



# Of Interest to Maid and Matron

Edited by Virginia Sloane



## Beauty as a Profession

By Mary Wilkinson Mount.

**D**ON'T you want me for a model?"

A thickset young woman looked up at me with an engaging smile which emphasized the ugliness of her jaw and mouth, displayed protruding teeth and deepened every wrinkle in a face which time and hard work had robbed of all semblance.

I smothered my gasp of astonishment and asked the stereotyped question, "Have you any photographs of yourself to show me?"

She hadn't any. They never have, those poor, deluded women in heterogeneous attire who make the rounds of the studios and insist upon recognition of a beauty which no one except themselves is able to perceive. Their photographs "had not turned out well," they say.

This applicant was persistent. The sight of a slim young beauty, who announced "I'm on time!" as she greeted me, and of another waiting model who looked like apple blossoms and tangled sunlight as to face and hair, in nowise disconcerted her. She left her address and urged me to let her know when I could use her.

The slim girl with chestnut brown hair that crisped into curls dropped into a chair and began slowly and painfully to rub her limbs.

"You don't know how they ache!" she explained. "We rehearsed after the performance last night and we've had to rehearse every day, besides the performance. Seems to me the soreness will never get out of my muscles."

"Oh, yes, indeed, I feel perfectly able to pose. Our play has just been put on, and all the six weeks the chorus rehearsed it we didn't get a cent. We never do while we are rehearsing a new play for that company."

"I was fined \$3 last time I came to you. They called a rehearsal and I left home before the call. They don't want us to pose, but what do they s'pose we're going to live on while we're learning a new play?"

"I'll make it up to you," I told her. "If anybody seen Ellen Day?"

Ellen was a saucy, dimpled beauty with sparkling eyes and different in type from the two young things discussing their careers while they waited.

"She came early, about ten minutes before you did, and she left a message for you. She said to tell you that her mother came here after her and it was something very important and she had to go," a third model informed me.

A missing model is a serious thing when one has scheduled certain pictures. The photographer sympathized with me.

"I must say," he commented, "that Ellen Day's mother looked remarkably like a tall young man in a high hat."

And then he went on rummaging hastily through his desk.

"Where are the stamps?" he demanded. "I've got to have stamps right away. These pictures must go immediately." He was distracted. Here was mail to get off, and in the studio models were



Miss Katherine Clements, pronounced an Ideal Model by Harrison Fisher.



Genevieve Lyon, Now Mrs. J. Murray Anderson, Model for Most of the Studios.



awaiting him at the camera.

His bookkeeper looked commiseratingly at him.

"Edna Kenny has been here," she told him, "and you know she always takes the stamps, and the postal cards too," she added.

"It's girls like that who make it hard for the rest of us," mourned my industrious young trio, starting for the dressing room: "People think all models are like that."

"No, they don't," I comforted. "Everybody knows that none of the other girls act like Ellen and Edna."

"Why do you hire them?"

The new bookkeeper asked this very practical question from the depths of her ignorance of studio needs. The photographer and I looked at her aghast.

Not hire two of the most fetching models in New York! What if they

were unreliable as the weather and one had a penchant for other people's postage and telephones? Sometimes no diversion more tempting than posing offered and they became a joy in the studio. As for postage, one could learn to keep an eye on the stamp drawer, but one could not get eyes on such models often in a lifetime.

Few models are punctual. Mine were getting into costumes and awaiting a belated couple before the day's work could begin.

B-r-r-r! shrilled the telephone.

This time the attendant looked pityingly at me.

"It's Miss Sanders, and she says that she can't come. She has a rehearsal on this morning."

"Well, I'm thankful she let me know," I sighed. "Whom can we get of her type?"

Over a list of available models we pored desperately. Then we began at the telephone.

"Out." That was the unvarying answer. "You'll never get a substitute this time in the morning," said the attendant, helping me get telephone numbers.

"Hello!" Her face suddenly lighted up. "Sadie Carter is at home and she'll come if you send a taxicab for her." She was jubilant.

"Send a taxi!" I lapsed, speechless. Sadie Carter lived in the Bronx.

"Yes. She says it's raining. She can't come unless you send a cab."

I looked out at the window. Sure enough a light sprinkle was falling.

"Tell her all right and to get ready quick; we are waiting," I urged her, meantime juggling the other telephone to get a cab service.

What with delays of models and telephoning the morning had almost sped away.

"I suppose Angele Ricard won't come," I declared, by way of anticipating the climax to my troubles.

"Oh, yes, she's coming! She's dependable. But you know she's always late," the attendant comforted.

Back in the studio the other models reassured me on this point.

"You can count on her. Angele told me she was coming. She's always late. You know she can't keep a job because she's never on time. Such a sweet girl, too. She's lost her last job."

"Yes, she is nice," I agreed. "That's too bad about her company. How did they come to drop her?"

"Late for rehearsals and late for performances. The management couldn't stand for that. Think of a girl coming along in the middle of an act and expecting to be kept in the chorus!"

"I thought she'd gone on the road for the season," I recalled.

"She did. She had a nice part for herself. A part, mind you, and she couldn't be punctual and they had to ship her back home. From 'way out West, too.'"

"And she works so hard and does so well when you can get her there," said her friend.

"Yes, she's a good girl and she poses beautifully," I contributed.

"There she is!" her critics exclaimed. And then they jeered her, friendlywise.

"Here comes the girl who can never hold down her job a week!"

"Here comes the late Miss Ricard!"

"The always late Miss Ricard!"

"What do you s'pose will happen to the girl who can't hold down her job for even a week?"

Affectionate badinage it was in tone, if telling in words.

Angele smiled lazily and tried to look indignant, but her temper was too sweet to be soured by anything irate managers, jeering friends or irritated picture-makers, whose dollars went with her delays, could say to her.

"What would you do if you didn't have a mother to help you?" demanded the young things who had no such blessing to soothe the life for them, and who worked cheerily about eighteen to twenty hours a day.

"Well, I just can't get up in the morning," defended Angele, "and I've got a job."

"Got a job! Another job?"

"How did you do it?"

"What manager would take you?"

Even the photographer joined the chorus of exclamation.

Angele looked a trifle disconcerted, but she braved it out.

"With the Up-and-Down Company," she informed us. "They're going abroad in a few weeks and I thought I'd like to visit my home people over there, so I joined the company."

"How'll you ever get back?"

The cry was one of sincere dismay. It expressed the foregone conclusion that the consequences of "being late" would follow Angele even upon the other side of the Atlantic.

The photographer put his head around the camera and moaned sadly.

"Maybe we'll see Angele back again when the walking's good from Paris."

Angele exhibited the trait that made her valuable. She had calmly dispensed with her wraps, arranged her hair, donned the costume in which she was to pose and took her place with unruffled mien, doing all with a deliberate expedition as restful to the onlooker as it is helpful to makers of pictures. However late Angele might be, as her friends said, when she was "there" she worked well and with an unobtrusive rapidity rare in either model or chorus. No wonder managers were glad to reward her with parts when she could be held to rehearsals long enough to learn them.

Sadie Carter came tripping in, capable, pretty, well groomed, as all these hard worked models are, and with a mere word of explanation was ready to carry out the part of her missing confrere of the studios.

"Are you posing so as to keep yourself on the stage until you get a good part?" she asked the girl with the apple blossom face.

"No," the glinting haired one told her, "I'm never going on the stage; posing pays much better."

"She poses for so many advertise-

ments," explained the chestnut haired girl. "They pay better than the stage."

"It's awful hard work till you get a part," admitted another girl. "But when you once get a good start, you can always make a living, and in posing people get tired of the same faces and drop you, and then you've nothing to fall back on."

"Or else you get a double chin, like Rhoda Miles, and they have to drop you," said another.

"Or get too fat, or get sick and scrawny. There's always something likely to happen when you're nothing but posing for a living," commented Angele.

"Alas! Didn't I know? Hadn't I lost several beautiful models because of double chins, obesity or the ravaging effects of illness?"

"Posing's a mighty nice thing to keep you going till you get along in your chosen profession," said a chorus girl. "I don't know how I'd live without it."

"I'd give up the stage and do nothing but pose," said another too uncertain about my living. Every now and then photographers drop a model, for a while anyhow, and she has nothing that she knows how to do to support herself."

"Posing for artists is interesting," said a gentle dancer with soft eyes. "It doesn't pay as well as the photographic work, but it is easier and it's interesting to see the picture grow. I like to be in pictures and see how the artists have changed me. They generally change something and idealize the face so as to make it more beautiful than the model."

There was no vanity in this earnest aspirant for stage honors.

"I should think Angele would like to sit for artists—just sit still. It's lazy work," laughed a friend.

"I don't mind posing for artists," admitted Angele, "but I like the stage. I like to travel with the companies and see new places."

"Well," confessed Sadie Carter, "I didn't know how to do anything when I had to make my living, so I tried posing, and I get along very well, but it's anything but the easy work people think it is."

"It's awfully hard," every one sympathized. "Fifty cents an hour for artists is very little when the days are short and the hours are few. That only means from about eleven until three o'clock, when the light changes."

"Posing for photographers at \$3 to \$5 a posing is hard enough," explained the professional model. "But posing for artists is harder. No matter how considerate they are, there are some pictures where you have to hold a difficult attitude until you fairly ache all over."

"I know," agreed the girl who danced until her muscles were sore. She rubbed her limbs feelingly. "But it isn't as hard as dancing and rehearsing all the time. Won't I be thankful when I get a part to play!" Her eyes beamed.

The other girls smiled with her and made little cooing sounds of encouragement.

That was the incentive to tedious days of studio posing and exacting hours of stage practice—there was a career before them that promised an independent living and help, usually, for some member of the family. They are full of courage and hope, these young things, and hard work has no terrors for them.

Lucy Cotton, Popular Model as Meg in "Little Women," Model for Howard Chandler Christy, A. B. Wentzell and All Big Illustrators.