

"WEDDING 'AT HOMES'" FOR PEOPLE OF SMALL INCOMES.

By C. E. C. WEIGALL.



THIS article, like "Hints on an Inexpensive Trousseau," is intended for those whose income is not of the largest, but who wish to make the best of the little they have to spare.

Now that fashionable weddings so seldom take place in the morning, the expense and difficulties of a smart wedding-breakfast are quite dispensed with, and game, ices, and unlimited champagne are quite a thing of the past, or at least quite unnecessary.

But I am not writing for people who think that a cup of indifferent tea, or worse than indifferent lukewarm coffee, and a wedge of bridecake, or a flake of bread-and-butter, are quite enough to offer even their friends who drive in from a distance to see dear "Milly" or dear "George" married!

No; surely if at any time honour should be done to the dear son or daughter, and the resources of the household taxed to the utmost, it is at this, the wedding time. And besides this, the father and mother of the bride are naturally anxious to make the best of themselves and their belongings before the members of the other family that is to be so closely united with them.

We will suppose, then, that the wedding is to take place in the country—in a vicarage or other house containing three sitting-rooms of average size on the ground floor.

The greater part of the furniture should be removed from the study and drawing-room the day before, to transform the smaller room into the "present show-room," and the larger one into a reception-room for the guests, with plenty of chairs and ottomans round the walls, but no tables or knick-knacks as traps for the unwary left in the room.

If it is a summer wedding, I should remove fender and fire-irons, and fill in the hearthstone with a layer of dried moss—to be bought in penny packets. And upon the moss, or rather

in it, stand small cups and jars full of scarlet poppies, purple irises, or tall white dog-daisies, and disguise the whole fire-place with tall fronds of bracken. This looks very well, and gives an air of artistic arrangement to the room at once.

Arrange the presents on a table in the centre of the small room as prettily as possible, with the giver's name on each one, as, unless you have a garden, the only amusement you can offer your guests is that of looking at the wedding gifts. Of course, if you are blessed with a garden, have tennis and archery going, or croquet for the elders and rounders for the younger members of the party.

Supposing the wedding to take place at two o'clock, the guests must all go straight to the church, and the house-party, bridesmaids, and relations be driven there also, the bridesmaids taking their stand in the church porch to await the coming of the bride and the relative who is to give her away. But as this paper does not concern the wedding, but merely the "At Home" afterwards, we will imagine the return of the whole party back to the old home, the bride and her relations rather tearful and excited, and the bridegroom striving to appear cool and collected, but very anxious to have all the fuss over and get safely away.

The bride is now the cynosure of all eyes, and has to display herself in all her wedding finery, and then go off to the dining-room to cut the cake with her husband.

The dining-room should also have been stripped of all superfluous furniture, and have a long table at the far end of the room, behind which stand the two or three women-servants in pretty white caps and aprons. Never attempt to go in for hired waiters; the men will only be a nuisance to you and look pretentious; and, if people would only believe it, women are far pleasanter as attendants.

Have a spotless damask cloth covering the table, and let the silver be brilliant, and the glass and china as sparkling as possible. Do not attempt to give wines of any kind. Have coffee at one end and tea at the other of the table, with a maid to pour out at each end, and the third, to wash up the cups and spoons, in the background.

Your eatables should be brown and white thin bread-and-butter, rolled, to go with the coffee and tea; dainty sandwiches of different descriptions; cucumber or tomatoes, sliced very thin, between bread-and-butter, or more elaborate ones such as these:—

VICTORIA SANDWICHES.

For twenty-four persons—Wash forty-eight anchovies, bone them, take out the backbones, and divide them in halves; cut an equal number of thin slices of brown bread-and-butter; put between two slices alternate layers of hard-boiled eggs, cut in thin slices, mustard and cress cut small, and the anchovies. Press the slices closely together, and with a sharp knife cut them into small squares. Serve on a napkin, and garnish with parsley.

SARDINE SANDWICHES.

Cut some slices of thin bread-and-butter and put the following mixture on each slice:—Bone and pass through a sieve twelve sardines, the yolks of two hard-boiled eggs, and a nice bit of butter; add some finely-chopped parsley, and season highly with black pepper and cayenne; mix all well together. Cut the sandwiches into oblong shapes, and serve with cress or lettuce in the middle.

You will want one or two more pretty

savouries. A good aspic jelly may be made thus:—

SAVOURY JELLY.

Any amount of remnants of poultry and game can be cut into small dice, mixed with quarters of hard-boiled eggs, and put into moulds filled up with savoury jelly, which can just as well be made of gelatine dissolved in stock as of calves' feet. This, if duly seasoned with plenty of pepper and not too much salt, is delicious. Instead of poultry scraps, well-picked shrimps or prawns make a pleasant change.

ANCHOVY EGGS.

Boil the eggs hard; when cold, shell them, and cut in half lengthways; take out the yolks and pass them through a sieve, and to every egg add one teaspoonful of anchovy sauce, cayenne pepper, and a small piece of butter; beat all together and replace in the whites. These eggs should be served on fried rounds of bread.

Do not trouble to have any sweets except cakes and buns. The following recipes are particularly good ones.

GOOD BUNS.

Two pounds of flour, half a pound of sugar, a quarter of a pound of butter, a cup of yeast, a quarter of a pound of picked currants. When well mixed cover them over, and put them by the fire to rise, after which make into buns and put them before the fire for half an hour. Bake in a quick oven.

GINGER DROPS.

Eight ounces of grated sugar, the white of one egg well beaten, two full teaspoonfuls of essence of ginger; mix well, and drop on white paper with a good large teaspoon. Bake in a very moderate oven about ten minutes. The drops are done as soon as they can be nicely taken off the paper.

If the wedding takes place in the fruit season, nothing is nicer than a fruit salad, which looks very smart in a large glass bowl.

FRUIT SALAD.

Place a layer of oranges or strawberries at the bottom of a salad bowl, and sift white sugar over them. Then put a layer of raspberries and sift sugar, then currants—red or white—and sugar, and so on till the dish is full. Then pour a wine-glass of Marsala and half a glass of brandy over the whole, and leave for at least six hours. A little ice improves it greatly.

Do not think it necessary to have a gigantic wedding-cake, but have a small one, simply iced, of about twenty pounds, for the centre of the table. You hire the ornaments for the cake at the shop where you buy it, as well as the cake boxes you will want for sending cake away to your friends. Only send to your near relations who have been unable to attend the wedding, for lavish cake-sending is unnecessary and extravagant. Put a card in each box—

"With MR. and MRS. ———
Compliments."

Then a word as to the cards of invitation, which are the most usual to send out when issuing invitations for the wedding. You may either use the simple form—

MR. and MRS. JONES.

MRS. WALKER AT HOME.

June 10th.

.S.V.P.

or the more elaborate one—

MR. and MRS. WALKER

request the pleasure of MR. and MRS. JONES'S company at the marriage of their daughter,

MISS ETHEL WALKER,

to

MR. FRANCIS HANSON,

at St. Mary's Church, Linden, on Tuesday, June 10th.

Do not send cards after the wedding; the custom is vulgar and out of date.

After the bride has cut the cake, she retires to take off her finery and put on her travelling dress, and this is the time when a little good music will relieve the monotony of the proceedings. You are sure to have a girl among the guests who is willing to sing or play; but unless the music is first-rate, avoid it as you would the plague.

Remember that the bride's father provides the wedding carriages, and the one in which the happy pair start for the station; no doubt some kind friend who is happy enough to possess a landau and pair of horses will be

only too glad to help by lending them for the occasion.

Another matter to which no attention is often paid is the clothing of the wedding guests.

To my mind there is nothing so painful as seeing the whole of the house-party in gowns of green and blue, or even if they have selected pretty colours, the shade of one lady's gown killing that of her next neighbour.

My idea is, that the hostess should give a hint to those near relations who are quartered in the house that the wedding is to be a heliotrope one, or a "vieux rose" one, as the case may be; so that in buying their gowns the ladies might be guided as to the colour, and so be in a certain sort of harmony.

Thus a very pretty, harmonious wedding would be where the bride was in white silk or muslin; the bridesmaids in white gowns, with pale mauve trimmings; the bride's mother in silver poplin or dead grey silk, with a bonnet composed of pale lilacs; the bridegroom's mother in deep heliotrope velvet; and the rest of the relations in harmonising colours, with posies and ribbons all alike—of lilacs, violets, or heather.

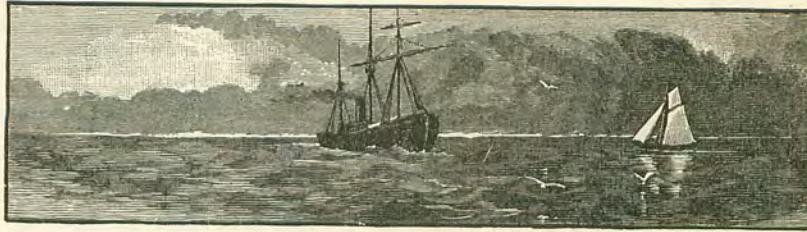
Even if the dresses have, of necessity, to be of the cheapest materials, let the cashmeres or alpacas blend artistically. With the present fashions, and the present shades of colouring, bad and inartistic dressing is quite an unpardonable sin.

Do not allow the bride to take much luggage with her, but send all her boxes straight to her new home. It is a great mistake to be overcrowded with luggage on a honeymoon.

She will want two day-gowns—a simple one for walks and excursions and one better one—and a tea-gown for *table d'hôte* or evening wear.

When the bride and bridegroom have driven off it is the signal for the wedding guests to depart, which they do after a few words of congratulation to their hostess. People often complain that they do not know what to say on these occasions; but a pretty little speech as to the bride's looks, and the success of the whole entertainment, can surely not be very difficult to frame.

If these few hints are carried out as far as possible, I think that the "Wedding 'At Home'" will be certainly voted a success by all who have the pleasure of attending it.



A VOYAGE FOR HEALTH.

I.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE VOYAGE.

A VERY favourite method of treatment for many ailments is what is called a "long sea voyage." People who are worn out from overwork of mind or body, and those suffering with graver diseases, such as consumption, are frequently ordered to avail themselves of the health-giving effects to be obtained by a long sojourn on the mighty ocean. Few, perhaps, of our girls will have occasion to undertake this sort of journey on their own account, but it may fall to the lot of many to accompany some relative, father, mother, or brother in a sea voyage, and it is with a view of helping such that I wish to point out the various advantages to be obtained; how to both obtain them and how to avoid the many possible discomforts which may occur in the course of such an undertaking. A very favourite voyage among the "long voyages" is that to Australia, and any one who has travelled out to that colony cannot but be struck by the number of invalids on board.

The first considerations which have to be made are the season at which to take the voyage, and the route. The favourite route is that through the Suez Canal and Red Sea, though many people, especially those going to New Zealand, go by way of the Cape. If the Red Sea route be chosen, the months of May, June, July, August and September should be avoided, as in those months the heat in the Red Sea may be very great indeed. A very good month to start in is February or March. Then, again, as to ships: there are many

excellent English lines, foremost among which are the Peninsular and Oriental, and the Orient Companies, by the Red Sea route, and the Shaw Saville ships by the Cape route. These ships are of noble size and excellent appointments, and are commanded by officers of exceptional ability. Many invalids may, however, dread the "fearful Bay of Biscay," and for such there is a very good alternative. Starting from London by the Continental express, Paris may be arrived at in about eight hours. Here a rest should be made, and then taking train from the P. L. M. (Paris-Lyon-Méditerranée) station, Marseilles can be made for either by a direct route or by breaking the journey again at Dijon. The hotels at Marseilles are excellent, and the two best, the Grand Hôtel de Louvre et de la Paix, and the Hôtel de Nouilles, are situated in the main thoroughfare, which is called the Cannaliéu. That useful institution, Cook's Office, is also in the same street. At Marseilles the main choice of steamers lies between the P. and O. or the Messageries Maritimes, a French company of deservedly great reputation. The Orient vessels do not call at this port but at Naples.

A new train has lately been added by which passengers can go right down to Brindisi and join the P. and O. at that point. Having chosen your ship, it becomes necessary to choose your cabin, and this is a thing in which great care and experience are necessary. It is very rarely worth while for an invalid or weakly person to travel by steamer in any other than a first-class cabin; of course, for those who are strong and accustomed to sea-

travelling, the second-class cabin and accommodation may be ample. But those who take a sea-voyage in order to regain health for the most part stand in need of all the comforts of location and food that can be procured. Having then decided on a first-class cabin, it becomes necessary to book your places as soon as possible, as very often berths are booked for months in advance, and unless you are early in your application for places you will have little or no choice for cabins. The question of deck-cabins is one which must be considered. There is no doubt that they are cooler in the tropical parts of the voyage, but when rough weather comes, if it does come, they frequently have to be vacated by their occupants, who "seek seclusion" below. On the whole, I think a "downstairs" cabin is the best, all things considered. In many ships there are two sets of cabins, an outer row and an inner row; one of the outer cabins should, if possible, be chosen, as the lighting and ventilation are much better and more under the control of the occupant. Cross-berths, *i.e.* berths running in the transverse axis of the vessel, should be avoided, as when the vessel rolls the body of the occupant is moved in his long axis, and this motion is, above all, unpleasant, and one may be literally alternately "on one's head and one's heels." The amount of available room will vary as the number of passengers, but in an "empty" ship a double-berthed cabin may often be secured for an extra charge, though they can generally be obtained by paying fifty per cent. on the ordinary first-class fare. The cabin should be as much as possible amidships, and not too near the engines.