

May M. Belden.

The Shop Girl.

Quick woumen have entered business the shop girl is coming more and more to have her place in American life. In the cities her class is a large one and as she usually finds most of her associates ^{within it}, those outside have little to do with her except as they meet her on the street or behind her counter. But it is not hard to recognize her. She always dresses modestly though a little gaudily. Her hair is arranged in the latest and highest pompadour with a "diamond"-studded comb to set it off; her dress though possibly of too delicate a color to suit. The occasion is made with a certain knack. It is always of cheap material and trimmed in a manner which might be called in a word from her own vocabulary "flashy". Her gilt belt has the most extreme tip that the fashion-plates suggest and her skirt drags behind quite as far as my lady on whom she waits. On her hands, which it must be confessed are not of the cleanest, she wears several rings heavily set with dull looking "diamonds" and opals. She is not to be seen usually without at least one bracelet jangling noisily as she moves her hand.

On the whole, she is not without her good points. The
very way she dresses shows that she has a look for the
beautiful, though a very crude one, and that if she had
any training she might have taste. She has never been
taught how to make the best use of what she has and
is largely dependent on her own resources. Sometimes
her family is entirely dependent on her efforts for ^{their} support
and a hard work-a-day life is here. With her happy
disposition, however, she tries to make the best of her hard
lot and when the opportunity comes to lay aside her
work for a few hours and enjoy a social time with
her friends, she enters into it with a good hearted cheer.
She is very fond of the theatre, of not the highest order, of the
dance and of gaiety in general, but of the best things.
Literature, art, and good music she knows nothing of
consequently cares nothing. We can not blame her that
she does not live on a higher level, for she has never
had the world of greater things open to her.

Mary M. Baldwin