

THE GIRL'S OWN HOME.

TO THE READERS OF "THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER."

BY THE COUNTESS OF ABERDEEN.



THROUGH the kindness of the Editor I am allowed to lay before the readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER some facts which, I believe, will be of interest and will awaken the sympathy of every reader of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER.

I wonder whether you who live in London have ever considered the life of the girls who stand behind the counters in the shops you go to, or of the girls whom you do not see but of whom you hear as earning their daily bread in the workrooms and factories of London? Have you ever thought of the wages they earn, or of the homes to which they have to go when their work is done? If not, I would advise you to procure the last report of the "Homes for Working Girls in London." You will there find many interesting things concerning those two hundred and fifty thousand young workwomen of whom I have spoken.

"Two hundred and fifty thousand!" you will exclaim, "but surely this is exaggeration; surely most of these girls have homes of their own or are provided for as far as food and lodging are concerned, in the houses of business where they work?" This is true regarding a great number, and I desire to take this opportunity of testifying to the admirable way in which many of the large London firms provide for the comfort and the well-being of those whom they employ. But after all has been said, there still remain the large majority of "working girls," earning for about eight months in the year from ten to fifteen shillings a week (and these are considered good wages for these girls), and mostly out of work during the remaining four months. Where do they live? How do they pay for their food and dress? What are their amusements? Picture their lives, if you can, and put yourselves in their places. Think of yourself leaving home at fifteen or sixteen—badly trained at home, as many are, alas! with but little right principle and but little knowledge of the evil in the world—fancy yourself working for ten or twelve hours every day, and going at night to some small room in a back street. Bad food, bad air, no comfort and no home life. What then? Does not every young girl long for brightness and for change? for healthful recreation and for loving sympathy? If she has no home to go to, will she not be likely to seek for change from the dreary round of work by reading the trashy literature that abounds, by resorting to dancing-rooms

and theatres, where she had better never be seen, where she is in danger of losing all that is pure and true and high-minded, where she may form companionships which will prove fatal to her? If, when you have pictured all this, you feel that something must be done, and you inquire how best can these sisters of yours be helped in their life struggle, then let me take you to pay a visit to one of the "Homes for Working Girls." You will find yourself outside a large cheery-looking house in a good street; a brass plate on the door will tell you that this is Morley House, or Gordon House, or whatever other name has been given to this particular home. On entering you will find everything bright and attractive-looking, plenty of pictures, a library, newspapers on the table, a piano, which, I may mention, is always in great request. You will find the dining-room as cheerful as the sitting-rooms, and when you go upstairs you will find cubicles on the first floor, where those who can afford the luxury can obtain privacy, and on the next floor comfortable bed-rooms where several girls sleep together. If your visit happens to be in the evening, it will do you good to see the happy girl faces so evidently *at home*, some reading, some working, others playing at games or singing. Once a week there is a Bible-class, and there are family prayers every morning and evening. Besides this there were weekly gatherings of all the residents in the various homes last winter in a large room at one of the houses.

As the report says: "The attendance at these meetings from the first was remarkable; often the room was so full that it was impossible to find the needful accommodation." No person was *pressed* to attend; simply a hearty invitation was given to turn in for "one hour" to draw near to God, and in the words of one of them it may well be said, "It was an hour's spiritual refreshment." Then there were forthrightly working-parties during the winter which culminated in a sale, the proceeds of which were devoted to Zenana Missions and to destitute London children. Sometimes tea-parties, concerts, or soirées are given at the various homes, and sometimes friends who are members of the committee ask the residents to their houses. In these and other ways pleasant variety is given to the inmates, without encroaching on the essentially home-like character which those who have the management of the homes desire to maintain in all the arrangements. The superintendent in each house is the mother, to whom the girls can at all times turn for advice and help.

But it is time that I should tell you what are the charges made for all this comfort and home life. For lodging, the rent of a cubicle is 4s. a week, for a bed in one of the upper rooms 2s. 6d.; in both cases the use of

the public rooms is of course included. The charge for board, including breakfast, dinner, and tea, is 4s. 6d. a week, or, if meals are taken separately: breakfast, 2½d.; dinner, 6d.; tea, 2½d.; supper, 1½d.

Even with these moderate charges it is often found that these working girls cannot afford the whole board, but take only the two cheaper meals. Take, for instance, a case which is quoted in the report. "A girl was missing from the Sunday dinner-table, and when she returned, during the afternoon, was asked if she had dined. She answered: 'I could not pay for the dinner, so walked round the squares several times until I knew dinner would be over, and then I could return.'" I ought to mention that by a recent rule a new charge is made upon the residents, to which, however, they heartily assent—and this is that each inmate should subscribe one penny a week to a sick fund.

It will be readily guessed by any of you who have anything to do with managing a household, that the above charges cannot make these institutions self-supporting, nor would it be desirable that they should be so, for if they were they would not meet the case of the girls whom they are intended to provide for. The wages given to women must be raised before these homes can be self-supporting. As it is, it is found that the charges made for board just meet the cost of food for the resident; but the rent moneys are very far from meeting the rent, taxes, superintendent's salary, servants' wages, and many other expenses. Hence the need for annual subscriptions. But it is not so much the need for subscriptions that I want to set before you (for we believe that God is blessing this work, and that He will give the money needful to carry it on) as to ask you whether the readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER would not like to start another home themselves—one which would be particularly associated with them. It takes from £950 to £1,000 to start each home, what with the necessary alterations and the furnishing, and it has struck me that it would be a pleasant work for the readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER to found a home for working girls, and to maintain it afterwards by their continued prayerful interest and help (and it is not only by money that help can be given, for presents of fruit, flowers, vegetables, books or periodicals, and cast-off clothing are always acceptable). One shilling, or even sixpence, from every reader would do much more than open one home.

Seven homes have been opened in four years:—

Alexandra House, 83, St. John-street, City.

Victoria House, 155, Queen's-road, Bayswater.

Morley House, 14, Fitzroy-street, Fitzroy-square, W.

Gordon House, 8, Endsleigh-gardens, N.W. (This house is specially intended for German girls, who come over to England in large numbers to seek for employment).

Woodford House, 28, Duncan-terrace, Islington.

Garfield House, in the south of London, 361, Brixton-road, S.W.

Norfolk House, 50, Well-street, Hackney, E.

There is much cause for thankfulness that it has been possible to do so much in so short a period; but how few are provided for compared with the thousands that remain! Will you, then, help on this Christ-like work, and carry out the command: "Whatsoever ye would that men would do unto you, do ye also unto them," remembering the words, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."—I remain, yours faithfully,

ISHBEL ABERDEEN.

P.S.—Those who desire any further information can write to the Honorary Secretary, John Shrimpton, Esq., 38, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C., to whose zeal and energy the founding of the homes is mainly due, or else by visiting the homes between 3 and 5 p.m. Those who desire to join in forming a "GIRL'S OWN PAPER HOME" can send their subscriptions, however small, either to the Hon. Secretary, at the above address, or to the Countess of Aberdeen, Haddo House, Aberdeen.

TEA IN HEALTH AND SICKNESS.

By MEDICUS.

"Home, home, sweet, sweet home,
Be it ever so humble, there is no place like home."

"Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
And, while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups
That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful evening in."



THE launch of a new volume of a magazine is, not only to its editor, but to every member of his staff, one of the most joyful events of the whole year. It brings hope and happiness to the heart, just as the springtime brings sunshine to the flowers.

Well, here we all are again once more, back from our summer and autumn holidays—back with renewed strength in every limb, and the bronze of health on cheek and neck; back from roaming o'er moorland and fell, from wandering by the sad sea wave, or quiet meandering

streams; back from pleasure, back from play; back to duty, back to work.

The autumn wanes apace; days grow short and nights creep in, and winter will be with us ere ever we know—

"Dark, dreary winter, and wild, drifting snow."

Perhaps; but we do not shudder in the least to look forward to it, for every season has its pleasures just as it has its dangers; and it is really a fact that, beautiful and joyous as summer days are, we would tire of them and long for a change were they to last all the year round. There are many talented writers able and willing to cater for the pleasures of the readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER in the volume just begun. Mine is the task—if task it can be called that is always executed so willingly—of giving month after month many a timely hint about health and its preservation, and many a friendly warning which may help you to keep sickness at bay, not only from yourself personally, but from the friends and relations you love so dearly.

All the year round, until October comes again, I hope to be your "Medicus," and sometimes even your mentor, and I promise you I shall do my teaching in the plainest, simplest, and most pleasant way I know how, so that you may be constrained to admit that I really have the interest of my readers at heart.

I promise, furthermore, to make use of no break-jaw, cranky old physicky words, to dress all my recipes in holiday attire, to make the medicines I prescribe—when I do prescribe any, which will be seldom—as pleasant to the palate as pineapple jelly; and if ever I have occasion to describe to you some fact in physiology, I will couch it in language that shall be as pretty to read as a passage in Lord Lytton's "Pilgrims of the Rhine."

All this I promise, and what I promise I shall try most faithfully to fulfil.

And now on this auspicious occasion I invite my readers to have, in imagination, a friendly cup of tea with me.

I do not think I shall be able to tell you in one short paper even half what I know about the herb called tea, but on the other hand I'm certain you will not read it without learning something.

It is somewhat over nine hundred years since the custom of tea-drinking was first introduced into China. We have been taught to believe that the tea-plant was indigenous to China, but it seems that this is hardly in accordance with fact, for historical records of both China and Japan speak of an Indian prince of the name of Djarma as having emigrated from his own country and taken up his abode in China north, where he soon taught the natives the virtues of this remarkable plant.

It is probable, however, that tea did grow in China even at this early date; but the fact that it is but a mere bush in that country, while it flourishes as a tall spreading forest tree in India, would lead us to infer that India is really the true and original home of the *Thea sinensis*, which, being translated, signifies the tea plant. I conclude that this inference is correct from another well-known fact. Most Indian teas are of better flavour, and more pungent withal; so much so that they are used to a very great extent to mix with those of China by way of improving the taste and aroma of the latter.

The Chinese have another legend connected with the initiation of the habit of tea-drinking. A recent writer gives the story in the following words:—"In the treatise called 'Kuen Fang Pu,' a legend is told of the discovery of the tea plant in the reign of Yuen Ty and Tsin dynasty. An old woman was accustomed to proceed every morning at daybreak to the market-place, carrying a small cup of tea on the palm of her hand. The people bought it eagerly, and yet, from the break of

day to the close of the evening, the cup was never exhausted. The money she received she distributed to the orphan and the needy beggar frequenting the highways. The people seized and confined her in prison, but at night she always flew through the prison walls with her cup in her hand." A very remarkable old woman indeed, and a very kind-hearted old woman as well; and yet we cannot believe in her. We must be content to leave the question of the origin of the use of tea in the dim obscurity of antiquarian research, and just be thankful we have so refreshing a beverage placed before us every morning and every afternoon.

A writer in the *Edinburgh Review* speaks about tea as follows:—

"By her fireside in her humble cottage sits the lonely widow; the kettle is simmering over the ruddy embers, and the blackened teapot on the hot bricks is preparing her evening drink. Her crust of bread is scanty; yet, as she sips her warm beverage, genial thoughts awaken in her mind. Her cottage grows less dark and lonely, and comfort seems to enliven the ill-furnished cabin. When our suffering and wounded soldiers were brought down frozen and bleeding from the trenches before Sebastopol to the port of Balaklava, the most welcome relief to their sufferings was a pint of warm tea, which was happily provided for them. Whence this great solace to the weary and worn? Why out of scanty earnings does the ill-fed and lone one cheerfully pay for the seemingly un nourishing weekly allowance of tea? From whatever open fountain does the daily comfort flow which the teacup gently brings to the care-worn and the weak?"

These questions are answered in the following words, which every girl would do well to read and remember:—

"The chief necessity for food arises from the gradual and constant wearing away of the tissues and solid parts of the body. To restore and repair the worn and wasted parts, food must be constantly eaten and digested. And the faster the waste the larger the quantity of food which must daily be consumed to make up for the loss which the waste occasions. Now, the introduction of a certain quantity of theine (one of the active principles of tea) into the stomach lessens the amount of waste which would otherwise take place. Tea makes the ordinary food consumed with it go farther therefore, or, in other words, lessens the quantity of food necessary to be eaten in a given time.

"It is no longer wonderful, then, that tea should be the favourite, on the one hand, with the poor, whose supplies of substantial food are scanty, and, on the other, with the aged and infirm—especially of the feeblar sex—whose powers of digestion and whose bodily substance have both begun to fail."

But tea does more good than even this, for it is soothing and grateful to the mind as well as the body. "It tempers," says Lo-Yu, who wrote more than nine hundred years ago, "the spirits and harmonises the mind; dispels lassitude and relieves fatigue, awakens thought and prevents drowsiness, lightens or refreshes the body, and clears the perceptive faculties."

To millions and millions tea has become not only a daily luxury but positively a necessity of life; it behoves us therefore to buy it as good and pure as possible, and to know how to make it on correct principles when we have bought it.

I must tell my readers, young or old, and tell them plainly, that cheap teas are never good, and that they are actually dearer in the end. How are we to get a good wholesome tea? Why, buy it in a respectable shop and pay a fair price for it! The good teas are cheapest because they go farther and do more

(Continued on page 11.)

So much, then, for errors of pronunciation. Beware of them, girls, for they often render ridiculous what would otherwise command attention and respect.

It is a good rule in every case of doubt to consult a pronouncing dictionary, and one may easily be had, both good and cheap. Write down the words in which you find yourselves tripping, and read them over and over aloud till the right sound at last becomes so familiar that your ears would as soon tolerate the wrong pronunciation as put up with a discord in music. In fact, an error in grammar or pronunciation should strike the ear just like such a discord.

Errors in pronunciation arise most often from ignorance, and half the battle is over when we know exactly what they are. Other fertile sources are carelessness and affectation; and if any girl suspects that she is either careless or affected, let her at once begin to mend her ways. A few errors arise from pedantry, but that is hardly a woman's failing.

One can excuse ignorance, and once in a while perhaps pardon carelessness, but it is difficult to tolerate affectation. Affectation in pronunciation comes out strongly in singing, and everyone has heard songs sung in the style in which an American critic says "The Last Rose of Summer" was given by a distinguished vocalist at the New York Beethoven Centennial:—

"'Tis ze las rose of zummare,
Leff pluming alone.
All ees luffly gampanyuns
Are fated um cawn."

The "Minstrel Boy," to give another example, is sometimes sung thus:—

"Tha minstrel bo-hoy to tha wa-a-har as gone,
In tha ranks of de-e-heth youll foind im.
His father's sworrd e as gurred on,
And is harrup ee as hu-hu-hung behoind im."

This example must be our last, for our space is exhausted. But a great deal remains to be said, and of other errors in speech, and the means of correcting them, we may perhaps speak another time.

THE GIRL'S OWN HOME.

By the COUNTESS OF ABERDEEN.

To the Readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER.

It is just a year ago since your Editor was good enough to allow me to ask you to join together to help your sisters, the "working girls" of London, by founding and helping to support a home of your own for them. With his constant kindness and sympathy he has more than once since then commended this object to you, besides publishing the lists of subscriptions and donations; and now he allows me to encroach again on his valuable space in order to convey my most hearty thanks to those who have responded so kindly and generously to my appeal. I have myself received very many kindly and sympathetic notes, and some of these from persons who, though but poor themselves, have been anxious to lend a helping hand to other struggling ones, knowing well from their own experience the temptations, the sorrows, the dangers of a life alone in London. The Hon. Director of the Homes has also received many such letters, and he has quoted one in the interesting report of the Homes just published. It is one from your own Editor, enclosing a collecting-card with £1 14s. 6d., and saying—

"The poor little Miss Mary E. Craig, who collected the money, filled in the last name

the night before her death. She wished to do the last stroke (for it was all written by her); then that the money might be sent in immediately she had been called to her 'own home.'"

Another very pretty letter has just been received from a young lady in the Barbadoes, who sends back her collecting-card, with no less a sum than £16 10s., and who apologises for not sending more. We have another kind friend who sent us a legacy of £100 which had been left her, but who will not allow us to mention her name; so that altogether we have now got together the sum of £545 2s. 2d.

And, again, let me say that we are most grateful for this; but—but you must now let me have a little bit of a grumble.

The number of subscribers to THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER is now very large, and if (as I pointed out last year) each subscriber gave one shilling towards the Girl's Own Home, you would be surprised to find how much it would exceed the thousand pounds that we want for the starting of this home. And surely no reader of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, who has a home herself, can think without sympathy of a girl working away day after day, with oftentimes long hours and insufficient food, without friends, without a home, in that dreary waste of London. If I liked, I could tell you many and many a story of girls who have been sheltered in these Homes which are already started, which would fill your eyes with tears and your hearts with compassion; but we would not lift the veil from the privacy of home life, and so we only ask you to think of many a sorely-tried and tempted one living now in the shelter of a home, brightness and comfort surrounding her, a motherly friend from whom to seek advice, and, above all, an atmosphere full of happiness because full of true Christianity. If any of you wish to know more about the working of the Homes, you have but to ask the Hon. Director to send you a Report, which differs from usual reports by being full of interesting matter. But do let me appeal to you earnestly not to let this year close without making an effort to raise the sum still required. Please let every reader who has not already done so, write to J. Shrimpton, Esq., 38, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C., and ask him to send a collecting card for the Girl's Own Home.

A young and beautiful woman, to whom God had given every good gift in this world, and whose heart was filled with all noble aspirations and unselfish desires, once asked Thomas Carlyle to tell her the way in which he thought she could best do some good in her generation. "I'll tell you what you can do," said he; "just find out some poor lassie and be kind to her." We have now the opportunity of acting on this advice. Shall we turn a deaf ear to the pleading of these thousands of Christ's little ones whom He asks us to remember for His sake?

P.S.—It will perhaps be of interest to mention that we are about to establish a registry for female servants in connection with one of the Homes (Gordon House). This, it is hoped, will afford valuable opportunities for mistresses to obtain good servants, especially when they wish to engage German girls.

LIST OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

ALICE, 1s.; One of the Girls, 2s.; Sympathy, 1s.; collected by Miss Spencer, £1; an English Reader, 2s.; Readers at Lamington, 10s.; collected by Miss M. F. Hurt, 7s. 6d.; How Slow the Readers are in Helping You, 1s.; Isabelle, 10s.; collected by Miss Gale, 13s.; Three E's, 2s.; Waratah and Lily, 6s.; total, £3 15s. 6d. Total amount received to August 31st, 1883, £545 2s. 2d.

VARIETIES.

BE CAUTIOUS.—Don't judge a man by the clothes he wears; God made one, and the tailor the other. Don't judge him by his family relations, for Cain belonged to a good family. Don't judge a man by his failure in life, for many a man fails because he is too honest to succeed. Don't judge a man by the house he lives in, for the lizard and the rat often inhabit the grander structure. When a man dies, they who survive him ask what property he has left behind; the angel who bends over the dying man asks what good deeds he has sent before him.

A WOMAN should have the principles of various things—observe, not a smattering of the superficialities, but the principles, well laid, so as to be able with ease to go on with anything which may be necessary, and to feel no great disappointment in having to turn from one to the other.—Mrs. Schimmelpenninck.

SELF IMPROVEMENT.—I do not advise you, my young countrywomen, to fly from the world, but I earnestly recommend it to your particular attention never to allow your minds to sink below the tone and vigour which mark their natural strength. Be as gay and playful if you will as those who assume gaiety to conceal their weakness, but never cease at any period of life to increase your knowledge, and by exercise to improve the powers of your understanding.—The Ettrick Shepherd.

FEAR, this effects—that I do not the ill;
Love, more—that I thereunto have no will.
Trench.

I CAN understand people's losing by trusting too little to God, but I cannot understand any one's losing by trusting too much to Him.—Rev. C. Kingsley.

PERHAPS the most valuable result of all education is the ability to make yourself do the thing you have to do, when it ought to be done, whether you like it or not; it is the first lesson that ought to be learned, and, however early a man's training begins, it is probably the last lesson that he learns thoroughly.—Prof. Huxley.

OLD PROVERBS.

Willows are weak, yet they bind other wood.

Get thy spindle and thy distaff ready, and God will send thee flax.

The best physicians are Dr. Diet, Dr. Quiet, and Dr. Merryman.

Who looks not before, finds himself behind.

JUDGING BY EVENTS.—Mankind are too apt to judge of things solely by events, and to connect wisdom with good fortune and folly with disaster.

A MAD INTERVAL.

One day, an emperor, who was a tyrant, went to the outside of the city by himself. He saw a man standing under a tree, and asked him:—

"What sort of a person is the emperor of this country? Is he a tyrant or a just man?"

The man answered, "He is a great tyrant."

The emperor said, "Do you know me?"

"No."

"I am the emperor of this country."

The man was much frightened, and asked in reply, "Do you know me?"

"No," said the emperor.

"Then," said the man, "I am the son of a certain merchant; every month during the space of three days I become mad. To-day is one of those three days."

The emperor laughed and left him.