and is impressed, very few. The Sunday-school in a half-hour a week attempts to do it, but the Sunday-school reaches a very small part of the girlhood of our land, and its work with those whom it has reached is often ineffective. It is at present engaged in a serious effort to make its teachings more effective and far reaching. The public school is not directly teaching the *thou shalt not*, for teaching it does not mean saying it, in the form of a command. It does much indirect moral teaching, which is invaluable. It is experimenting with direct moral teaching and many of the experiments have shown highly gratifying results, which lead us to hope that the day is not far distant when direct teaching of the common laws of moral living shall find a place in every school. We shall have to find some new definition first, for such words as success, wealth, honesty, courage, honor and the long list in the vocabularies which the pupils in every school make for themselves.

In reacting against the thundering negatives of the past, the church has, in the decade or more that lies behind us, been teaching an unbalanced religion. "Thou shalt," and "thou shalt not" must be taught together if the best results are to be reached. In individual instances so great success has been won by the teacher of religion that his method is worth one's earnest study.



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One morning there came into Sunday-school class a very ordinary looking little girl of ten years. Her father was a truck driver, her mother had been a domestic. There were four children in the home, the little girl being next to the youngest. The parents had no relation to any church. The two older children had turned out great disappointments to them and when a neighbor invited the ten-year-old to go to Sunday-school the mother gave her consent, saying that perhaps the church could keep her from following her brother and sister. It did.

In that home there was no moral instruction, no moral suasion. When the children had told a lie directly to the mother they were punished severely. When they told a lie to a teacher or neighbor the mother was their defender and they escaped punishment. They heard their mother lie to her husband, to her neighbors, to the rent collector and the grocer. They learned not to fear a *lie* but to fear being discovered in it. They became clever liars and the little girl at ten was an adept. For disobedience, cheating, taking food and pennies they were alternately turned over to their father for punishment or shielded from his wrath according to the mother's temper at the time of the offense. They were not taught or helped to hate sin or to see it in its hideous aspect. *Thou shalt not* was a matter of convenience, not of principle.

The teacher into whose class the little girl came was a woman of experience who before her marriage had been a teacher in the public school. She called in the home, she learned the standing of the girl in the day school, in less than a month she *knew* her. What she found out made her determine to help the child hate falsehood and cheating in every form. By story and incidents she showed Sunday after Sunday, side by side, the cowardice and unhappiness of the liar, the distrust of his fellowmen, the misery which he must suffer and the courage, happiness and freedom of the truth-loving and truth-telling child. Every lesson said "don't lie" and "speak and act the truth." One day the little girl was invited to her teacher's home to look at pictures and choose some books to read, for the teacher had discovered her love for pictures and books. After a very happy hour, while saying good-by in the hall, the child suddenly seized her teacher's hand and stammered, "How can you help telling lies?" The teacher says, "As I looked into her plain little face with its quivering lips, I loved her. I determined to fight for her and with her." It was a fight, for habit was strong and environment did not change. For over five years that teacher faithfully presented the "*thou shall not*" and "*thou shall*" which shaped the girl's ideals and helped her reach them. She taught her to pray; she inspired her with a genuine love for God the Helper, who would "see her through," she opened doors of service for her. At twenty she is a truthful and truth-loving girl, she has been



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able to say “no” to the things which proved the downfall of brother and sister; she is a useful, self-supporting, thoroughly respectable member of society and an earnest Christian. She has been able to lead her younger brother safely past the dangerous places and is helping him through school. What the church, through its religious instruction, has been able to do for this girl and many others it might do in far larger measure were it equipped with a regular teaching force adequate to its need, if its preachers could come into real contact with the children and youth of the community and present to them with power the *thou shalt not* which shall give them at least an opportunity to strive to obey.

If the girl herself is reading this chapter I know she will agree with me when I say that a girl respects and honors in her heart the teacher who presents to her, fearlessly and honestly, the things which she believes a girl cannot do with safety, which lead into dangerous places and which make it hard for her to keep pure, true, unselfish in thought and deed; and she respects even more highly the teacher who can give her broad sane reasons for finding substitutes for these things. She may, as she grows older, come to the conclusion that her teacher was mistaken but she respects her for her honest effort to help.

In every girl's creed there must be some negative. The *law* says you must and you must not. As she reads this page perhaps some girl will stop for a moment and write out the things to which she believes a girl should say “no.” Here is such a list, written in the form of a creed by a girl when a sophomore at college.

“I believe that a girl should not indulge in amusements which make her nervous and excited, give her a headache, make it hard for her to study, cost her a good deal of money and crowd out all thoughts of duty and which make her feel envious and jealous of those who are more popular or fortunate than she, and sometimes make her think things she hates to remember.

I believe that a girl should *never* repeat what she has heard about another person if it could in any way injure that person's character.

I believe that she should not lie even by looks or by silence. I believe that she should never deceive another, never make fun of the weaknesses or misfortunes of other people and never treat another girl as she would not herself want to be treated.”

This is a negative creed. It does not say *do*, it says *don't*, but there are times when every girl needs *Don't*. Put *don't* into your own creed, you girls who are thinking over these things.



When you are tempted to lose your head and plunge into things you have been taught are wrong, just because “*everybody*” that mysterious mischief maker, is doing these things, keep steady and *Don’t*.

When you are tempted to make things more comfortable, more interesting, more exciting by exaggeration—*Don’t*.



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When you are tempted to escape by a lie the consequences of what you have said or done—*Don't*.

When you are tempted to let envy or jealousy find expression in words or acts of meanness and unkindness—*Don't*.

When you are tempted to repeat a story or say a daring thing you would not say in the presence of the one whose respect you desire—*Don't*.

When you are tired of the struggle to be true and do right, tired of the effort to seek always the best things and are tempted to give up—*Don't*.

When you are tempted to repay injustice with revenge, unkindness with cruelty, jealousy with malice, to do to others as they do to you—*Don't*.

Learn the power of control, of *restraint* and though it be only the negative side of religion, it will help to make you strong.

When the instructor in religion opens his eyes and sees the peril which lies in wait for the girl wage earner, the society girl and even the schoolgirl, what he is forced to see makes him say with a passionate cry from his soul, as he thinks of the individual girls whom he knows and loves, "*Thou shall not.*"

## XIV

### THOU SHALT

A thought which slumbers in the mind has within it the germ of life. At any moment when the right stimuli have been given, it may spring into conscious being and find expression in action that will color the entire life. While it slumbers today, tomorrow may bring the waking moment and so it must be reckoned with in the formation of character. Still it lacks the positive element. It is limited.

It becomes the work of those interested in the welfare of the girl to cause the awakening and constant stimulation of those thoughts which shall lead to action along right lines. The repeated impression upon the mind of deeds of heroism, of unselfish daily living, of great action on the part of ordinary people in a common-place environment has an unmistakable effect upon the forming character.

But if the thoughts engendered by the deeds of heroism and achievement be called into action by the opportunity in the girl's life to reproduce them, then the effect upon the character is made definite and intense. It is not until the girl has done a kindred thing, until the impression has found its way out in action, that the full result upon the forming character is seen. All the complex life about her is busy through the eye and ear,



through numberless sensations and instinctive reactions leaving impressions. Their imprint upon her life may be seen by any close observer when the girl herself is unconscious of it. But it is the special set of impressions which *habitually* find *expression* that determine character.

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This is most encouraging, for it means that if the girl can be led to express the right impression and leave the others to fade away into the recesses of consciousness where it will be hard to awaken them, the determination of her character will be a possible task. It means that in the years of habit formation and character making those who share the task of the girl's training have the opportunity to lead her to repeatedly express in positive action the high ideal, the noble self-sacrifice, the great deed or ambition, the generous impulse slumbering in her thoughts and appearing in her day dreams. The material which is furnished her for thought creates her day dreams, what she sees in her day dream *effects* character, what she *does* makes it.

It is for this reason that parents and teachers who are seriously concerned with the problem of making a girl's religion a real and vital thing seek ways and means by which she may be led to express both in words and actions the thoughts and desires which their teaching has awakened.

A successful teacher had been studying with her class for some weeks the lessons founded upon "Unto the least of these, my brethren"—"A cup of cold water even," "Ye have done it unto me," and kindred texts. She taught well and the girls were thinking. Some attempted as individuals to express what they thought. In the minds of most, the stories, illustrations and facts slumbered. One Saturday three of the more thoughtless girls were asked to accompany the teacher on a visit to a children's hospital. They were much impressed by what they saw. The convalescent ward proved of great interest and the babies fighting for their lives against pneumonia brought tears to their eyes. On their way home they expressed the wish that the class might make some of the bonnets and gowns which the sweet-faced young nurse had said the hospital needed so much for its baby patients. "Perhaps the other girls will not be interested," said the teacher. Immediately the most thoughtless girl in the class replied, "Oh, Miss D——, they cannot help it. We will *tell* them what we saw! We have been studying long enough about what we ought to do. We haven't done a thing! At least—I haven't—" she added.

[Illustration: HER HEART IS FILLED WITH A DEEP DESIRE TO SERVE]

Two dozen bonnets and gowns, well made after the pattern furnished by the hospital, were the result of the interest of that class. While the girls sewed they talked. They discussed in simple girlish fashion the problems of poverty and illness and the duty of one part of society to the other. In this sort of informal discussion they expressed themselves far more freely than in their Sunday-school class or their classroom at school. By the expression of high and generous thoughts they strengthened their own ideals and placed themselves in the presence of their friends and companions on the side of Christ-like living.



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About a week after the last bonnet and gown made by the class had been sent to the hospital the teacher was surprised by a visit from Arline, a heedless and hitherto disinterested member of the class. It was a bitter cold day, the sunless air penetrating even the warmest garments.

"I brought you this box of things to give away," the girl said as the teacher tried to conceal her surprise. "There must be a good many babies in the river district who need warmer clothing these cold days. I had some time for sewing and my aunts helped."

The teacher found three bonnets and gowns carefully made, three tiny flannel petticoats, six pairs of warm stockings and three small hot water bottles.

"I bought the things with my own money," said the girl. "It is the first time I ever did anything like this. I enjoyed it."

The church visitor found a needy place for each thing and told Arline most heartily how grateful she was for the help she had been able to pass on. The simple deed by which Arline expressed in the positive terms of action what she had been thinking seemed to make a definite change in her character and about three months from the time she had made her gift, in a simple and natural way she came into the church. As the girls were given more and more definite opportunity to express themselves in thoughtful acts and kindly words, the teacher found sympathetic, interested listeners to the lessons she tried to make inspiring and practical in their appeal, and one by one the girls decided for themselves to come into the church and help it do its work in the world. The definite stand of such a group of interesting girls, easily leaders in school and the social life, made a decided difference in the standards of the young people of that community. The community as a whole, and the parents of the girls especially, owe to that teacher a very real debt for her part in the character building of those girls, who before they came in contact with her had had only vague and hazy ideas of a girl's duties and privileges. She furnished them with material for thought and with opportunity for translating that thought into action which is rapidly determining their characters.

A class of girls in another community made up of "freshmen" and "sophomores" in the high school who were accused by other girls, and with reason, of being "snobbish," "proud," and of forming "cliques," had been studying with a most interesting teacher a course on Christian life and conduct. They had been urged to show in their own lives, in school, in their social relations, the characteristics they learned each Sunday should belong, not only to every Christian but to every girl. Then their teacher began to make the suggestions definite, getting as many as she could from the girls themselves. They were asked to increase the membership of their club, attend and take part in young peoples' socials from which their "set" had held



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aloof, join in the work of the Girls' Guild, to which they had given a little money but nothing else. These things were hard for some of them. At first they were not able to do them naturally and easily and they found the friendship and confidence of the other girls hard to gain. But they had come to the conclusion in class that these things were right and the enthusiasm and approval of their teacher over the attempts they were making spurred them on. Then they began to make discoveries. They found out what interesting girls there were outside their "set." They found they had exaggerated their own importance. They began to enjoy the good times of the young people in the church societies and to want a real part in them. The change in the spirit and life of that class, even in a year, was wonderful. At the end of the second year with that teacher the spirit of the young people in that cosmopolitan church had entirely changed. Those girls had wrought the change because they had themselves been transformed. They had been expressing, day after day, in positive action the things they learned, and the impressions which before had slumbered in the mind burst into life through the daily deed. They studied Christ's rules for living, they traced the results of obedience to those rules in the lives of those who truly followed Him and *they* tried to *do* in their own every day lives, until *doing* brought *power* to do and character was being made.

In the religion of every girl there must be the positive side; whether she works in a factory or attends a fashionable boarding school her character will be made and her religious life formed through the impressions which constantly find expression in words and actions.

A girl's religion, especially in the early teens, must be active not passive. She must be made to feel—and *be given the right outlet for the feelings aroused within her*, to dream—and *be helped to find a way to work out her dreams*. She must be given knowledge and *be shown the way in which to use it*.

It is in this way that the girl, every girl, may hope to find a sane and natural religion which shall be a real help in the real world where she must live. Christ was a doer of deeds. The gospel record of His life has somewhat to say of the things He did *not* do but its pages are filled with the things that He did. Lame, blind, lepers, insane, poor, lonely and sorrowful as well as "sinners," His friends and His disciples bear witness to the things that He *did*. Christianity is a religion of deeds and whether it be through a factory-club, a neighborhood house, Camp Fire Girls, Christian Associations, the summer camp, girls' conferences, the Sunday-school or the home, the girl must be impressed with the fact that religion and life go hand in hand and must be shown the way to give that impression opportunity to express itself, until repeated expression shall have marked out the trend of *character*.



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If the girl herself is reading this chapter she will realize that while in a girl's religion there must of necessity be the simple definite "thou shalt not," the most important part of that religion is Thou Shalt. The girl herself should be so busy doing the things that ought to be done that there is no time for the undesirable and forbidden things. It is much to the girl's credit that she loves a religion that does things. The world needs, every church, every community, every school and every home needs, girls who have found their religion and put it into practise. Find yours, then put it to work, *helping*, helping *everywhere*.

### XV

#### A MATTER OF CULTIVATION

A great many people are willing to sow seed. There is an inspiration in the picture which the word "Sower" brings to the mind. I can never forget those days when the boys and girls just entering their teens took their spades and hoes, left the schoolroom with its algebra and technical grammar behind and went out into the glorious spring sunshine to plant their school gardens. On the various packages of seed were pictured the promised flowers or vegetables and with joy they looked forward to the day when they should be able to proudly exhibit the results of their planting.

When the planting was done most of the children believed that the hardest part of the task was over. Year after year successive classes failed to realize the fact of *Time*. As the weeks passed and the slow development that is nature's way to perfection went on, one would hear a boy say, "Next year I'm going to plant radishes; they grow faster," and another, "You will never get me to plant squashes again; they're too slow."

These young gardeners found very difficult, and some found quite impossible, the task of *waiting*, meanwhile working with the soil and protecting the growing plants, that the flower and fruit might be as fine as possible. Despite encouragement from other children and from instructors, some of the boys and girls lost their enthusiasm entirely and seldom looked at their gardens.

Those boys and girls, planting their seeds of flower and fruit on the sunny hillside and in the shaded nooks where the school gardens lay, were not at all unlike the men and women who today plant the good seed in the gardens of hearts that come to them in the glorious springtime of life ready for the sowing. Like the boys and girls these older gardeners are pleased with the picture of the result of their seed sowing. With enthusiasm they enter upon the task of planting, with eagerness they watch for the first appearance of results. And then Time enters in. There is evidence of weeds; slugs and worms appear. Then comes the clear call for the two great virtues of the sower who will win a harvest—Labor and Patience. He must cultivate the soil, else only the meager

harvest can be his. The art of cultivation is the one so many would-be harvesters fail to learn.



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To realize what the art of cultivation can accomplish one needs to read carefully the increase in the record of the producing power of certain wheat fields in our country during the past four years. Courage comes with the study of the reports of modern miracles accomplished through the advice and instruction of the agricultural schools and colleges which have escaped from the thralldom of the abstract. Every one should look once into the faces of boys and girls of the rural schools who having been instructed in the art of cultivation have practised it and increased the value and quantity of the output on their fathers' farms, ten-fold. It fills one with hope to look into the bright eager face of a fourteen-year-old prize winner, holding side by side in his hand the stalks of corn, one small and meager, the other rich and full, made so by the art of cultivation which he has so patiently practised.

What the cultivation of the soil has accomplished in the agricultural world it can accomplish in the teaching of religion. If young America is irreligious today it is because we have sown the seed and left it to itself. In the soil of young hearts are the elements which make a sane, full output of religious life possible—but cultivation is *necessary* and, if we are to raise the type of our girlhood, *imperative*. We shall be compelled to resist the temptation to give up because the seed does not grow faster.

Those entrusted with the cultivation of this human soil into which the seed has been dropped must know what that seed needs as it develops—urging forward here, that through self-expression it may grow strong, restraining there, that it may not spread itself out and through over-expression become weak. Only loving personal knowledge of each individual life will make possible this guidance and restraint. They must know the environment in the midst of which the good seed is striving to climb to fruition, else they cannot know just what to drop into the soil to stimulate the seed in its fight for strength, nor how to protect it from growths that threaten to choke it.

Those entrusted with the cultivation of this soil, if they are to be successful, must learn to use the mighty stimulus to growth that comes from simple friendship. Seed which can come to fruition under no other conditions springs into vigorous life under the power of warm friendship. Many a seed which might have developed and borne rich fruit has shriveled and dried in the chill of unfriendliness and misunderstanding. These cultivators of the heart soil must learn very quickly the value of sunshine. Young life needs the rain and has it, but young life loves the sunshine, it blossoms in the presence of hope and expectation, it droops in the atmosphere of distrust.

If one obeys the law in the sowing of the seed and follows the direction in its nurturing, the Lord of all harvests will himself give the increase.

“God’s Word should be sown in the heart like seed;  
Then men’s hands must tend it, their lives defend it,  
Till it bursts into flower as a deathless deed.”

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Somewhere in the religious training of a girl there must be a large place for the feeding of the soul; for unless food which is able to sustain life and expand it is supplied the girl can never become a power in herself. Hers will not be an invigorating religion; there will not be in her that vitality which will make it possible for her to banish fear and fret, to rise above discouragement, to endure suffering, to triumph over sorrow, to forget self. But if she can gain this energizing power she will not join, in womanhood, the ranks of those spending their days in search of inspiration; she will have it in her own soul. If she lacks this vital power she will become one of the multitude of Christians who are dependent upon circumstances for their happiness, upon the words of others for their encouragement, upon the pleas and persuasion of others to move them to service. From this sort of woman, who is kindly and pleasant when things go smoothly, who courageously attacks a problem as long as another stands by to brace up and urge on, who gives time, thought or money when some strong appeal is made and then loses interest and forgets, until another “prod” is given, from this sort of expression of religious life all who are interested in girls would save them and so are seeking the means of nourishing their souls that power may be generated from within.

It is not possible to get inspiration from a source with which one has no connection and the whole task of those attempting to give to the girl a workable religion, is the task of making connections with the Source of power.

Some weeks ago I observed the work of an instructor attempting to make the connection through the study of the Bible. She knew that telling a girl to read her Bible is not helping or training her to do it. These girls had purchased ten and twenty cent Testaments which could be cut, and small loose-leaf note books, on the covers of which were pasted one of the pictures of Christ. The girls had spent two weeks clipping from the Testaments and pasting in their note books “the things Jesus said about himself and the words God spoke concerning Him.” Two weeks more were spent clipping the “things others said about Him”—Peter, Paul, John, the Pharisees. The next work was to clip what Jesus said about forgiveness, about one’s duty to neighbors, treatment of one’s enemies, the way to be happy. Later they were to use both Old and New Testaments, cutting out the verses which they thought would be of comfort to any one in sorrow, to one who had greatly sinned, and verses which they considered good advice to young people. That instructor was making a sane, practical attempt to feed the souls of those girls by helping them search out for themselves what the Bible has to say on topics of real interest.



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I saw a note book recently prepared by a fifteen-year-old girl which I believe most valuable because of the things about which it has lead her to think. She had taken as the subject of her book, "The Good Shepherd." On the cover was a picture with that title; in the inside a fine collection of pictures representing Jesus as the Good Shepherd, clippings regarding oriental shepherd life, "The Shepherd Psalm," the Parable of the Lost Sheep and the words of hymns like "The Ninety and Nine" and poems like "That Li'l Black Sheep."

One cannot soon forget that book with its decorated margins, its neat mounting of cards and clippings and its beautiful pictures. The effect of the book upon the girl who made it, the teachers said was very apparent. Another book was entitled "Come Unto Me," and the pictures, verses and hymns were most impressive. When each girl has exchanged books with each member of the class, they are to be sent to a rescue home for girls.

The Bible messages to mankind brought by such simple methods into direct contact with a girl in her early teens is one means of nourishing her soul. If it is true that the best in poetry, art, literature and oratory, as well as the greatest uplift to character, finds its source in that Book the girl should come into real touch with it that it may feed her expanding soul. It is this sort of first-hand, individual study while she is still a girl which will help her later to turn to the Book for encouragement, comfort and strength, and lead her to great thoughts and the attempting of great things because her own soul is inspired.

The majority of teachers, superintendents and leaders interested in religious instruction today were trained in Christian homes and taught as little children to pray. Attendance at church services of various kinds gave to them almost unconsciously a phraseology of prayer and impressed upon them the place of prayer in the Christian life. So familiar is the fact of prayer that they forget that the majority of pupils in the average Sunday-school of today are not familiar with the words of prayer at family worship, are at best irregular in church attendance and that many are associated with no society in the church where there is any training in prayer.

To such young people prayer has nothing to do with life. They say the Lord's Prayer at school perhaps, formally and hurriedly in the morning, they hear the prayer from the superintendent's desk on Sunday, or perchance remember the evening, "Now I lay me down to sleep," which is said in many homes not Christian, by the little child. But the prayer; which though only an echo of adult prayers, and only half understood, calms many a fear in a childish heart, helps to victory over sin many a struggling ten-year-old reared in a Christian home, is utterly foreign to the child who has none of these influences and who meets in the average Sunday-school not cultivation, but the abstract taken for granted type of instruction.

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I have in my possession a most interesting set of papers written by girls in their early twenties regarding their memories of their own training in prayer and the result of it in their lives. I quote first from the papers of girls brought up in Christian homes.

“I can remember now the very wording of some of my father’s prayers and those words found their way into my own—some of them are still there. Often when a child, I prayed impulsively, using unconventional terms and saying ‘you’ instead of ‘thou.’ Before I was twelve mother often reminded me of my prayers when she said good night. As I grew older nothing was said to me about it. I was hot-tempered and continually ‘getting mad’ at other girls and teachers and almost every one. No one will ever know the remorse I suffered after one of those outbursts. At night I would pour out my soul in a plea for forgiveness. I was sure God forgave me and started next day with determination to conquer. I often prayed about examinations which were very hard for me. Once or twice I prayed that mother would see that I needed a different kind of dress from the one she planned. I am sure that I felt God was a sympathetic friend and prayer to me was natural.”

Here was a girl who because of the cultivation in the home turned simply and naturally to God to supply her need. She is today a pure, healthy, natural young woman who has seemingly triumphed over her propensity to “get mad.” Another girl says:

“I have prayed ever since I remember. We always had family prayers at home and in church our pastor always prayed for us children. I used to pray when I was afraid, which I often was at night when the wind blew, and I felt comforted. My little sister was not strong and for years I prayed every night that God would let us keep her. Sometimes when I had been scolded in school for whispering, in which I was a great offender, I prayed in shame and remorse for forgiveness. As I grew older I still prayed when afraid and repentant and often on a beautiful day, or in the canoe at sunset when I could not say all I felt. When I was about eighteen I began to pray for the missionaries and people who were poor and sick. I do not remember any definite instruction about prayer. It seemed natural to me. I often felt doubts when the answer didn’t come but had a very definite feeling that the trouble must be with me.”

This girl by environment and unconscious training has also found speaking with God a natural thing. There are so many papers which express through different personalities the same general facts which cannot fail to impress one who reads, with the power of the cultivation of prayer.

But in the papers and from the interviews of girls in the early twenties whose only definite relation with the church is the Sunday-school class, who come from non-Christian homes, whose parents almost never enter a church a different note sounds.

One says:



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"I am trying to be a Christian. I have not joined the church. I cannot say that I pray very regularly but I have tried to. It does not seem to help me much. The minister prayed for me the day my brother died and it helped. Sometimes I read in a book of prayers."

And another writes:

"I do not believe I ever was taught to say my prayers when a child. I do not remember ever praying except the Lord's Prayer. I am interested in our class, the teacher makes the lessons interesting. I like to hear them discuss things. I always bow my head during prayer anywhere. Sometimes I have thought I would pray for myself but I never have."

One of the most interesting papers is written by a young woman engaged in rescue work for girls, or has talked personally with a great many girls about prayer. She says:

"There was another girl with whom I talked one afternoon whose face I can see clearly now. She was suffering from great remorse because of her sin, for up to the time of her misfortune she had been 'a good girl.' One of the workers suggested that she pray for strength and forgiveness. 'Pray,' she said bitterly. 'They told me that when I was a little girl and went to Sunday-school. Pray. How can I talk to God? What would he do for me? I tried last night when I couldn't sleep but *don't know what to say!*'"

There was no natural turning to a strong sympathetic Friend and Father on the part of these girls, or the twenty or more whose testimony I have been looking over. Those who were trying to be Christians made it a matter of duty to try to pray but it was irregular and forced; there was no natural spontaneity about it. It wasn't real to them, it played no vital part in life. In looking over the papers one is convinced of the tremendous asset the girl has who from childhood has been trained to turn to the Source of Strength when in fear or trouble or need and when filled with the joy of living. A girl's life must be raised to a higher plane by daily contact with the Highest. If she sincerely speaks but for a moment to God, realizing his love, mercy, justice and righteousness, it will not be as easy for her to be jealous, unkind, untrue or a gossip. One covets for all girls this natural, spontaneous turning to God which has seemed to come to so many through the Christian home and its unconscious influence and instruction. Nothing can take the place of the earnest daily prayer of a manly father, and the instruction of a sweet, Christian mother. But the task which so many homes lays down the community must take up. The public school *cannot* cultivate the spirit of prayer, and if the home does not, the church remains the only possible agent through which it may be done. The Sunday-school teacher is the church's most potent instrument, therefore a large share of the task is hers.

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The teachers in the Beginners' departments realize the need of the cultivation of prayer and pray simply and often during the session, baby lips repeating the words. Through cards and memory verses prayers go into homes where none are ever made. In Primary departments the instruction is continued and children are led to express themselves in simple words of worship. In the Junior departments there is the superintendent's prayer—the appeal it makes depending upon the leader's sympathy, and knowledge of childhood. Often both are lacking. These Junior girls know the street, the moving picture show, the unsupervised playground, the temptations of school life; they are beginning to show the moral effect of poverty on the one hand and social ambitions and false standards on the other. How many prayers for girls from ten to twelve does one hear? How many can he find though he search ever so diligently.

When we come to the girl in her teens we find often in large numbers of classes that the only instruction in prayer is the indirect teaching from the prayer at the desk. How many girls listen reverently to it?

They come from stores and shops, from high schools, offices, homes of plenty and homes of want. They know temptation, they meet it in more dangerous forms than ever before. How does the prayer affect life as they know it? Very little I am bound to believe unless *the great experience* has come to them and they have said in simple girlish fashion, "O Christ, I choose thee King of my life—I follow thee wherever the way shall lead," unless that transferring of *will* from vague and indefinite desire to a definite purpose has come, the prayer which is a part of the average opening service will have little influence. Even if the great decision has been made, the prayer of one far away at the desk, often out of touch with young life, does not bring the uplift.

What a teacher may do the following testimony of a young girl may help us to see:

"I never had any special instruction in prayer at home. I think I must have said my prayers when a very little child. My parents are just fine but they do not go to church. They almost always spend Sundays with grandmother on the farm. I do not remember any instruction about prayer, though of course it was mentioned and I knew good people prayed, until I was seventeen when the finest teacher I ever had talked to us about it for four Sundays. Then I saw how much the people who had helped the world had prayed and how much it did for them. She made Christ seem so beautiful and sympathetic that though I can't explain it I wanted to pray myself. That afternoon out in the hammock I did. I shall never forget how wonderful the world seemed.... In a few weeks three of us joined the church and we prayed for the other girls. That year eight of us joined."

The testimony speaks for itself. She taught them what prayer had done for others; she made them want to pray. I do not know that teacher but I feel sure she knew by experience what she taught.



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I know another teacher who is very successful in cultivating the spiritual life of every class of girls as it comes to her. I find that each new class has been asked to join with her at night in using wisely selected prayers written by Stevenson, Rauschenbusch, Phillips Brooks, and others taken from religious journals and from calendars. Each prayer is used daily for two weeks. After about six months the teacher asks that a committee be appointed to write a prayer for the class, this committee being changed every two weeks.

Some of the prayers were very helpful and all had a crude, simple sincerity that was fine. I saw a letter written to this teacher by a seventeen-year-old girl away from home and out on a strike. It was a pathetic letter but one sentence cheered the teacher's heart—"The prayer that Midge and Kate wrote keeps coming to my mind and it helps me to keep a level head when we all git kinder wild."

When girls see that prayer is not beseeching an unwilling God for *things* the desire for which may be born of pure selfishness, but is the way by which help to keep steady and strong, power to love one's fellows and to live courageously and well comes to many, it will make a difference in what they think about prayer and the way they pray. But most girls do not know these things intuitively. They must be helped to know them. The spirit within them must be cultivated. Prayer and seeking the Bible for courage and help are largely matters of cultivation. The great Teacher prayed Himself in such a wonderful way that the disciples listening cried—"Lord, teach us how to pray." And he answered their request, giving them *the words to say* until they should find words for themselves. He made them *want* to pray.

If the girl herself chances to read this chapter let her be assured that there is no lesson in all the world which she can learn which can give to her anything like the courage, strength, comfort and help to go right on in the face of hard things, that can come to her through learning how to truly pray, not empty words, not words for others to hear, but words that say all she feels of disappointment and longing, of hope and gladness. The Great God hears *all* one can say and knows what she cannot say. Only God can do that. Even the best friends tire of our struggles and failures. God never does and when I speak to Him I may *know* He cares. Though I am one speck of humanity in a great mass of men and women, though the girl who is reading this is just one ordinary girl, one among millions the world around, she may speak to God, her Creator without fear, may touch His *greatness* and her heart be warmed by His answering touch.

"Speak to Him then, for He heareth,  
and spirit with spirit may meet.  
Closer is He than breathing,  
And nearer than hands and feet."



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### A PLEA AND A PROMISE

The Plea is for a purer, more invigorating atmosphere for our girls to breathe—the Promise, that when it is given to them they will respond, their religious, as well as physical and mental life will be normal and the vitality in it will express itself in action.

Inspiration is a part of a girl's religion and inspiration means "inhaling—taking into the life that which creates high and lofty emotions."

Memory takes me back to school days when with windows wide open, shoulders squared and heads erect, the teacher's command bade us inhale and we filled our lungs to the full with fresh, life-giving air. Then came the command to exhale, and we emptied our lungs, that there might be room for more of the clear invigorating air. In life's larger school our girls of today are inhaling what? Is it the fresh, untainted, life-giving air?

The other day on the street I overheard a girl uttering words that made me turn in dismay to look at her. I saw, not what I expected to see, a coarse, ill-clad, ignorant girl, but a pretty, fashionably dressed girl with high school books under her arm. Where had she breathed in the sentiments regarding honor which in slangy phrases she breathed out with no hesitation or shame? There was nothing high or lofty in the emotion enkindled by what she breathed into her soul from her environment, and what she had breathed out into her companion's ears could not fail to weaken and injure.

I found myself wondering what her environment could be and later when I described her, a girl companion told me her name. I remembered her then, one of the girls who had grown up quickly, the daughter of a skilled mechanic who made good wages and owned a comfortable home. She was an only child and her mother was socially ambitious for her. The mother had done nothing to interest her daughter in the church, only now and then did she attend Sunday-school; friends were entertained Sunday evening, so she had no connection with the young peoples' societies of the church. She is a type of a vast number of girls whose religious sense lies dormant.

Knowing now her environment, I asked myself, "Where can she 'breathe in that which will stir her soul to high and lofty emotion,' and enable her to help and bless her world?" At home? Can she there breathe in that which will enkindle noble ambition to love and serve in a world which so needs love and service?

Once there were numberless homes and, thank God, there are still many where a girl can breathe in deep draughts of the fresh, sweet, wholesome atmosphere in which the family lives. But knowing something of that mother, I knew she discussed with her daughter, dress and parties, her future at college, her music, her marks, and laid wisely and well her plans for the forming of friendships which she considered "an advantage." In her presence she criticized friends and neighbors and related bits of gossip.



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Occasionally she scolded her for faults that happened at the moment to annoy. Her father talked boastfully of his successes and ambitions, criticized the men for whom he did business, found fault with those whom he employed, occasionally talked of politics in a vain attempt to interest his wife and daughter. There were few books in the home. The newspapers and one or more popular magazines represented the only reading of the family. The daughter played a little, sang a little, sewed a very little and studied as much as she must to insure the certificate for entrance to college. But she attended matinees, dancing parties in large numbers, and belonged to a whist club. A whist club, poor girl, at sixteen! Her parents were blind and deaf to the fact that in their daughter's life there was nothing, save now and then a desperate attempt on the part of an earnest high school teacher, or a word from a teacher who occasionally found her in the Sunday-school class, which might inspire her soul with high ideals, pure, noble thoughts expressed in action which makes life sweeter. Of nature's beauties, of her countless miracles, of the dramatic acts of current history, of the lives and needs of other girls she knew almost nothing. In her pitiful little world she lived, her best self dying for want of pure air with the oxygen of power in it.

Can she find in the social life and amusements of the day the inspiration needed to fill her soul with life that it may develop as her normal healthy body develops? No, the girls of our country do not find our social life a help to the higher expression of self. Only here and there do wise parents make social life simple, free from show and sham, from false standards and appeals to the senses. But few know how to center the social life in the home, in the out-of-doors, in clean sports, instead of letting it center about exotic conditions, unreasonable hours, and deadly refreshments. Only now and then does the present social life demand any exercise of mental power.

It is wonderfully encouraging to find, here and there, groups of girls of sixteen and their boy friends having their simple good times in each other's homes, enjoying the picnic and the skating party; or the girls by themselves enjoying camp life, the tramp in the woods, the gymnasium class; or with their parents or chaperones enjoying the moving pictures of high standard, without vaudeville. These girls are such a contrast to the usual groups of sophisticated, bored, blase girls who at eighteen have tired of the ordinary means of recreation and amusement. Our social life suffers from too rapid growth. It does not offer the tonic for healthy social nature. It needs pruning. Some of it needs to be torn up by the roots.

And what of the schools? Can she find there the atmosphere that will stir her soul to noble, unselfish joyous living? Yes, in some schools. Many are engaged in merely continuing the "system," following a curriculum strangely deficient in those things which touch life directly, to inspire it and kindle it with ambition.



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Recently, four names, the names of women, were presented to classes of girls in the last year of the grammar grades and the four years of the high school. The girls were asked, "Did you ever hear of Frances Willard? What do you know about her?" Then followed the names of Mary Lyon, Clara Barton, Alice Freeman Palmer. The show of hands and the written replies were pitiful. Some had a vague idea that they had heard the name somewhere, a few gave one or two facts. Clara Barton seemed the one most familiar but knowledge concerning her was very limited.

Then Jane Addams' name was tried, the same meager replies resulting. Finally the name of the wife of a noted and notorious insane criminal was given and scarcely a hand was down in answer to the first question, and pencils flew over the paper in answer to the second. What does it mean? It does not condemn the school, nor does it hold the school responsible but it does suggest that there might be some substitute characters for the mythical ones of ancient history, or that possibly the lives of great and noble women might be studied with greater profit by the girls of today than certain abstract problems in physics. In many of the classes where the questions were asked that fresh, clear, vitalizing atmosphere charged with reality, seemed lacking.

When we can calmly look at our schools, recognize the tremendous difficulties under which they work, realize their limitations, and with profound belief in what they have done, gratitude for what they are doing and confidence in what they are going to do, get at our task of setting teachers free and vitalizing courses of study, we shall be able to generate in them all the atmosphere in which the girl will find inspiration for noble living.

Where can the girl turn for the life giving atmosphere? To the church? Yes, if the church were awake to the facts and equipped to meet her needs. But what a small part of our country's girlhood comes into direct contact with the church, and how few churches have adequate leadership provided for those whom it does touch. The whole problem of adolescence is a problem of leadership. A wise leader has almost unlimited power in charging the atmosphere with the spirit of uplift. The church *must* furnish leadership. It *must* guide or lose its youth. It must advise with practical, possible advice.

Perhaps the day will come when groups of churches will unite in forming social centers and the business men of those churches shall *seriously* consider the problem of where girls shall meet their young men friends and how they shall spend their evenings together. Perhaps some day the men of the church will select in their community a good, clean moving picture house, and there are some, where they can advise their young people to go, helping them thus to escape the snare of those who cater to evil.

Those most deeply interested in a girl's religion, have come to see its relation to every other phase of her life, and to know that one may not snatch amusements from the lives of young people, giving nothing in return.

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Just what is wisest to give in return is our great problem. The church *must* meet it and it needs help.

The time is ripe and more than ripe for the direct appeal to the home. It should be made through every avenue and in every language. It should be made through every newspaper and printed in every tongue—“*Responsibility* belongs to the home.” All sorts of homes must help in making the atmosphere in which a young girl must live, *safe*, free from poisons that mean suffering and in the long run death to the best things.

I happened one day in a smoke laden city upon a group of women in one of the residential districts who were meeting together to see if all the families for a certain number of blocks east and west would promise to use only hard coal in their homes. One of the women, the mother of three young children, pictured vividly the difference it would make in the atmosphere their children must breathe and closed her appeal by saying, “But women, it means that we must *all* burn it. The help one or two of us can give amounts to almost nothing. Into each of our cellars the hard coal must go and each of us must insist upon using nothing else. Then we shall have clean, pure air for our babies to breathe throughout all this section.”

She had stated the answer to the whole problem of bringing inspiration to our girls. It will need *every* home and *every* church to keep the atmosphere clean and invigorating.

It may be that the girl herself is reading and thinking over this *Plea* and *Promise*. If she is she will realize how earnestly we covet for her all the best things and how we long for wisdom to help her get them. Perhaps she will think that *she* can do a great deal toward getting them for herself, *and she can*. Let me recall to her mind one of the girls whom we find in almost every gymnasium class, whose pale face and stooping shoulders attract at once the instructor’s attention. Let me remind her of the special exercises given that girl for chest development, the advice about food and the command, “Live with your windows open. Let the air into your lungs.” Again and again you will remember the instructor gave the command to the class, “*Breathe*. Use your lungs! Half of you use only two-thirds of your lung capacity!” And then by way of emphasis she contrasted her own chest expansion and yours, adding, “If you want health, take deep breaths.”

The Plea which I make to the girl herself is that she use, to the full capacity, her power to inhale those things that shall give inspiration for pure, helpful living. Every girl has that power. Some use only two-thirds of it, some one third, some have forgotten its existence. If a girl wants to really live she must “breathe deep,” with her soul’s windows open wide to the atmosphere that will give her strength. If she is obliged to live with those who do not think of these things,



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whose own spirits are starved, she can seek friends who will help, she can go to the places where her mind and soul are stirred as well as her senses, she can find in good books great uplift and courage. She will, if she truly wants inspiration and help to live nobly, attend regularly some church where the service makes her long to be her best. She will, if possible, join some class where she can study the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, who *now* even as when He was here, lifts those who listen to Him out of failure and discouragement into hope, in whose presence every girl may breathe in the atmosphere filled with life giving power.

If a girl responds to this *Plea* to open her soul to the great Giver of life, I can *Promise* that she will find true happiness and joy.

## XVII

### A PERSON NOT A FACT

Every thoughtful person craves facts. They are cold, hard, sometimes disconcerting but they carry weight. "It is a fact, it has been proven," hushes many a query and silences many an argument. And yet it is not in the array of facts which can be given at any moment that young people find their incentives and inspirations. They may have all the facts at their tongue's end but lack the fire which shall transfuse those facts into power to act in accordance with their teachings. Julius Caesar is a fact. A girl may have no doubt of his existence, she may not question the great events of his life, but he does not stir her to action. The fact of George Washington does not awaken the patriotism of a girl and in schools where merely the facts regarding his life are given his influence is practically negative. But whenever the facts have been breathed upon by a sympathetic spirit and the fact George Washington transformed into the personality that lives in the girl's presence then his influence begins to count.

It is not the facts about Abraham Lincoln that engender heroism. The facts may be presented in such a way as to hold but passing interest. I have heard the life and times of Abraham Lincoln taught that way. But I have seen Abraham Lincoln presented to a class of foreign girls by one to whom he had become a friend as real and genuine as if he stood by her side. As I listened I saw Abraham Lincoln. I felt the kindness and patience of his great soul, the honest purpose and the fine courage of his life. The facts were there in that lesson but more than the facts were there. *He* was there. At the close of the lesson that teacher looking into the faces of the girls who represented nearly every land across the sea said to them, "What do you think of him?" One girl responded eagerly "I think he was *grand!*" and a dark-haired intense girl, her black eyes glowing, rose and said with an earnestness and fervor I can *never* forget, "I *love* him!" "You shall hear more tomorrow," said the teacher, and they looked as if it were hard to wait.



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A careful observation of the ways of presenting great men of history and great characters in literature to young people will convince one beyond doubt that the girl may store the *facts* in the memory for a time, but if the living personality is presented *it* will remain to mold and guide and influence the life. The teacher's greatest power is never in what she teaches but in what is revealed to the individual through her teaching. The mind hungers for facts, searches for facts and wearies of facts. It follows personality.

When Richard Watson Gilder tried to voice the plea of the young doubter, puzzled, perplexed and suffering from the great array of apparently conflicting facts and most of all from his own failure to win out over the temptations that swept over him he said:

“Thou Christ, my soul is hurt and bruised!  
With words the scholars wear me out;  
My brain o’erwearied and confused,  
Thee, myself and all, I doubt.  
And must I back to darkness go  
Because I cannot say a creed?  
I know not what I think! I know  
Only that *Thou* art what I need.”

The fact is not enough. John Kendrick Bangs says it forcibly—

“A mere acceptance of the fact of love of God above,  
Of all the vast omnipotence of Him our Maker and Defence  
Is not believing.”

Slowly we are getting back to the recognition of the proper place of fact, of its power as the background and basis against which and upon which Personality must stand. Our eyes are opening to see that if the girl is to gain a religion which shall mean life, she must gain it through a person who reveals a *Person*.

Here is Mary D——, a girl of fifteen, a worker in a mill employing a very cheap grade of help. Her face was hard, there was no light of anticipation in her eyes—she had nothing to anticipate. She toiled through the long hours, for there was no limit to her day in the state where she lives. Her home was not a home but a place where she could stay nights—when her father was not so quarrelsome through cheap drink that he drove her out. One day a woman at a noon service in the factory shocked at a profane remark of Mary's said reprovably, “Don't you believe there is a God?” “Sure I do,” said Mary, “but I don't see's it makes no difference to me.” Further questions followed and Mary declared her belief, adding, “I don't bother much about them things.” Mary had some *facts* and declared some sort of belief in them, but they made *no difference*.

[Illustration: THE FUTURE PROMISES NOTHING AND SHE HAS LOST HOPE]



The next summer, Mary, overcome by the work of the year and an attack of the grippe, was sent by a woman in one of the churches, to a girl's camp. She lived in decent fashion, she saw a lake, great mountains, sunsets and stars! She found flowers and sat quite still watching birds that seemed so marvelous to her.



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Slowly she grew strong. One night she went to the sloping bank by the lake under the great pine trees to attend the twilight service. The sky was crimson with the sunset and there was a wonderful path of light across the lake. The songs and the beauty moved Mary's soul. She wanted something with all her heart that she had never wanted before. She did not know what it (the great change) was at first, but before she slept she turned to another girl in the tent and expressed it as best she could—"I want to be good," she said.

Through the weeks that followed she saw in the faces, in the kindness and courtesy, in the good times she had never known, in the women who planned them and in the songs and talks at sunset a *Person*. She heard His name often. He represented all of the happiness and comfort she had ever known and one day with all the eagerness of an awakened soul she said, "I love Him." They told her what changes must come in the life of a girl who said those words and meant them, for they had seen the faults in her and they were many. She was undaunted by all they said she must do, and answered in her uncouth fashion, "I'd die doin' them fur Him."

They wanted her to leave the mill but she said no, one of the girls was leaving and she was to have her place with lighter work. She wanted to go back and tell the girls some things, she said.

Not three years have passed but Mary D—— is a new girl. She is attractive; one can scarcely believe unless he has seen it. She is clean; she is happy. Her friends secured a position for her father out-of-doors where he had loved to work as a boy. Mary took him to the Mission and there he promised to begin the fight against his enemy. The men in the Mission helped. Regular pay made a decent home possible. They have begun to live.

Overcome by the effects of ignorance and sin, failures as citizens, as individuals, as human souls, they met a *Person* and life was transformed. If it were possible to replace in every factory for Mary D—— who assented to the facts but passed them by as having nothing to do with her, Mary D—— who met a *Person* and loved Him what a world of new moral forces we could create!

He was revealed to Mary D—— not in the abstract which could not impress her but in the concrete which she understood. O if only we *could* grasp the significance of that!

Ruth M—— was a college junior with ancestry and wealth, brilliant, sarcastic, selfish. She knew all the facts and accepted them. She was a member of a church with which she had united at fourteen as had her mother and grandmother before her. She did not think much about the facts, they had not greatly impressed her. If questioned, she promptly stated that she believed this and that, she thought such and such things were probable though no one could prove them, and dismissed the subject to talk of her own plans and interests.

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Then her great sorrow came. In a moment she lost everything dear to her. They called it an accident. She held God accountable and in bitterness and anger turned her back upon all the facts. The months passed and her health breaking she was obliged to leave college. At the beautiful health resort to which she went she met a girl she had known well when a little child. They renewed the friendship. Then the girl's sorrow came. It was not death, it was far worse, scandal and disgrace in her family, which had been unstained before. Out of a clear sky it came.

In amazement Ruth watched her friend. She saw her suffer but she saw no conquering bitterness, heard no words of wild rebellion. She looked into a sweet calm face and saw a girl less than twenty, with life's conditions changed in a moment, adjust herself to the new conditions and go on. Seeking a solution she questioned her friend and met a Person. Day after day as she saw Him revealed in that heroic life, as she beheld the girl overcoming in His strength natural resentment against the injustice and unkindness of those who would make her suffer for the sins of her parents, the facts were swallowed up in the Person and she loved Him.

Together, the past summer, in a rest camp for mothers and babies they worked out the commands of the Person who had made it possible for them to take up life after bitter loss and find it sweet.

If one could summon to a central place the girls who have met the Person what an inspiration they would be! Of every sort and condition, of every color and nation, speaking languages new and old and dialects that have never been written, all uniting in the testimony that He has made life great for them.

The facts are in chaotic state. Parts of truth and segments of universal fact are waiting for man to unite them. Only the perfect whole can speak with certainty and we must wait for that. The creeds are countless. They do not matter much. The Person said little about them. They are just our poor attempts to put in words—God and His will. It is

“Not the Christ of our subtle creeds  
But the Lord of our hearts, of our homes,  
Of our hopes, our prayers, our needs;  
The brother of want and blame,  
The lover of woman and men,  
With a love that puts to shame  
All passions of mortal ken.”

The only way to meet a fact is to face it, follow it and see where it will lead. It is prejudice that blinds one's eyes to facts. It is only man's limited vision, that makes a part seem as a whole, that accepts as *fact* the thing he would *like* to be a fact, that one need fear. Facts that *are* facts need never cause one to doubt. For fact is truth and

truth leads to God. The business of every church and every teacher of religion is to discover the facts, *and present the Person.*



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If the girl herself is reading these words let her be assured that more than any array of facts that she can gather, more than any proofs man can summon, she needs the Person. The handicapped girl finds in Him strength to triumph in spite of it, the privileged girl finds in Him the inspiration for her work of extending her privileges, the girl who is easily led to find in Him one who never leads astray, the girl who is misunderstood can find in Him one who understands perfectly, the indifferent girl who “means to” will find in Him a friend to encourage, steady and compel, the girl who worships the twin idols can find in Him a rescuer who shall set her free, the girl of high ideals will see in Him the highest Ideal, the source of all the others, and the average girl of the every day with her good points and bad, her successes and failures, will find in Him a Friend who will make life seem wonderfully worth while.

Don't let the multitude of things in which you are interested, the maze of contradiction, the abstract facts, the trials and hardships of life, the pleasures you love, or any other thing make you pass Him by. If you gain everything else in life and miss Him you will fail to know what life means. If you find Him you will find Love and that is the best thing life can give.

### XVIII

#### THE GLORY OF THE CLIMAX

So many miss it. It is more than duty but the path that leads to the glory of it often begins with the plain, insistent, *ought* of duty. It is more than obedience, though without obedience none ever find it. How many girls there are who are disappointed, dissatisfied, suffering perhaps in body and soul because they never learned to obey! It is a great thing to be able to hear “you ought” and then at whatever cost to *obey* it. But the climax is not found in these things great as they are.

Faithful servants of a religion whose law is duty one finds among girls and honors them. Good and faithful servants of a religion whose law is obedience there are among girls. But neither of these have found the glory of the climax. The climax is Love. The supreme command of the Founder of true religion is—Thou shalt Love.

The religion of love is a girl's religion and she can never be satisfied with any other. If those who have tried to teach her religion have failed to show her this, then they have succeeded in giving her only a set of laws to be obeyed or a list of things she should not do. Love gives to Thou Shalt and Thou Shalt Not *power* without which they can accomplish little.

Love transforms hard, disagreeable, empty service and makes it glorious. No one knows this better than a girl. She has done things when necessity compelled her to do them, and she has done them when love compelled her to do them. She knows the



difference. Jesus founded His Kingdom on the knowledge He had of Love. He *knew* the kingdom would stand. On his lonely island of banishment dreaming in the twilight, with all the struggle and attainment behind him Napoleon realized it as he said, “Caesar, Charlemagne, I, have founded empires. They were founded on force and have perished. Jesus Christ has founded a kingdom on Love, and to this day there are millions who would die for Him.”



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When I say that the religion of girlhood is the religion of Love I mean real love. Warm, sweet, tender, quick to understand, quick to discern need, tireless in service. I mean the love that does not wait to be asked to serve, the love that gives because it must give. When a girl's religion is filled with this love and rests upon it the girl does not say, "Well, I suppose if I am a Christian I can't do that." The thought in her heart if it were put into words would be, "I wonder if He would want me to do that?" Simple, natural, sincere desire not to do the thing displeasing to One who loves and is loved.

One day I was looking at a deep well, sunk away down in the rocks. Machinery dragged the water from the earth and machinery turned it into service. Some days later I saw a mountain spring. It poured and poured out over the rocks, down the precipice into the brook, on into the river. It ran as if it were glad to run and would never stop! Green things grew on every side of it, mosses clung to the rocks it touched, rich grass filled the meadow through which it flowed, birds followed it. Life and beauty seemed to spring from every place it touched.

When I remembered the well of water deep down in rock, dragged up by machinery it seemed to me like religion, the religion of service through duty, and I knew that it would keep right on serving as long as the machinery worked and would do its part dutifully.

Then I looked again at the spring. It seemed to me like religion, the religion of love that blessed because it is its nature to bless and poured itself out in service because it must.

It is the religion of love which holds one to the side of the road where need is great, work must be done, perhaps sacrifice made. That Samaritan who stopped, dismounted, tenderly cared for an injured brother of hated race, lifted him to his own beast, slowly walked beside him to a place where rest and shelter could be provided, knew the love-inspired religion. The Priest and the Levite were followers of the law, the letter of the law, but they looked upon the man in his need, crossed to the other side and *passed by*.

The Jericho road is still with us, and the needy who call for help and for justice are upon it, injured in body or soul. The religion of the letter of the law looks, crosses to the other side, passes by. On one side of the road Need, on the other side Greed, and Love always where Need is.

The religion of Love follows the road the Founder took, the road that leads to the place of service. That road may lead to China, it may lead to the islands of the sea. It took Livingstone to Africa, Dan Crawford to the Bantus for twenty-two years and now is taking him back for the rest of his days. It took Carey to India, it left Grenfell in Labrador, it led last year's college girls to every quarter of the globe. It leads this one down among the dirty, helpless, little children trying to play in



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wretched scorching city streets, it leads that one to the lonely countryside where girls starved for life are waiting. And, oh, so often it leads one to the door of her own church, to her own street, to her own class-room, to the girl beside her in the office. Sometimes it leads to one's own kitchen, or it stops beside the chair where one's own mother sits. One can never tell where the road of the religion of love may lead, but one cannot fail to see that those who follow it have shining faces and they love to live.

One day at sunset I waited at the little wharf to walk through the pines with Elizabeth. She was paddling in her canoe over the lake that had turned to crimson and gold, from the fresh air camp on the other side to which she went every afternoon in summer to play games and tell stories. "I had a great day," she called in her clear, cheering voice as she neared the wharf, and added as she stepped from the boat, "Little Billy loves me and Katie Kane whispered softly and *blushed* when she said it, that she told me a lie yesterday and was never going to tell a lie no more as long as she lived! Poor Katie," she laughed.

When we reached the knoll where the three pines were we stopped and looked back. Words could never describe what we saw. Elizabeth stood silently watching it, her sweet face, her dark hair and her middy blouse tinged with the glow of it. As the sun slowly slipped into the lake she waved her hand playfully at it. "Good night, old man," she said. "Give us a cooler day tomorrow. Fifty new children come to camp." After a moment while we waited for darkness to come stealing over the lake, forgetful of me, she said with her whole soul in her voice, "Oh, I *love* it, I love it *all*—the world, and those poor blessed children," then very softly "and God."

She had found the girls' religion, the religion Jesus Christ said, when they asked Him, meant two things—"Thou shalt love the Lord Thy God—and Thy Neighbor."

This is the girl's religion, for in loving she shall find Love—the glory of the climax.

## THE END