

ward appearances at least, bore the parting, or rather the separation, for he purposely avoided all formal leave-takings with Fairy, better than his wife. He never murmured or complained; all he said, when he came home and heard Fairy's father had come to fetch her, was, "God knows best; His will be done;" and, but for his more than usually tender manner to Fairy that evening, she might have thought he rejoiced at her joy as fully as he pretended to do. *His wife frankly* told him she could not make him out: he, to whom the child had been as the apple of his eye, to sit there smiling as cheerfully as if she were to live with them for ever, instead of going to her own parents the next day, for the baron could not be persuaded to delay his departure beyond the morrow.

But John only smiled and said, "So we shall live together for ever one day, Polly, but it won't be on this side of the grave." And never once did he murmur at her going, though for months afterwards he

always put Fairy's little three-legged stool in the place where she used to sit in front of the fire after supper, and then he would gaze into the burning wood lost in thought. Unless Mrs. Shelley spoke to him now and then, some tears would roll down his weather-beaten cheeks, and then his wife knew he was thinking of Fairy. For eighteen years she had been the light of his life; no wonder, then, that he missed her. Whenever she used to go to stay at the Leslies' he counted the days till she came back, and then often complained of her absence; but now that she had gone for good and all, as his wife expressed it, he never uttered a word of complaint. Mrs. Shelley confessed she could not make her husband out. He even rebuked her for her constant remarks, that it was very hard to flesh and blood to bring up a child for eighteen years as your own and then one day for its own parents to come and take it away for ever; and yet in her heart of hearts she knew John was more

wounded at Fairy's loss than she was. She still had her three sons to interest her, although two were away from home. Charlie was never absent for a night, and Willie was expected home soon to remain in England for a year or two, while Jack, although it was now a settled thing that the rest of his life was to be passed in America, was the pride of his mother's heart.

And Fairy, how did she bear the parting?

In the first place, it is always easier in all separations for those who go than for those who are left behind; in the next, Rex went with her, and lastly the entirely new life, her new found parents and brothers, all of whom vied with each other in making the most of her, although in this respect the baron undoubtedly carried off the palm, so occupied her time and thoughts, that it was impossible for the Shelleys to fill her mind to the same extent as her memory dwelt in theirs.

(To be concluded.)

A WISE LETTER.

By the Author of "How to be Happy Though Married."



IF there be any readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER who are not acquainted with Dean Swift's "Letter to a Very Young Lady on Her Marriage," I should like to bring it to their notice, for the advice it contains is not altogether out of date now; and though the Dean's hints show that he is not gallantly blind to the faults of the gentle sex, yet they are shrewd and often very much to the purpose. The letter was contributed to the *Tatler*, a periodical which was started by

Steele in 1709. Swift begins by telling his correspondent that he had always borne a friendship to her father and mother, and that for some years past the person she had chosen for a husband was his particular favourite. Though he writes in this way, it does not follow that the Dean had any particular young lady in view, for he was wont to practise all kinds of literary deceptions and disguises. More probably he desired to give advice, not to any individual very young wife, but to everyone who comes under this description.

The young lady is told that as her parents rather neglected the cultivation of their daughter's mind, she must do her best to remedy this deficiency. A wise man wants a wife to be a reasonable companion and a true friend through every stage of his life. It is, then, her duty to qualify herself for the position. The young wife's husband has an excellent understanding and an amiable temper, but she is told that, nevertheless, she will in time grow indifferent, and perhaps contemptible to him, unless she can supply the loss of youth and beauty with more durable qualities. "Pray, observe how insignificant things are the common race of ladies when they have passed their youth and beauty, how contemptible they appear to the men, and yet

more contemptible to the younger part of their own sex. . . . Whereas I have known ladies at sixty, to whom all the polite part of the court and town paid their addresses, without any further view than that of enjoying the pleasures of their conversation."

The young lady is to improve her mind for some hours every day by reading and making extracts from history and travels. She is to correct her taste and judgment by cultivating the acquaintance of persons of knowledge and understanding.

"As little respect as I have for the generality of your sex, it has sometimes moved me with pity to see the lady of the house forced to withdraw immediately after dinner, and this in families where there is not much drinking, as if it were an established maxim that women are incapable of all conversation. In a room where both sexes meet, if the men are discoursing upon any general subject, the ladies never think it their business to partake in what passes, but in a separate club entertain each other with the price and choice of lace and silk, and what dresses they liked or disapproved at the church or playhouse. When I reflect on this, I cannot conceive you to be human creatures, but a certain sort of species hardly a degree above a monkey, who has more diverting tricks than any of you, is an animal less mischievous and expensive, might in time be a tolerable critic in velvet and brocade, and, for aught I know, would equally become them."

If the Dean lived in these days of the higher education of women, we hope that he would not be called upon to speak in this way, and yet his words are not altogether unmeaning, even to us.

It is to be feared that the art of reading aloud is almost as much neglected by ladies now as it was when Swift complained, as he does in this letter, of the same neglect. He advises the very young wife to read aloud, more or less, every day to her husband.

"It is usual in young wives, before they have been many weeks married, to assume a

bold, forward look and manner of talking, as if they intended to signify in all companies that they were no longer girls, and consequently that their whole demeanour, before they got a husband, was all but a countenance and constraint upon their nature, whereas, I suppose, if the votes of wise men were gathered, a very great majority would be in favour of those ladies who, after they were entered into that state, rather chose to double their portion of modesty and reservedness."

With this it is interesting to compare what Charles Lamb says in his "Bachelor's Complaint of the Behaviour of Married People." "Nothing is to me more distasteful than that entire complacency and satisfaction which beam in the countenances of a newly-married couple; in that of the lady particularly, it tells you that her lot is disposed of in this world, that you can have no hopes of her. It is true, I have none, nor wishes either, perhaps, but this is one of those truths which ought, as I said before, to be taken for granted, not expressed."

The very young wife is cautioned to avoid the company of "bold, swaggering, rattling ladies," whose supposed wit and humour lie "in rude, shocking expressions, and what they call running a man down." We agree with the Dean when, after giving some illustrations of these "rapid," slang-loving persons, he says:—"I have often thought that no man is obliged to suppose such creatures to be women, but rascals disguised in female habits."

But the matrimonial mentor is perhaps a little too strict in preaching total abstinence from female acquaintances, and we are not quite sure of the wisdom of saying, "I advise that your company at home should consist of men rather than women. To say the truth, I never yet knew a tolerable woman to be fond of her own sex." These men acquaintances, however, are to be of her husband's choice, "and not recommended to you by any she companions; because they will certainly fix a coxcomb upon you." If the very young wife

must have female acquaintances, her only safe way of conversing with them is by a firm resolution to proceed in her practice and behaviour directly contrary to whatever they shall say or do. "For instance, in the doctrines they usually deliver to young married women for managing their husbands, their several accounts of their own conduct in that particular, to recommend it to your imitation, the reflections they make upon others of their sex for acting differently, their directions how to come off with victory upon any dispute or quarrel you may have with your husband, the arts by which you may discover and practise upon his weak side: when to work by flattery and insinuation, when to melt him with tears, and when to engage him with a high hand: in these and a thousand other cases it will be prudent to retain as many of their lectures in your memory as you can, and then determine to act in full opposition to them all."

On the subject of visiting, the Dean says that half a dozen acquaintances are enough to visit, and that it will be sufficient to see them twice a year. It is dangerous to have confidants, especially when it is a waiting-maid who is admitted into the cabinet council of her young mistress.

There are some affectations and disagreeable habits to be avoided by the very young wife. Instead of thinking it becoming to be what ladies now call "nervous," she should rather be ashamed of cowardice. It is "something very capricious, that when women profess their admiration for a colonel or a captain on account of his valour, they should fancy it a very graceful and becoming quality in

themselves to be afraid of their own shadows, to scream in a barge when the weather is calmest, to run from a cow at a hundred yards distance, to fall into fits at the sight of a spider, an earwig, or a frog. At least, if cowardice be a sign of cruelty, as it is generally granted, I can hardly think it an accomplishment so desirable as to be worth improving by affectation."

Then follow some remarks about dressing too fine and paying too little attention to personal cleanliness, which are clinched with the saying of one who is called a "pleasant gentleman," concerning a "silly woman of quality." The "pleasant gentleman" said that "nothing could make her supportable but cutting off her head; for his ears were offended by her tongue, and his nose by her hair and teeth."

As regards fashion, Swift is not unreasonable enough to expect the very young wife to be out of it, but "to be the last and least in it." Probably he and Pope often talked of this matter.

The latter, in his "Essay on Criticism," speaking of literary style, says—

"In words, as fashions, the same rule will hold,

Alike fantastic if too new or old;

Be not the first by whom the new is tried,

Nor yet the last to lay the old aside."

"I expect that your dress shall be one degree lower than your fortune can afford, and in your heart I would wish you to be an utter contemner of all distinctions which a finer petticoat can give you; because it will neither

make you richer, handsomer, younger, better natured, more virtuous, or wise than if it hung upon a peg."


The last piece of advice given is about the spending of money; a most important matter; for, as it has been said, any fool can make money, but it takes a wise man or woman to spend it rightly. "I think you ought to be well informed how much your husband's revenue amounts to, and be so good a computer as to keep within it in that part of the management which falls to your share; and not to put yourself in the number of those polite ladies who think they gain a great point when they have teased their husbands to buy them a new equipage, a laced head, or a fine petticoat, without once considering what long score remained unpaid to the butcher."

We have seen that some of the remarks in this letter are a little hard on the fair sex, but our best friends flatter least, and we may be sure that Dean Swift could have written even less agreeable truths to a young husband. He seems, however, to have given more study to the ways in which wives make or mar domestic felicity. We all know his famous saying, that "the reason why so few marriages are happy, is because young women spend their time in making nets, not in making cages." Certainly, a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, and girls are quite justified in trying, in all ways consistent with modesty and self-respect, to net husbands. Still, she is the really fine woman who can not merely net the affections of a husband during the honeymoon, but who can cage and keep them throughout a long married life.

MERLE'S CRUSADE.

By ROSA NOUCHETTE CAREY, Author of "Aunt Diana," "For Lillias," etc.

CHAPTER XXIII. RINGING THE CHANGES.



I T pleased me greatly to hear that Gay would be mistress of Marshlands; I could not imagine the place without her bright presence. She would still have her pets around her, her bees and chickens, and her brown mare Bonny; the tame pheasants would still follow her up and down the terrace, the pigeons fly on her arms and shoulders; she would ride out with the old squire, and sing to

him of an evening, and Walter Rossiter would be a son to him in his old age. I thought it would be an ideal life, and I found out that my mistress thought so too.

She often talked to me about it when we were left alone, and of her young sister's happiness, and when Gay had a leisure hour she would run up to the

nursery, and chat about her future, telling me everything she thought I should like to hear.

After a week or two Mr. Rossiter came to Prince's Gate, and then I saw little of Gay; my nursery duties occupied me, and she was too much engrossed with her lover's company to give me much of her time.

Mr. Rossiter had brought a sad piece of news with him, that I was sorry to hear. Mr. Hawtry had returned from Venice, bringing his cousin with him to the Red Farm; but a few days ago he had met with an accident in the hunting field; his mare had thrown him in jumping a gate. It was a young mare he had lately bought, and she had not been properly broken in; the result had been a broken leg to her master. Gay could not quite tell me how it had happened. Mr. Hawtry was too good a horseman to be easily thrown, but he had fallen in an awkward place, and it was only by a miracle he had not been killed.

His cousin, Edgar Hawtry, was nursing him; but it was likely to be a tedious affair.

I noticed that Mrs. Morton and Gay seemed to take this accident greatly to heart; they were always alluding to it and looking eagerly for bulletins from Marshlands. "There would be few

men more missed than Hawtry," I heard Mr. Rossiter say one day when he and Gay were in the nursery playing with the children. "I should not be here now if Edgar were not with him; but he is a famous nurse, Mrs. Cornish tells me."

I was glad to think that poor Mr. Hawtry was not left alone, to miss his mother and Miss Agnes. He was so strong and active, so full of life and energy, that we could not imagine him a prisoner to his couch. I had heard a great deal of this young artist cousin, whom he had nursed through a long and dangerous illness in Venice. He was a light-hearted, handsome young fellow, and I was glad to know that he was at the Red Farm taking care of Mr. Hawtry.

Mr. Rossiter and Gay left us a little before Christmas. Mr. Rossiter's duties recalled him to Netherton, and Gay could not well remain longer. Mrs. Markham was to accomplish her flitting with the New Year, and then Gay would assume her position as mistress of Marshlands.

She came to us again early in February to get her trousseau, and remained three weeks. Her wedding was fixed for the end of April. I saw a good deal of her during those weeks. She would take us with her in